



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

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MAY 2021



Magellan's Cross

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Encases the Original Cross Planted
By Ferdinand Magellan On This Very Site
April 21, 1521

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MAY 2021 + VOLUME 101 + NUMBER 5



A painting by Filipino artist Dionisio Gayo depicts the first Easter Sunday Mass in the Philippines, celebrated on Limasawa Island March 31, 1521, by a priest accompanying the Magellan expedition.

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ON THE COVER



A small chapel next to the Basilica of Santo Niño in Cebu City, Philippines, houses the Magellan Cross. Ferdinand Magellan planted a cross on the site in 1521; this cross is believed to encase fragments of the original.

Membership in the Knights of Columbus is open to men 18 years of age or older who are practical (that is, practicing) Catholics in union with the Holy See. This means that an applicant or member accepts the teaching authority of the Catholic Church on matters of faith and morals, aspires to live in accord with the precepts of the Catholic Church, and is in good standing in the Catholic Church.

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The Universal Faith

FIVE CENTURIES AGO, the Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan reached the Philippines with a fleet of three ships. He was sailing under the patronage of Charles V, the grandson of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain. As with the arrival of Columbus in the Americas nearly three decades earlier, Magellan and his international crew were accompanied by Christian missionaries. They celebrated Mass on the small island of Limasawa on Easter Sunday, March 31, 1521, and two weeks later, the Indigenous ruler of nearby Cebu and his wife were baptized, along with their subjects.

The 500th anniversary of these events is being widely celebrated this year in the Philippines, where a large majority of the population is Catholic and the Knights of Columbus has been present for more than a century (see page 6). The quincentenary of the first baptisms was declared a holiday in Cebu City, where a pontifical Mass was held April 14 to mark the anniversary. Archbishop Charles Brown, apostolic nuncio to the Philippines, pointed out in his homily a “paradox” in the arrival of the Christian faith in the Philippines — “that the faith which itself was born in Asia was then brought here first by means of European explorers.”

Christianity is not, as many presume today, a product of Western imperialism, nor is it a European religion that seeks to repress other cultures. To the contrary, as Archbishop Brown explained, “In these five centuries, the Catholic faith has entered deeply into Filipino culture and produced a distinctively Filipino

expression of the unchanging and universal truth of the Catholic faith.” This faith, he added, “cannot be identified with any single culture; it is rather the life-giving truth of God.”

This was manifested in a powerful way 10 years after Magellan’s journey — on the opposite side of the globe. The apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico marked a significant turning point in the evangelization of the American continent. When all seemed to be lost, God’s intervention through the Virgin of Tepeyac opened millions of hearts to the Gospel (see page 3). And, centuries later, when the Church in Mexico came under attack in the 1920s, there were many who died for the faith under the banner of Christ the King and Our Lady of Guadalupe (see page 12).

All of this is to say that the Gospel does not destroy culture, but transcends and transforms it in a spirit of truth and love. Knights of Columbus around the world exemplify this reality through the principles of charity, unity and fraternity, just as we profess our belief in one, holy, catholic (that is, universal), and apostolic Church.

Before ascending to the Father, the risen Lord gave his apostles a missionary mandate, which he speaks anew to us today: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age” (Mt 28:19-20). ✚

Alton J. Pelowski, Editor

Columbia

PUBLISHER

Knights of Columbus

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Most Rev. William E. Lori, S.T.D.
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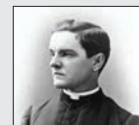
EDITORIAL

Alton J. Pelowski
Editor

Andrew J. Matt
Managing Editor

Cecilia Hadley
Senior Editor

Margaret B. Kelly
Associate Editor



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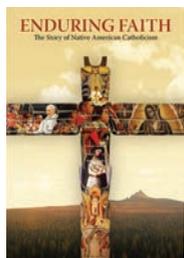
COLUMBIA
1 Columbus Plaza
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columbia@kofc.org
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Enduring Faith: The Story of Native American Catholicism



A new K of C-produced documentary explores the rich spiritual and cultural gifts of Indigenous Catholics in North America. The 58-minute film, titled *Enduring Faith: The Story of Native American Catholicism*, tells the stories of St. Kateri Tekakwitha, the first canonized Native American saint; Nicholas Black Elk, a Lakota chief whose cause for canonization is underway; and Our Lady of Guadalupe’s appearance to an Indigenous elder as a *mestiza* woman. Above all, it shows how Christ reveals himself through the uniqueness of every culture. For upcoming broadcast times and more information, visit kofc.org/enduringfaith.

‘Behold Your Mother’

Devotion to Our Lady is essential to our identity as Knights of unity and charity

By Supreme Knight Patrick E. Kelly

AS THE LEADER of a fraternal order with a founding mission to care for women and children, I must begin with a note of honor to our mothers during this month when we celebrate Mother’s Day. I’m grateful for the fact that my own mother is still going strong at 94, and with you I pray for all the mothers in our lives — whether living or deceased.

This month of May, which is devoted to the Blessed Mother, also offers an excellent opportunity to reflect upon Mary’s role in our lives and in the Church today. While Knights are devoted to Mary under many different titles, we have long had a special devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe. The tenure of Past Supreme Knight Carl Anderson, who consecrated the Order to Our Lady of Guadalupe when he was installed, formalized that devotion’s place in the Order’s spirituality, but the history goes back even further.

As a fraternity which spread to Canada, the Philippines and Mexico within a generation of its founding in the United States, it is only natural that we would turn to the Virgin of Tepeyac. Mary, under the title Our Lady of Guadalupe, is acclaimed the Patroness of the Americas and the Philippines, Star of the New Evangelization and Protectress of the Unborn. Her reassuring message to St. Juan Diego, an Indigenous layman, in 1531, is a message for all of us: “Am I not here, I who has the honor to be your mother?”

Notably, Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared as a pregnant *mestiza* woman, and as such she is a symbol of both our work in the pro-life movement and our calling to support our Indigenous brothers and sisters in the faith. And as St. John Paul II wrote in *Ecclesia in America*, we see in her “an impressive example of a perfectly inculturated evangelization” (11).

This notion of inculturated evangelization should resonate with us as Knights of Columbus — particularly as men of unity. The message of Jesus Christ is for all peoples and

nations. Mary appeared in the New World in a way that was deeply meaningful to St. Juan Diego and the people of that time and place, but with a message of salvation that is universal. Mary’s appearance points to the reality that, so long as we are unified in the essentials, we can be diverse in the particulars.

Indeed, the impact of Our Lady of Guadalupe on the people of Mexico and the entire American continent is clear. Within seven years of her appearance on Tepeyac Hill in Mexico, almost 9 million people in the region converted to faith in Jesus Christ. Far from conquering or oppressing the native people of the Americas, she appeared as a mother, proclaiming liberty from fear and eternal life in her son.

As such, Our Lady of Guadalupe is an icon of unity for us — especially in terms of our Order’s presence throughout North America, the Philippines and beyond.

A decade from now, in 2031, we will celebrate 500 years since the Guadalupan event. The Order is already discussing ways to mark this anniversary. But for now, and particularly in this month of May, I challenge all brother Knights to renew our devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and her holy rosary.

When we became Knights, we were given this powerful weapon against evil with the words, “Her holy rosary in our hands, going where we go. The salutation ‘Hail Mary’ on our lips. What challenge can we not face? What victories can we not achieve?”

We have received a tremendous gift in the rosary, in the message of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and in the Blessed Mother herself. Christ’s words from the cross to the apostle John were spoken to the entire Church and to each of us: “Behold your mother” (Jn 19:27).

She is our mother. She is our queen. And we are her Knights. Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us!

Vivat Jesus!



‘We have received a tremendous gift in the rosary, in the message of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and in the Blessed Mother herself.’

Mary's Discipleship and Ours

The Virgin Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Church, teaches us to receive God's love and cooperate with his grace

By Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William E. Lori

IN LIFE'S DIFFICULT MOMENTS, we often turn to the Blessed Virgin Mary for help. It is right that we do so, for she is our mother who loves us dearly. She is always attentive to our specific needs, but her love for us does not stop there. More than that, our Blessed Mother seeks, above all, to instill in us essential characteristics of the Christian life, characteristics that she embodies and exemplifies — namely, openness to God's love, faithful discipleship and spiritual fruitfulness.

When the angel Gabriel announced to the Virgin Mary that God had chosen her to be the mother of his only son, the Messiah, her "yes" to God was total and ongoing. Her response to the angel stands forever as the model for our response to God's will in our lives: "May it be done to me according to your word!" (Lk 1:38). Because of Mary's single-hearted openness to God's plan, she conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and brought forth the world's savior, Jesus Christ.

In the setbacks of daily life, we can easily compromise our "yes" to God. We succumb to anger and disappointment; we dwell on ourselves instead of opening our hearts to God's will. Even then, Mary is never far from us — only a prayer away. She urges us to surrender bitterness and self-absorption, and entrust ourselves to God's providential love. Mary did not understand all that the Incarnation would demand of her any more than we understand all that God asks of us. Yet, when we say "yes" to whatever God wills for our lives, we discover peace.

A second essential characteristic of the Christian life is fidelity. Many episodes in Mary's life illustrate this quality. As she entered the house of Elizabeth, her cousin cried out, "Blessed is she who believed that God's promises would be fulfilled!" (Lk 1:45). Mary's faith never wavered as she witnessed astonishing events in the life of her divine son. Instead, she lovingly stored these mysteries

in her heart (cf. Lk 2:19). As Jesus began his public mission, Mary became his first and best disciple. In her goodness, she epitomized the Beatitudes. When Jesus said, "Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it," he was surely thinking first of his mother (Lk 11:28). In time, Mary's fidelity brought her to the foot of the cross, to Calvary, where she shared intimately in her son's passion and death.

It is all too easy for us leave the path of discipleship. Think of how many Catholics have abandoned the practice of the faith. Some claim they left because of scandal, others because they no longer feel it meets their needs, and still others because of social pressure. Mary urges us to cling to our faith for the long haul. Let us not be "fair-weather disciples"!

A third essential characteristic of the Christian life is spiritual fruitfulness. Mary exemplifies such fruitfulness by the virgin birth of her son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Yet, God the Father had in mind for her another form of motherhood: She was to be the Mother of the Church and the spiritual mother of each of the Lord's followers. As he hung upon the cross, Jesus said to the beloved disciple, John, "Behold your mother" (Jn 19:27). Even as Mary's heart was rent with sorrow, the full extent of her motherhood was revealed. She who gave birth to the savior became the "new Eve," who gave birth in the Church to countless disciples of the Lord, including you and me.

How are we to be spiritually fruitful? Each of us is called to attract new followers to the Lord and his Church. We are called to reinforce and deepen one another's faith, and to manifest in our lives the abundant gifts of the Holy Spirit. And we are called to transform the world around us.

During this month of May, let us turn to Mary with renewed devotion, asking her to lead us to her divine son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. ✚



'Mary did not understand all that the Incarnation would demand of her any more than we understand all that God asks of us. Yet, when we say "yes" to whatever God wills for our lives, we discover peace.'

Supreme Chaplain's Challenge

A monthly reflection and practical challenge from Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William E. Lori

“As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and remain in his love. ... This is my commandment: Love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” (Gospel for May 9, Jn 15:9-10, 12-13)

Christ tells us we will remain in his love if we keep his commandments. Saying you love someone can be easy, but it is really our deeds that reveal our love — or lack of it. Christ showed us how to love by his example and by sacrificing his very life for us. To love as Christ commands us to love demands action. The Letter of James says, “Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves” (1:22). May each of us commit to keeping the commandments and offering our very selves in service and sacrifice for others.



Challenge: This month, I challenge you to meditate on the meaning of the Ten Commandments in your life by picking a different one on 10 different days and praying about it for at least 10 minutes. Second, during this month devoted to our Blessed Mother, I challenge you to assist your council in implementing the Faith in Action Rosary program — showing your love of Christ by showing your love of Mary.

Catholic Man of the Month

Venerable Marie-Clément Staub (1876-1936)

EVEN AS A BOY, Joseph Staub wanted to be holy. He prayed daily, served at Mass often, and once went so far as to drink from the church’s baptismal font — reasoning, with a child’s logic, that holy water would be even more effective if consumed. His piety, enthusiasm and sense of purpose characterized the rest of his life.

Born in the Alsace region of France in 1876, Staub left home at 14 to study at seminary. He entered the Assumptionist order in 1896, taking the name Marie-Clément, and was later ordained at the Basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome in 1904.

When asked to go to America a few years later, Father Staub was initially reluctant. But in obedience he went, bringing with him a profound love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and affection for Joan of Arc, only recently beatified.

Based in Worcester, Mass., Father Staub led retreats and preached throughout New England and French Canada. He was a passionate and powerful speaker, and it was said that he spoke “as though he had himself seen the Sacred Heart.” He also zealously promoted the



Archconfraternity of Prayer and Penance, founded in France in 1894.

In 1914, Father Staub began a new mission, founding a congregation of religious sisters under the patronage of Joan of Arc, with a charism to pray for and serve the clergy. They settled in the Archdiocese of Québec in 1921 and grew dramatically in the years that followed.

Father Staub addressed the Sisters of St. Joan of Arc on May 16, 1936, the 16th anniversary of St. Joan’s canonization, asking, “What does it require ... to become a saint?” That same evening, he died of a fatal heart attack.

Pope Francis declared Father Marie-Clément Staub venerable in 2014. ✚

Liturgical Calendar

- May 1** St. Joseph the Worker
- May 3** Sts. Philip and James, Apostles
- May 13/16** The Ascension of the Lord
- May 14** St. Matthias, Apostle
- May 21** St. Christopher Magallanes, Priest, and Companions, Martyrs
- May 23** Pentecost Sunday
- May 24** The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church
- May 26** St. Philip Neri, Priest
- May 30** The Most Holy Trinity
- May 31** The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Holy Father’s Monthly Prayer Intention



Let us pray that those in charge of finance will work with governments to regulate the financial sphere and protect citizens from its dangers.





'Gifted to Give'

Knights join in jubilee celebrations marking 500 years of Christianity in the Philippines

By Brian Caulfield

Bishops across the Philippines opened the jubilee doors of their cathedrals on Easter Sunday, formally launching a yearlong celebration of the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Christianity on their shores. While attendance was limited by pandemic protocols, the faithful throughout the country, including Knights of Columbus and their families, celebrated in their local parishes.

In proclaiming a jubilee, and the plenary indulgence attached to it, the Church in the Philippines is not just commemorating a moment in history — the arrival of Ferdinand Magellan and the baptism of a local king and his wife in 1521. The bishops hope that the quincentenary of those historic events will also be a springboard to a more vibrant future. Since 2013, they have led a program of faith formation and evangelization that culminates this year under the banner “*Missio ad Gentes: Becoming Jesus’ Missionary Disciples.*”

In a video message to the Filipino people, Pope Francis reflected on the jubilee year’s theme — “Gifted to Give” — by citing Jesus’ words: “Without cost you received; without cost you are to give” (Mt 10:8).

Archbishop Jose Palma of Cebu participates in a jubilee procession April 4 with the renowned image of the Santo Niño (Holy Child) in Cebu City. The oldest Catholic icon in the Philippines, the image was a gift from Ferdinand Magellan to the local ruler and his wife on the occasion of their baptism April 14, 1521.

Photo by Sammy Navaja/Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines



Members of Manila Council 1000, which in 1905 became the first K of C council in the Philippines, gather following a Third Degree exemplification ceremony on April 27, 1947.

“These words are an invitation to thank God for all those who handed on the faith to you,” said the pope, who visited the Philippines in 2015. “I myself can testify that you know how to hand on the faith; it is something you do very well, whether in your own country or abroad.”

Despite the advance of secularism, particularly among the young, and influence from various Protestant denominations, as much as 86% of the population of 110 million claims affiliation with the Catholic Church.

In the coming months, Knights of Columbus councils in the Philippines will be involved in a wide variety of jubilee activities, including presentations on missionary outreach, evangelization and Church history — in addition to their many ongoing charitable works. With more than 470,000 members in nearly 3,500 councils spread throughout the archipelago, the Order has both a notable place in the country’s Catholic history and a prominent role in the Church’s future.

“We join our brothers and sisters in the Philippines in celebrating 500 years of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and his Church, said Supreme Knight Patrick E. Kelly. “I have long admired the profound faith exhibited by the Filipino people, and particularly my brother Knights of Columbus from the Philippines, to whom I send fraternal greetings on behalf of the whole Order. I thank God for that witness and pray that this anniversary, marking a half-millennium of Catholic faith, provides not only an opportunity for celebration, but also for renewal.”

EMBRACING THE FAITH

The story of the faith in the Philippines over the centuries has been one of grace and growth amid challenges. No institution has had a deeper and more positive effect on the Filipino people and their culture than the Catholic Church. Although the faith was brought with Spanish colonial rule, Filipinos took to Catholicism immediately and were able to separate the goodness of the faith from the sometimes oppressive actions of the government.

That reality is underscored by the fact that both canonized Filipino saints, St. Lorenzo Ruiz (1594-1637) and St. Pedro Calungsod (1654-1672), were laymen who died as martyrs, not from persecution in their homeland, but as missionaries to other Asian lands.

A history of Christianity in the Philippines written for the quincentenary notes, “That the first two saints produced by the Philippines were laypersons is no coincidence.” It continues by quoting the eminent historian Jesuit Father John Schumacher: “The religious life introduced by the missionaries was not a diluted version of European Christianity. ... Not mere individual conversions were sought for, but rather the creation of a Christian community.”

This emphasis on building strong Christian communities is a key reason the Knights of Columbus has flourished in the Philippines since the first council was founded in Manila in 1905. Many of the charter members of Council 1000 were

U.S. soldiers stationed in the capital after the Spanish-American War, but Filipino men were soon welcomed and quickly advanced to leadership positions. Jesuit Father George Willmann, known as “the Father McGivney of the Philippines,” would later observe that the heart of the Filipino man was conformed naturally to the principles of the Knights of Columbus (see sidebar).

A recent example of the social influence of the Church — as well as the role of Knights in Philippine history — took place in 1986, during the peaceful People Power uprising against President Ferdinand Marcos’ reign of martial law. In a radio broadcast, Cardinal Jaime Sin, then archbishop of Manila, asked the people to take to the streets to stop the advance of the military against protestors. Thousands turned

out with rosaries, and religious sisters knelt before tanks, as many soldiers abandoned their posts to pray with them.

Marcos was eventually exiled, and a new constitution was drafted; among those appointed to the job was Hilario Davide Jr., who later became chief justice of the Supreme Court. Now 85 years old, Davide is a longtime leader of Filipino Knights and served as chairman of KCFAPI, the Knights of Columbus fraternal insurance agency in the Philippines.

The Order continues to grow in large numbers in the Philippines — so much so that Luzon, which includes the capital of Manila, was divided into North and South in 2015 to make a total of four K of C jurisdictions. Knights are involved in numerous charitable works to serve the poorest in their country, including food programs for schools and

‘Father McGivney of the Philippines’

JESUIT FATHER GEORGE J. WILLMANN (1897-1977) was given the title “Servant of God” in 2015, when the Archdiocese of Manila opened his cause for canonization. He also has a less formal title, one that reflects the esteem he earned for his pivotal role in K of C history: “Father McGivney of the Philippines.”

John W. McDevitt, supreme knight from 1964 to 1977, once said: “I do not suppose there is any member of the Order, any priest of God, who is known more for his faith in Columbianism than the unofficial supreme knight of the Philippines, Father Willmann.”

Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., George Willmann entered the Society of Jesus in 1915 and during his formation was sent to the Philippines as a teacher. Falling in love with the country and its people, he asked to be assigned to the Jesuit mission there after his ordination. He arrived in Manila in 1936, where he joined Council 1000. He soon became convinced that the Knights of Columbus was key to forming men and their families in the Catholic faith and keeping them from Masonic associations.

When the Japanese invaded the islands in World War II, Father Willmann could have returned safely to the United States, but he chose to stay with his people, suffering near starvation in a prison camp. After the war, he led the Knights’ efforts to help rebuild the



Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, then archbishop of Manila, and former Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. (right), both longtime Knights, unveil a portrait of Jesuit Father George Willmann to celebrate the opening of his cause for canonization Dec. 7, 2015.

country and the Church, and petitioned the Supreme Council to expand operations. He became the national chaplain, district deputy and territorial deputy, and oversaw the creation of three jurisdictions, building up the Order to more than 450 councils with 30,000 members. He also founded Knights of Columbus Fraternal Association of the Philippines Inc. (KCFAPI), which continues to provide financial protection to

members and their families.

A few weeks after attending the 1977 Supreme Convention in Indianapolis, Father Willmann fell ill while visiting relatives and died peacefully Sept. 14 at the age of 80. The Supreme Council arranged for his body to be flown back to the Philippines, where he had served 44 years. A memorial Mass was offered for him in the Manila Cathedral, and he was interred in a Jesuit cemetery.



Bishop Broderick Pabillo, auxiliary bishop of Manila, opens the jubilee door of the Manila Cathedral on Easter Sunday, April 4. "This is the Lord's gate," he declared as he slowly pushed the massive doors. "Let us enter through it and obtain mercy and salvation."

families, and free medical and dental clinics. Knights also preserve the environment by planting trees and building ocean breakwaters in a land that suffers regular tropical storms. In the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, which struck the central portion of the archipelago with winds nearing 200 mph, Filipino Knights partnered with the Supreme Council to launch the Livelihood Project, which employed carpenters to build boats for fishermen who had lost their vessels to the storm.

QUINCENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

In anticipation of the official start of the jubilee year, Pope Francis offered Mass in St. Peter's Basilica on March 14, accompanied by Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples and the former archbishop of Manila. Speaking at the end of Mass, which was attended by Filipinos living in Rome, Cardinal Tagle emphasized the acceptance of Catholicism as a grace-filled response to God's gift.

"That the Christian faith was received by the majority of our people and given by them a Filipino character is God's gift," said the cardinal, who is a longtime member of the Knights. "Now the Philippines has the third largest number of Catholics in the world. This is truly God's gift. We attribute the enduring faith of the Filipino people only to God's love, mercy and fidelity, not to any merit of our own."

Anniversary events continued March 31, when clergy and pilgrims gathered



on Limasawa Island to commemorate the first recorded Mass. On April 14, the first baptism in the Philippines was reenacted in Cebu City in front of the Magellan Cross. The cross, which stands in the center of the city, is said to encase remnants of the original cross planted by Ferdinand Magellan on that spot. The same day, in the plaza beside the Basilica of Santo Niño, a Mass with a national ceremony for the renewal of baptismal promises was followed by a cultural exhibition to highlight the historic meeting of East and West.



A Fourth Degree honor guard from Bishop Vicente P. Reyes Assembly 3525 stands at attention after Bishop Crispin B. Varquez of Borongan — who serves as Visayas state chaplain — opens the jubilee door of the Cathedral of the Nativity of Our Lady in Borongan City, Eastern Samar, on Easter Sunday.

Filipino Knights will continue to mark the quincentenary in different ways throughout the year; among the events planned so far are a series of talks given by Filipinos serving as missionaries abroad, historical lectures and twice-monthly virtual pilgrimages.

The Order’s anniversary commemorations in the Philippines are being led by Jose C. Reyes, former Luzon North deputy and now a member of the Knights of Columbus Board of Directors.

“The jubilee year theme, ‘Gifted to Give,’ highlights the call to all, rich and poor alike, to share whatever gifts they have received from God, since all Catholics have a mission of evangelization,” said Reyes, a recently retired justice on the Philippine Supreme Court. “People’s desire to reach others will translate into concrete action of sharing God’s love and letting people know more about God, not only in our own country but beyond.”

In a pastoral letter marking the anniversary, Archbishop Romulo Valles of Davao, president of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the

Philippines and a former state chaplain of Mindanao, also underlined the need to look forward as well as back during the jubilee year. “We pray for a missionary renewal of our Church,” he wrote, “both at home (*ad intra*) and beyond our borders (*ad extra*) during our celebration of the 500 years — and into the future!”

Noting that the faith was brought by Spanish missionaries traveling with Magellan, Archbishop Valles pointed out that Christianity has nonetheless never been perceived as a religion imposed on the people.

“Five centuries ago we received the marvelous gift of the Christian faith; our hearts overflow with joy and gratitude,” he affirmed. “Why of all the nations and peoples in Asia was the Philippines chosen by God to be among the first to receive this precious gift? The clear answer is simply this: God’s magnanimous, overflowing love.” ✝

BRIAN CAULFIELD is editor of Fathers for Good and vice postulator for the canonization cause of Blessed Michael McGivney.

Blessed by the Blood of Martyrs

A new shrine in Guadalajara draws Knights and other pilgrims to venerate the Mexican martyrs

By Elisha Valladares-Cormier

“**V**iva Cristo Rey!” “Viva la Virgen de Guadalupe!” Almost a century after these fervent cries of the Mexican martyrs vocalized an unwavering love for the Catholic faith, they continue to be proclaimed by Catholics around the country.

Atop Guadalajara’s Cerro del Tesoro (“Treasure Hill”) sits the Sanctuary of the Martyrs of Christ the King, a massive monument dedicated to those who were killed during the 1920s persecution of Catholics by the Mexican government. It is the first site to permanently house relics of all the canonized and beatified Mexican martyrs. Among them are nine Knights of Columbus, including six priest-martyrs whose feast is celebrated May 21. Construction on the shrine began in 2007; though the work is not finished yet, it has already become an important place of pilgrimage for the Knights and other Catholic faithful in Mexico.

The shrine church features a unique roof with three overlapping domes — the highest of which stands almost 200 feet tall — and a stunning 164-foot stained-glass window, the largest in Latin America. The Sanctuary of the Martyrs completes a triangle of Catholic holy sites in Mexico, along with the Cristo Rey Shrine in Guanajuato and the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City.

“What we want is for pilgrims to have an encounter with God,” said Father Gerardo Aviña Ortiz, rector of the shrine. “Such an encounter that they return to their families and daily lives strengthened to continue testifying to the faith as the martyrs did so long ago.”

Francisco Alonso Moreno, state deputy of Mexico West, said that Knights and their families see the shrine as a source of spiritual inspiration and strength.

“Knowing the lives of these holy martyrs cultivates a deep devotion,” said Moreno. “Their intercession is

requested by members of the Knights of Columbus and their families throughout Mexico. By sharing the testimony of these martyrs, we promote a vision of living lives of a charity that evangelizes.”

‘CHURCH OF THE CATACOMBS’

In the 1920s, Mexican President Plutarco Elías Calles embarked on a campaign to eliminate what he considered to be the “fanatical” influence of the Catholic Church. Beginning in 1926, Calles implemented a series of anti-clerical laws significantly restricting the religious liberty of Mexicans and harshly punishing priests and laity who dared to defy his orders.

No practicing Catholic was safe from the government’s persecution. In many cases, the slightest hesitance to answer a government official’s question could spell one’s doom. And if it were discovered that a man was a Knight of Columbus, a death sentence was even more likely.

“When the soldiers, the *federales*, would come into the towns, they would ask two questions: Where is the priest? Where are the Knights of Columbus?” said Francisco Sáenz, director of fraternal mission in Mexico and a member of San Ignacio de Loyola Council 16799 in Querétaro. “Catholics were brutally

murdered for their defense of religious freedom. The Church in Mexico became a Church of the catacombs.”

Pope Pius XI’s proclamation of the feast of Christ the King in 1925 became especially significant.

“One year after Pius celebrated this feast for the universal Church, we were commemorating the feast with the shedding of the blood of our martyrs,” Sáenz explained. “How fitting that the last words of many martyrs was that same title of Our Lord. Their blood liberated us, purified us, and taught us how we should live out our faith.”





Opposite page: A painting by Mexican artist Martha Orozco portrays the six Knights of Columbus priest-martyrs who were canonized in 2000. Depicted clockwise from top: Father Miguel de la Mora de la Mora, Father José María Robles Hurtado, Father Mateo Correa Magallanes, Father Luis Batiz Saínz, Father Rodrigo Aguilar Alemán and Father Pedro de Jesús Maldonado Lucero. • From top: Mexican martyrs Jorge and Ramón Vargas González and Luis Padilla Gómez are carried in coffins for burial after being executed in Guadalajara by firing squad on April 1, 1927. They were beatified with 10 others in Guadalajara in 2005. • Mexican Knights and their families pray the rosary during their first annual pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of the Martyrs of Christ the King in Guadalajara in 2016.

St. José María Robles Hurtado was one such martyr. A brilliant young priest from Guadalajara, he founded a religious community now known as the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, constructed schools and hospitals, and wrote prolifically championing the faith in a way that the government considered dangerous.

He was also a member of Council 1979 in Guadalajara and had an affinity with the Order's founder, Blessed Michael McGivney.

"Father Robles identified very much with Father McGivney," said Mother Rosa of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart. "He wanted to join the Knights because of his great work of charity for those most in need, like Father McGivney did with his Knights."

On a summer day in 1927, Father Robles was arrested as he prepared to celebrate Mass. Early the next morning, as he was brought to the tree from which he would soon hang, he forgave his executioners and even placed the noose around his own neck so that someone else would not have to.

As stories of executions such as Father Robles' were made known, Catholics all over the world sought ways to support the persecuted Mexican faithful. The Knights of Columbus was at the forefront, spreading awareness of the Mexican Church's plight and raising \$1 million in 1926, a huge sum at the time, to support refugees and exiles. These efforts were recognized by Pope Pius XI, who praised the Order in his 1926 encyclical *Iniquis Afflictisque* for its work promoting Catholic education and the National League for the Defense of Religious Liberty, which aided Mexican Catholics in presenting "a united invincible front to the enemy."

THE FRUITS OF FAITH

Long after Calles' regime was overthrown and religious restrictions were slowly lifted, the lives of Catholics who had died for their faith remained a source of hope for the Mexican Church.

St. John Paul II, who had lived through totalitarian regimes and religious persecution in Poland, wanted the lives of the martyrs examined so that they might be proclaimed blessed and saints. He eventually canonized 25 of the martyrs, including St. José María Robles Hurtado and five other K of C priests, in 2000. Five years later, Pope Benedict XVI beatified 13 more Mexican martyrs, including two priests and a layman who were Knights. More than 60,000 people attended the beatification Mass in Guadalajara.

While relics of several martyrs could be venerated in many places, there was nowhere someone could venerate and pray before all of them. Cardinal Juan Sandoval Íñiguez, archbishop of Guadalajara from 1994-2011, decided that such a place needed to be built, and that Guadalajara was the proper place for it.

"Guadalajara has long been a lung of our faith as Mexican Catholics," explained Sáenz. "It is in a region blessed with the blood of many martyrs and a spiritual bastion for our Catholic Church in Mexico, Latin America and the whole world."

Thanks to the generosity of many donors, including \$2 million in grants and a subsequent \$1 million loan from the Supreme Council, construction on the Sanctuary of the Martyrs of Christ the King began in 2007. When fully completed, it will include a shrine church that can accommodate 12,000 people and an atrium for 50,000 more, as



Photo by Aaron Ortiz

The Sanctuary of the Martyrs of Christ the King, pictured here in 2018, is being built on Cerro del Tesoro (Treasure Hill), south of central Guadalajara.



A crucifix stands in front of the 164-foot stained-glass window of the Sanctuary of the Martyrs' shrine church. At right, Jorge Ricardo Sevilla González, a member of San Pablo Council 15284 in Zapopan, Mexico West, venerates relics of the Mexican martyrs with his wife and son.

well as a retreat center, making it the largest shrine complex in Mexico.

Two reliquaries with relics of the canonized and beatified martyrs are housed at the shrine. One remains there at all times, but Knights bring the other to parishes all over the country. Upon arriving at a parish, the reliquary is often greeted with cheers and fanfare from Catholics eager to pray with the martyrs.

“The Knights of Columbus, through this great apostolate, spreads the message of the Mexican martyrs throughout the country and beyond,” said Father Ortiz. “The martyrs are Mexican, but they belong to the universal Church. The martyrs are a fruit of the faith of the people.”

K of C leaders in Mexico also began an annual tradition in 2016. In June, Knights throughout Mexico and their families set out for the shrine on pilgrimage. Participants prayed the rosary as they marched down the hill, before attending Mass and venerating the relics at the shrine church. The 2020 pilgrimage was held virtually due to the pandemic, and K of C leaders are preparing for virtual participation this year as well.

“The Mexican martyrs gave testimony of their faith, and today our society asks for witnesses who live out

that same faith,” said Father Eduardo Salcedo Becerra, state chaplain of Mexico West. “Catholics are called to be creative, active and committed. We see that in the holy martyrs, and we also see it in those who embrace the Knights of Columbus.”

Father Salcedo also sees a close connection between the Mexican saints and blessed and Father Michael McGivney, who has joined them in being raised to the honor of the altars.

“Father McGivney, like the Mexican martyrs, knew how to transform the reality of his time with the teachings of the Gospel, transforming injustice and oppression through faith and charity,” he said.

More than 130 years since Father McGivney’s death and nearly a century since the Mexican martyrs sacrificed their lives, Knights are similarly called to put their faith into action.

“We must live our faith, but we must also transform our community,” Sáenz affirmed. “We must have the audacity, the courage, of the martyrs to take risks for the good, for the service of others.” ✝

ELISHA VALLADARES-CORMIER is a freelance writer from Vermilion, Ohio, and a member of Bishop John Mussio Council 9804 at the Franciscan University of Steubenville.



'BY HIS CROSS WE HAVE BEEN SAVED'

A new book features reflections by Pope Francis about the world facing a pandemic

Raising the Blessed Sacrament in a monstrance over a deserted St. Peter's Square on March 27, 2020, Pope Francis gave a blessing "to the city and to the world" (*Urbi et Orbi*). He also venerated an ancient icon, *Maria Salus Populi Romani* (Mary, Protectress and Health of the Roman People), and kissed the feet of a miraculous medieval crucifix.

"Kissing the feet of the Crucified Christ always gives hope," the pope later recounted. "He knows what it means to walk, and he knows all about quarantine because they put two nails there to keep him there. Jesus' feet are a compass for people's lives."

The extraordinary moment of prayer was broadcast

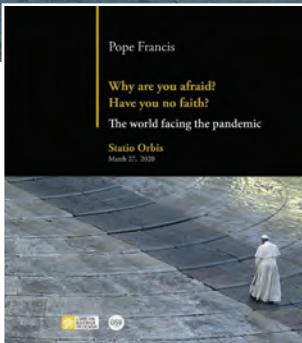
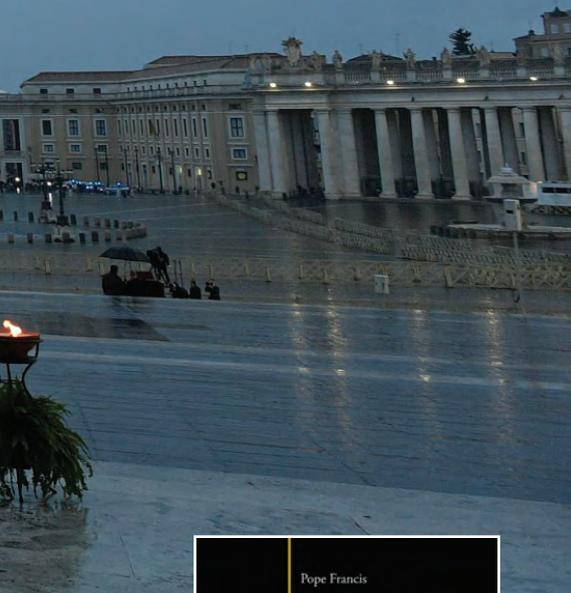
around the world with Knights of Columbus support.

More than a year later, the Holy Father's blessing and meditation remain a sign of hope for a suffering world. To commemorate the unprecedented event, the Vatican Publishing House (*Libreria Editrice Vaticana*) has published a book titled *Why Are You Afraid? Have You No Faith?* In addition to numerous photographs, together with the pope's March 27 meditation and reflections on the event, the book features a variety of the pope's homilies, messages and general audiences during the past year, as well as excerpts from his latest encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti* (*Brothers All*).

The Vatican partnered with various publishers to release the book in multiple languages this past March. ✚

Pope Francis delivers his meditation during the extraordinary moment of prayer before a deserted St. Peter's Square March 27, 2020.

Top right: During the March 2020 event, the Holy Father venerates a miraculous crucifix that was carried through Rome in 1522 to end a plague.



The English-language version of *Why Are You Afraid? Have You No Faith?* was recently published by Our Sunday Visitor. Visit osvatholicbookstore.com.



“In the midst of isolation when we are suffering from a lack of tenderness and chances to meet up, and we experience the loss of so many things, let us once again listen to the proclamation that saves us: he is risen and is living by our side.

“The Lord asks us from his cross to rediscover the life that awaits us, to look towards those who look to us, to strengthen, recognize and foster the grace that lives within us. Let us not quench the wavering flame (cf. Is 42:3) that never falters, and let us allow hope to be rekindled.

“Embracing his cross means finding the courage to embrace all the hardships of the present time, abandoning for a moment our eagerness for power and possessions in order to make room for the creativity that only the Spirit is capable of inspiring.

“It means finding the courage to create spaces where everyone can recognize that they are called, and to allow new forms of hospitality, fraternity and solidarity.

“By his cross we have been saved in order to embrace hope and let it strengthen and sustain all measures and all possible avenues for helping us protect ourselves and others. Embracing the Lord in order to embrace hope: that is the strength of faith, which frees us from fear and gives us hope.”

Pope Francis, from St. Peter's Square, March 27, 2020



Our Founder's Polish Pilgrimage

*A yearlong tour of Blessed Michael McGivney's relics
in Poland promotes faith and charity*

By Tomasz Adamski

From the very beginning of his priesthood, Father Michael J. McGivney faced many concerns and challenges. Chief among them was that many of the men of his parish, St. Mary's Church in New Haven, Conn., were nowhere to be seen.

In the biography *Parish Priest: Father McGivney and American Catholicism*, historians Douglas Brinkley and Julie Fenster write, "Every time he looked out over the pews ... the ranks of the male parishioners were pathetically thin, except for the boys and the old men. St. Mary's looked like a church in wartime."

Blessed Michael McGivney wanted to find the lost sheep, and this desire guided his entire ministry. Today, more than 130 years after his death, his presence is bringing together Catholic men and their families 4,000 miles away from New Haven, thanks to his spiritual heirs in Poland.

On Feb. 21, Polish K of C leaders began a yearlong pilgrimage of Blessed Michael McGivney's relics that will visit 200 sites throughout the country — including each its 146 councils.

Knights, their families and other pilgrims are gathering to attend Mass in the presence of his relics and entrust their intentions to him. The relic pilgrimage has also been an opportunity to promote works of mercy, especially charitable pro-life work, and to build devotion to an exemplary priest who offered himself completely in service to his flock.

"Father McGivney was a priest close to people, a priest who knew their problems," said Poland State Deputy Krzysztof Zuba. "That is why so many Catholics, also in Poland, see him as a model priest who is concerned about parishioners' troubles, who looks for solutions and offers them wise help."

Father Wiesław Lenartowicz, associate state chaplain, likewise affirmed, "We are convinced that Father McGivney's mission and the work of the Knights are a response to the challenges of the modern world — and an answer for priests and men who are seeking a path of deeper faith and service."

THE POWER OF PILGRIMAGE

Since the first K of C councils were chartered in Poland in January 2006, Polish Knights have specialized in organizing pilgrimages of relics and sacred images.

In 2012, an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the centerpiece of the Knights of Columbus Marian Prayer Program at the time, reached more than 250,000 people in Polish parishes. About five years later, Knights organized a pilgrimage of St. Albert Chmielowski's relics to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Polish brother's death. More recently, councils widely promoted the icon of Our Lady Help of Persecuted Christians to increase awareness of persecution in the Middle East. While each of these initiatives engaged tens of thousands of people, the current pilgrimage of Father McGivney's relics is of particular importance to the Polish Knights.

"The phenomenon of a relic pilgrimage means that a saint or blessed comes to meet you," explained State Advocate Stanisław Dziwiński, who is coordinating the national tour. "In this case, Father McGivney wants to visit and help people, just as he did in his lifetime."

Each local council will host a first-class relic for approximately a week. During this time, the Knights with their chaplains organize prayers and other events, and set up an informational display to present their founder's life and mission to fellow parishioners. The pilgrimage has also received national media



Opposite page: Knights gather at a church in Rawa Mazowiecka, a town in central Poland, welcoming a first-class relic of Blessed Michael McGivney to their community in early April. • Above: A panel of an exhibit about Father McGivney's life and legacy is seen at a church in Radom, Poland, as parishioners listen to a homily by Father Wiesław Lenartowicz, associate state chaplain.



Left: Bishop Marek Solarczyk of Radom and K of C chaplains genuflect before Mass, celebrated in February to inaugurate the Blessed Michael McGivney relic tour. • Above: Past State Deputy Tomasz Wawrzukowicz (second from right) and other K of C leaders participate in a press conference about Father McGivney and the relic pilgrimage in the Diocese of Rzeszów.

coverage; the country's largest TV station broadcast the K of C-produced documentary *Father McGivney: An American Blessed* in February, shortly after the relic tour began.

Thus far, only local parishes have hosted the relics, and pandemic restrictions have strictly limited the number of pilgrims at any given time. Nonetheless, thousands have already participated in the prayer services. Larger venues, such as the Divine Mercy Shrine in Kraków, are scheduled for later in the year.

"I watched the moments of personal veneration of the relics with great emotion," Dziwiński said. "It wasn't just the Knights who prayed there. I remember pregnant women; I also remember an elderly woman who had difficulty with moving, but she came up, and with her eyes fixed on the image of our founder, she prayed for a long time."

Knights encourage the faithful to entrust their intentions to Father McGivney's intercession and write down their prayer requests. In recent months, the Father Michael J. McGivney Guild has received hundreds of these requests from Poland, asking Father McGivney's prayers for intentions such as healing from diseases, reconciliation in the family and the

return of loved ones to faith.

"Catholics who learn about his life see him as someone who built a parish community in difficult times and helped parishioners find solutions to their problems," explained Zuba. "He is a source of hope for all of us. To whom should we turn in times of difficulties? To someone who has the experience in overcoming them!"

Through the national relic tour, Knights in Poland also want to highlight Father McGivney's close collaboration with the laity, emphasizing the unity between the laity and the clergy in carrying out the Church's missionary work.

"The ongoing pilgrimage is a proof for priests that they're not alone; they have an intercessor in heaven, and devoted men standing next to them," said Zuba. "The pilgrimage is a chance to introduce Father McGivney to priests at a time when the Church and priesthood are under attack."

IN DEFENSE OF LIFE

The miracle that led to the beatification of Father McGivney — the healing of Michael "Mikey" Schachle in utero — was hailed as a "pro-life miracle." In Poland, Mikey's story acquired special meaning.

Last fall, just as Knights of Columbus around the world celebrated Father McGivney's beatification, street protests were held in Poland demanding broader access to abortion. Knights and other Catholics in Poland embraced the miraculous healing of Mikey as sign of inspiration to act in defense of life.

"God confirmed [Father McGivney's] sanctity with a miracle healing an unborn child from a terminal disease. Isn't that a sign from God for the modern world?" asked Archbishop Wacław Depo of Częstochowa, Poland state chaplain, during his homily at a Mass of Thanksgiving in Jasna Góra Monastery, Nov. 8.

Andrzej Anasiak, past state deputy and representative of the Father Michael J. McGivney Guild in Poland, echoed these sentiments.

"A saint is often a sign for a generation — and we received a very strong sign," he said. "In a world where the culture of death seems to dominate, we received confirmation from the Lord that every life is sacred and to God nothing is impossible."

At the urging of Archbishop Depo, the Knights in Poland have taken the pilgrimage of Father McGivney's relics as an opportunity to intensify their



‘Every priest who is wondering today how to renew his parish can look at the example and path laid out by Blessed Michael McGivney.’

Archbishop Wacław Depo of Częstochowa, Poland state chaplain

pro-life efforts. At each stage of the tour, councils are collecting diapers, clothes, towels, hygiene products and funds for pro-life initiatives. Knights direct the donations to Catholic organizations such as hospices for children, orphanages or homes for single mothers, or to specific people and families in need.

Among the first beneficiaries was a home for women run by Caritas in the Archdiocese of Częstochowa. It currently houses 15 pregnant women or mothers with children, most of whom have experienced poverty or suffered violence and rejection.

“These gifts have definitely raised the standard of living of the women we care for in our center and were a source of great joy,” said Father Marek Bator, a member of Primate Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński Council 15672 and director of Caritas in Częstochowa. “Thanks to this initiative, these women see a different, new image of men and society, because someone has finally reached out to them with

dignity and love.”

The enthusiastic participation of the faithful in the relic pilgrimage is a cause of joy for Knights in Poland, who believe that Blessed Michael McGivney’s witness transcends the Order and speaks to the needs of our time.

“Although Father McGivney lived in the 19th century in distant America, the pastoral problems he faced resemble the most current challenges Catholic parishes in Poland and other European countries are facing now,” wrote Archbishop Depo in a letter to Polish priests at the start of the relic tour. “Every priest who is wondering today how to renew his parish can look at the example and path laid out by Blessed Michael McGivney.”

As State Deputy Zuba has said, “By presenting the legacy of Father McGivney, we show living proof that a holy priest can change the world.” ✚

TOMASZ ADAMSKI writes from Kraków, Poland, where he is a member of St. Brother Albert Chmielowski Council 15128.

OPENING DOORS TO BROTHERHOOD

*Chinese Canadian Knights grow in faith and numbers
through intergenerational service initiatives*

By Agnieszka Ruck

Founding a Knights of Columbus council at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Vancouver was no simple task. Only 15 years ago, hardly anyone in the parish — home to a vibrant community of Chinese immigrants and their families — had even heard of the Knights.

“It was not an easy job because nobody knew what the Knights were about,” recalled Koon Ming Lau, a charter member of St. Francis Xavier Council 10500.

Now you could call Council 10500 — the first Chinese council in British Columbia — the backbone of the parish. Since 2006, the St. Francis Xavier Knights have been raising funds, planning events and supplying volunteers for just about every area of parish life. In the same time, the council has grown from about 40 members to more than 170, and found ways to bridge gaps of culture, language and technology to mentor a new generation of younger Knights.



Webster Licaros, Marcus Wong and Vance Licaros (left to right) of St. Francis Xavier Council 10500 dish up meals April 10 to deliver to The Door is Open, an archdiocesan ministry that supports people experiencing homelessness.



Clockwise, from above left: Past State Deputy Koon Ming Lau works a video camera as he and other Knights of Council 10500 livestream Mass from St. Francis Xavier Parish. • Grand Knight Ambrose Ng (left) and Isaac Mak unload meals at The Door is Open. • Past Grand Knight Christopher Chen distributes palms on Palm Sunday in the parking garage of St. Francis Xavier Church. Due to pandemic restrictions, parishioners drove to the church after a livestreamed Mass to receive holy Communion and contribute to the collection.

By serving the parish practically, the Knights are also serving the Church spiritually, said Lau, who went on to serve as grand knight of the council and later as state deputy of British Columbia.

“The Knights of Columbus is a bridge between the Church and the younger generations,” Lau said. “We are in a role of evangelization — to bring the young parishioners back to the Church, especially those in university, and keep the young brothers and young families active in the parish and the local communities, so they have a sense of belonging and practicing their Catholic faith.”

A GROWING COMMUNITY

Council 10500 was born in a time of transition for St. Francis Xavier. The

oldest Chinese parish in the Archdiocese of Vancouver, it was founded in a house in Vancouver’s Chinatown in 1933 and later moved to a church nearby.

The parish grew throughout the 20th century, expanding its elementary school and adding a day care and a senior care home. It also opened a school for teaching English to new immigrants from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, who have arrived in Vancouver in a steady stream since the early 1990s. (Today, 20% of Vancouver’s population identifies as Chinese, and nearly 70% of Canadians of Asian heritage are first-generation immigrants.) With parish activities scattered at different addresses, then-pastor Father Aloysius Lou dreamed of uniting them in one

place. At the turn of the new millennium, his dream started coming true.

The elementary school moved to a new building, and plans were made to build a church on the lot next door. In 2004, the community began celebrating Mass in the school gymnasium, and the new church opened in late 2008, exactly 75 years after the parish was first established.

It was during this historic time that Council 10500 was chartered, but not without difficulty. It took Father Lou and the district deputy six months of weekly recruiting to attract enough men to start a council. Most parishioners were unfamiliar with the Order; some were unfamiliar with the very concept of a fraternal Catholic brotherhood openly

gathering, serving and recruiting, which is not possible in mainland China.

When a Knights of Columbus council was formed at St. Francis Xavier Parish, Koon Ming Lau, who was born in Hong Kong and moved to Canada in 1988, was one of the few parishioners who was already a Knight. He had joined the Order a few years earlier with his father, at the urging of a K of C field agent.

“The agent said, ‘It’s better if you join with your father because you can be the translator.’ That’s how I joined!” recalled Lau with a laugh.

Once Council 10500 was established in 2006, the Knights at St. Francis Xavier quickly made themselves known. They carried furniture into the gym each week for Mass; volunteered as readers and ushers; and helped to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars toward the new church building. And since St. Francis Xavier Assembly 3315 was established in 2012, Fourth Degree Knights have provided honor guards for weddings, funerals and baptisms.

“Today the Knights are in every ministry possible,” said Past Grand Knight

Christopher Chen, now a district deputy. “They’re probably at every Mass, in every choir, religious studies teachers, everything.”

Though the council occasionally has recruitment drives, Past State Deputy Lau finds that maintaining a constant presence is a more effective strategy to attract members.

“We don’t say, ‘Hey, why don’t you join?’ We build relationships, slowly, ask if they have heard about the Knights, and if not, share a few stories.”

Father Michael McGivney’s mission



Anthony Chow takes a jump shot on the basketball court outside St. Francis Xavier Church in April. Council 10500 organized a basketball program about a decade ago to help recruit younger parishioners. The team now competes against other K of C councils in an annual tournament.

to serve widows and orphans usually strikes a chord, as does the council's volunteer work outside the parish, such as its support of The Door Is Open, a soup kitchen serving the homeless in downtown Vancouver.

The Knights have bolstered community life, raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for the parish and for charity, and assisted their pastor in innumerable ways. Their continuous growth and charitable work have earned Council 10500 the Star Council Award or Double Star Council Award every year since 2007.



Photo by Sandra Leung/Victoria Photography

BUILDING BRIDGES

As Lau was finishing his term as grand knight in 2010, something was bothering him: Who, he wondered, would run the council 10 or 20 years later? It was time to recruit a new generation of Knights. Lau suggested a basketball tournament.

Chen was in his mid-20s when Lau recruited him to run a basketball program and invited him to join the Knights.

"I was totally out of my comfort zone. I didn't know anyone except for one officer," said Chen, a life coach who was born and raised in Vancouver. "They were the older demographic, with a different way of thinking. They were successful, but the generation gap was too far at the time, for me at least."

Nonetheless, Chen liked basketball, and he didn't mind helping out at an annual car wash to raise funds for the homeless, either. Older Knights encouraged him to become more involved, come to meetings and carve out a place for himself and other younger members.

In 2018, Chen became the council's first grand knight under age 40. He focused on recruiting young members and encouraging them to become part of council leadership. Now, the council has members from 18 to 80 years old; about 40% are under 45 and 20% are under 35. Some are the children or grandchildren of older members.

For 40-year-old lawyer Ambrose Ng, who succeeded Chen as grand knight in 2020, it's an accomplishment worth celebrating, as well as a significant challenge. A Hong Kong native who has lived in Canada since age 8, Ng often navigates cultural differences between older Chinese immigrants who prefer to communicate by phone and speak Cantonese (though most also speak English), and younger parishioners, who have grown up in Canada and prefer to communicate over social media or text message, and in English.

The older generation also tends to value long-held traditions and like to participate in honor guards and regular business meetings, he said, whereas many younger members would prefer to take active volunteer roles than take minutes.

"Communication is always a bit interesting," said Ng, who speaks both English and Cantonese. "When I'm in the hot seat as the grand knight, how am I going to communicate to the elders and the younger membership and make sure everybody's talking to each other?"

This can be an especially delicate task given the council membership's cultural background.

"Because of our Chinese heritage, there is a lot of respect and deference and following the ways of your elders," said Ng. "We're trying to respect that, as well as bring in new ideas. Young members make sure the Knights stay relevant to our parish, our community."

The COVID-19 pandemic has made the council's work even more challenging, as the Knights haven't been able to meet in person or host regular events. In response, tech-savvy members have helped to organize a weekly rosary over videoconference. The council is also helping the church's annual sing-a-thon and auction to take place virtually, to keep connections alive and fundraise in a difficult time for the parish. Knights serve as ushers when St. Francis Xavier Church is open for Mass at limited capacity and as video technicians when Mass is livestreamed.

Though Chen was unsure about the Knights at first, he's grateful he took the leap of faith.

"I wouldn't trade this experience for anything. If people are concerned about not knowing what to do at first — well, I didn't know either," he said. "But I was open to God's call and he opened up all these doors for me to do his work, to receive all these blessings, from meeting new people and impacting people's lives to being a mentor and example for the younger generation to follow and keep this council going."

He added, "I'm very appreciative of the members before us who paved the way with their time and work and gave us the opportunity to serve." ✚

AGNIESZKA RUCK writes for the Canadian Catholic News and the *B.C. Catholic*, the newspaper of the Archdiocese of Vancouver.



Members of Bishop Foley Council 2660 in Dearborn, Mich., and other parishioners pray the rosary for the intention of healing and peace throughout the nation. The rosary, which is prayed between Sunday Masses at the Church of the Divine Child, is organized and led by the Knights on fifth Sundays throughout the year.

PETITIONS FOR A BROTHER

Msgr. Joseph A. Kerin Council 12654 in Huntersville, N.C., held a rosary prayer vigil for Grand Knight Vince Famularo, who had been hospitalized in the intensive care unit with COVID-19. Members also sought the intercession of Blessed Michael McGivney for Famularo, who recovered from the virus.

SEMINARIAN ON THE MOVE

Arkansas City (Kan.) Council 2614 purchased a refurbished car for Thomas Prater, a council member in his first year of seminary. The donation will help Prater travel between the St. Joseph House of Formation in Wichita and his classes at Newman University, and allow him to make visits home.

ULTRASCAN INITIATIVE

St. Gianna Beretta Molla Council 14749 in Brampton, Ontario, donated a scanner to St. Anne's Catholic Church to help the parish comply with pandemic safety regulations. The device reads each entrant's body temperature and detects whether or not the person is wearing a mask.

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE DONATION

Father Norbert Lukes, OSB Council 4598 in Harrah, Okla., raffled off a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe to raise money for seminarians and the Knights of Columbus Ultrasound Initiative. The council raised nearly \$4,000, and the recipient of the statue donated it to Our Lady of Sorrows Parish in Chandler.

PARISHIONER OF THE YEAR

St. Angela Council 9511 in Brea, Calif., held a ceremony after Mass to honor its Parishioner of the Year, Rebecca Rodríguez. Grand Knight Tino Garcia and Father David Klunk, council chaplain, presented Rodríguez with an award for her nearly 30 years of service to St. Angela Merici Parish

OUR LADY INSTALLATION

Members of St. Teresa of Calcutta Council 15456 in Limerick, Pa., installed an antique statue of the Blessed Mother at Arcadia at Limerick Pointe, a retirement community affiliated with St. Teresa of Calcutta Parish. The statue, believed to be nearly 100 years old, was donated by the parish.



Faith

PREP FOR THE SACRED SEASON

Members of National Shrine of the Sacred Heart Council 5576 in Makati City, Luzon South, painted social distancing guides on the church parking lot in preparation for increased attendance during Lent and Holy Week.



Louis Sheffield (left) and James Batchelder, members of Potomac Assembly 2204 in Alexandria, Va., accept religious articles to touch to a reliquary containing first-class relics of St. Pio of Pietrelcina at the Basilica of St. Mary. Assembly members guarded the relics while they were hosted at the basilica and presented them to more than 900 visitors for veneration.



Family

SPECIAL DELIVERIES

Montebello (Calif.) Council 3429 assembled and delivered packages with food and toys for 10 families struggling due to the pandemic.



A member of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Council 12094 in Quipayo, Calabanga, Camarines Sur, Luzon South, serves food to children as part of a hunger relief program for families.

KINGS PARK CLOTHING DRIVE

Father John G. Seyfried Council 821 in Kings Park, N.Y., held its annual clothing drive for the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Together with student volunteers from Kings Park and Hauppauge high schools, members collected more than 5,000 pounds of donated items, the largest yield in recent years.

BATHURST BOUNTY

Msgr. William Varrily Council 12031 in Bathurst, New Brunswick, sponsored a drive-thru collection of food and cash donations in the Holy Family Church parking lot. All donations went to the Bathurst Volunteer Centre, a family social services nonprofit.

FAMILY MINISTRY ONLINE

To strengthen the domestic church in the midst of the pandemic, St. Sebastian Council 14255 in Akron, Ohio, established an online family faith ministry. Each month's virtual session features a Scripture study and a lesson from Blessed Michael McGivney's life.

HOME REPAIRED

Members of Richmond (Texas) Council 7445 organized a home repair project for the widow of a past grand knight. The council raised more than \$20,000 from members and Sacred Heart Catholic Church parishioners

for materials. Then, nearly 50 Knights, family members and friends completed extensive exterior and interior repairs and repainted the outside of the house.

NEVADA FAMILY FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS

Members of Msgr. Patrick J. Connors Council 4997 in Reno, Nev., regularly assist with Catholic Charities food distributions at Our Lady of the Snows Parish. The semimonthly events have served a growing number of families.

FOR FAMILIES AND FIRST RESPONDERS

Members of George Brent Council 5332 in Manassas, Va., cooked and packaged approximately 125 breakfasts, serving them to families in need at a parish drive-thru event and delivering them to police officers and firefighters at their stations.



Robert Roy (left), a member of St. Stephen's Council 2284 in Winooski, Vt., and his son, Zachary, prepare boards to be assembled into beds for local families in need. Knights and other volunteers constructed 36 beds in one day of work — a project done in partnership with the nonprofit Sleep in Heavenly Peace.



Jason Kinnison, a member of St. James Council 10895 in Omaha, Neb., serves a customer at one of the council's annual Lenten fish fry dinners at St. James/Seton Catholic School. Proceeds from the dinners fund various council programs.



Community

LAWN CARE ASSISTANCE

St. John Council 11281 in Naples, Fla., arranged for a lawn care company to donate ongoing services for a neighbor in a wheelchair who had difficulty maintaining her property on her own. Facing a fine for overgrown grass, she reached out to the Knights for help.

WASTE NOT, WANT NOT

Hanover Council 871 and San Jose Council 16069, both in Hanover, Pa., donated the food from their Lenten parish dinners, canceled due to the pandemic, to the free meal ministry of the Hanover Area Council of Churches.

AGAPE DONATION

Charleswood Council 7523 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, held a hunger relief drive at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church, collecting \$1,000 and more than 1,000 pounds of food and hygiene items. The Knights donated everything to Agape Table, a local charity offering meals and other services to people in need.

FURNISHING VETS

Members of St. Michael the Archangel Assembly 3244 in Boise, Idaho, regularly pick up and deliver donated furniture to Boise Rescue Mission Ministries, which provides free transitional housing and meals to chronically homeless veterans. The assembly has obtained numerous couches, beds and tables for the residents.

WARMTH FOR A WIDOW

St. Joseph's Council 3402 in Keyport, N.J., helped the wife of a deceased Knight who had lost hot water in her home. She reached out to Grand Knight Wayne Szaro, who enlisted two council members to replace her old water heater with a new one.

WREATHS ACROSS BIRMINGHAM

Rev. James F. O'Reilly Assembly 2507 in Birmingham, Ala., participated in the Wreaths Across America program for the fifth consecutive year. The assembly purchased wreaths and placed them at the Prince of Peace Parish columbarium and at the gravesites of two local veterans.

TONS OF CHARITY

St. Aloysius at St. Paul Council 1913 in Olathe, Kan., regularly organizes food drives at St. Paul Parish in response to a request from Father Michael Hermes, pastor and council chaplain. Since the pandemic started, the Knights have collected more than 120,000 pounds of groceries for the Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas food bank.

FAITHFUL FLAG RETIREMENT

A color corps comprising Knights from several Las Vegas assemblies conducted a ceremony on the grounds of Christ the King Catholic Church to retire worn and unserviceable flags. Christ the King Council 14144 hosted the event, and Father Manny Guico, Nevada state chaplain, gave a blessing.



Members of St. John Vianney Council 12580 in Lithia Springs, Ga., construct desks for children who lacked study space at home during the pandemic. The Knights donated the furniture to students at two high-need public schools, parish families, and members of a local home-schooling group.



Life

HOLLYWOOD 5K

Father M.J. Monahan Council 4851 in Hollywood, Fla., sponsored a 5K race to benefit Special Olympics. Nearly 50 runners, including 18 Knights, participated, raising more than \$3,600.

VACCINE BOOSTERS

Members of councils in southern Arizona volunteered with the Santa Cruz County Health Department to facilitate the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. Knights and their wives assisted with traffic control, registration and other tasks. The events went so well that the crew was asked to volunteer seven days a week for several months.



Grand Knight Delmor Thurman of Father Boecker Council 6090 in Lombard, Ill., welcomes Sacred Heart and St. Pius X parishioners to a blood drive sponsored by the council.



District Deputy Tim Schwab (left) stands with Knights for a Silver Rose ceremony at St. André Apôtre Roman Catholic Church in North Battleford, Saskatchewan. The Silver Rose — one of eight — started its 2021 pilgrimage in Alberta and will travel south through the central United States before reaching Mexico on Dec. 12. Each jurisdiction hosting the rose holds prayer services promoting the sanctity of life and devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

St. Edward's Council 2650 in Texarkana, Ark., donated more than \$2,000 to Opportunities, Inc., a nonprofit providing support services and a long-term care facility for people with disabilities. The council raised the funds at its 11th annual Red Beans and Rice Dinner, held as a to-go event this year.

COUNCIL TO COUNSEL

St. Kateri Tekakwitha Council 12229 in Marlton, N.J., sponsored a baby supplies drive at St. Isaac Jogues Catholic Church. Members filled four SUVs with supplies for Good Counsel Home, a residence for homeless mothers and babies, and collected an additional \$2,500 in cash and gift cards.

DOUBLE DUTY FOR LIFE

St. Thomas More Council 9997 in Austin, Texas, sponsored a supply drive at St. Thomas More Catholic Church for two local pro-life organizations. The Knights brought in more than \$600 and nearly 37,700 baby items for the St. John Paul II Life Center, a nonprofit women's health care clinic and pregnancy resource

center. Members also collected nearly 50 bags of clothing for the Austin branch of the Gabriel Project, a Catholic Charities ministry supporting expectant mothers and their families.

FRANCISCAN OUTREACH

St. Francis Council 5080 in Toronto donated an ultrasound machine and medical supplies to a Franciscan hospital in Ghana after a Franciscan brother visited the parish to request help.

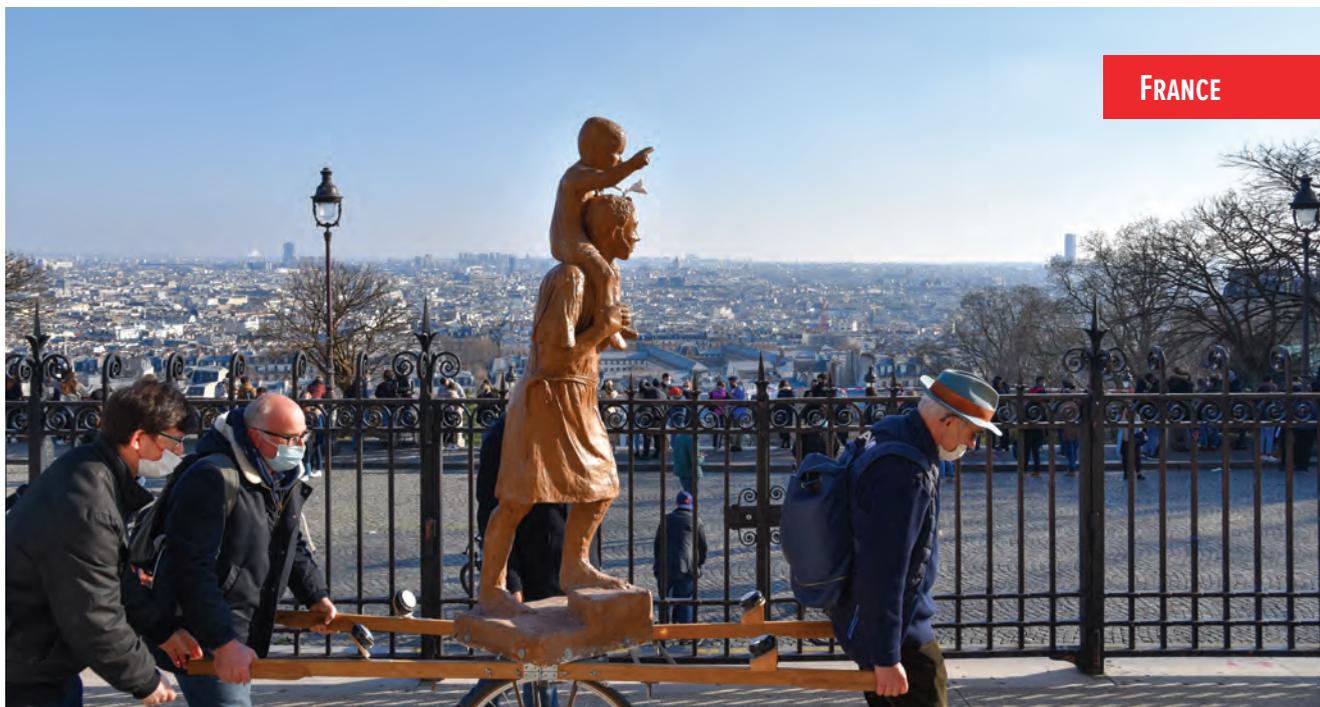
GROUP ULTRASOUND EFFORT

St. Paul the Apostle Council 11232 in Peotone, Ill., and St. Viateurs Council 745 and St. John Paul II Bilingual Council 14012 in Kankakee together donated more than \$3,600 to Living Alternatives Pregnancy Resource Center. The center will use the donation to pay the remaining balance on its ultrasound machine.

See more at www.kofc.org/knightsinaction
Please submit your council activities to knightsinaction@kofc.org



FRANCE



Knights from St. Martin Council 16910 in Paris wheel a statue of St. Joseph and the child Jesus through the city. The men processed with the statue, designed and sculpted by member Luc de Moustier (right), as part of the 2021 March of St. Joseph. The annual event, organized by a group of fathers, draws thousands of men from Paris and surrounding dioceses.

SOUTH KOREA



Knights of Columbus leaders in South Korea gather in the chapel of the Military Ordinate of Korea after a Mass and ceremony to honor retiring Bishop Francis Xavier Yu Soo-il (seated, center) and welcome Bishop-Elect Titus Seo Sang-bum (seated, right). Territorial Deputy Shin Kyoung-soo (second row, center) also met with grand knights and chaplains to discuss council growth and to plan initiatives, including participation in an upcoming pro-life march.

Ontario Life Director Alex Schadenberg (left) and State Secretary Marcel Lemmen rest after finishing a half-marathon at Confederation Beach Park in Hamilton. With their run, the Knights raised nearly CA\$12,000 for Compassionate Community Care, a pro-life charity that supports people with terminal illnesses and their families.

CANADA





Members of Bardstown (Ky.) Council 1290 stand with Archbishop Joseph A. Kurtz of Louisville and Father Terry Bradshaw after assisting in the ceremonial unveiling of a memorial to Daniel Rudd, a Catholic civil rights leader. Born into slavery in 1854, Rudd later established the first Black-owned and -operated Catholic newspaper in the United States and helped found the Colored Catholic Congress. Archbishop Kurtz and Father Bradshaw, council chaplain, celebrated Mass at the Basilica of St. Joseph before blessing the new plaque above Rudd's grave in the parish cemetery.



Members of several Mexico Central councils and their wives prepare to serve a hot meal in downtown Santiago de Querétaro to people experiencing homelessness.



At a memorial service held by Tandang Sora Assembly 2715 in Quezon City, Luzon South, for deceased member Jovencio C. Peralta, Faithful Admiral Eric J. Juan presents a Philippine flag to Peralta's daughter.

Members of Father Edmund Roszczynialski Council 15708 in Wejherowo deliver water and other supplies to a local hospital. The council has made three such deliveries as part of its ongoing support for health care professionals during the pandemic.





Knights Gear

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VALUATION EXHIBIT OF THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

In compliance with the requirements of the laws of the various states, we publish below a Valuation Exhibit of the Knights of Columbus as of Dec. 31, 2020. The law requires that this publication shall be made of the results of the valuation with explanation as filed with the insurance departments.

ASSETS — Actual and Contingent

1. Admitted Assets of the General Account Fund, Item 26, page 2 of Annual Statement: \$27,658,057,798

LIABILITIES — Actual and Contingent

2. Reserve for Life Certificates — including D.L. and Dis. W. (net of re-ins):	\$15,774,997,678
3. Reserve for accident and health certificates:	\$755,968,148
4. Total per Annual Statement, page 3 items 1 and 2:	\$16,530,965,826
5. Deduct liens and interest thereon, not included in Admitted Assets, and not in excess of required reserves on the corresponding individual certificates:	None
6. Balance — Item 4 less item 5 above:	\$16,530,965,826
7. Liabilities of the General Account Fund, except reserve (Items 3 to 25 incl. page 3 of Annual Statement):	\$8,816,151,555
8. Liabilities — Actual and Contingent — sum of items 6 and 7 above:	\$25,347,117,381
9. Ratio percent of:	
Assets — Actual and Contingent (Item 1)	Dec. 31, 2020 — 109.12%
Liabilities — Actual and Contingent (Item 8)	Dec. 31, 2019 — 109.40%
	Dec. 31, 2018 — 109.21%
	Dec. 31, 2017 — 109.36%
	Dec. 31, 2016 — 108.98%

EXPLANATION

The above valuation indicates that, on a basis of the A.E., A.M. (5), 1941 C.S.O., 1958 C.S.O., 1980 C.S.O., 2001 C.S.O., 2017 C.S.O., VM-20, 1937 S.A., 1971 Individual Annuity Table, Annuity 2000 Table, 2012 IAR — S 62 table and 1983 "a" Tables of Mortality with interest at 9%, 8.75%, 8%, 7%, 6%, 5%, 4.5%, 4.25%, 4%, 3.75%, 3.5%, 3.25%, 3%, 2.75%, 2.5%, 2.25%, 1.75%, the future assessments of the society, at the net rate now being collected, together with the now invested assets of the General Account Fund are sufficient to meet all certificates as they mature by their terms, with a margin of safety of \$2,310,940,417 (or 9.12%) over the above statutory standards.

STATE OF: Connecticut
COUNTY OF: New Haven

The officers of this reporting entity, being duly sworn, each depose and say that they are the described officers of the said reporting entity, and that on the reporting period stated above, all of the herein described assets were the absolute property of the said reporting entity, free and clear from any liens or claims thereon, except as herein stated, and that this statement, together with related exhibits, schedules and explanations therein contained, annexed or referred to, is a full and true statement of all the assets and liabilities, and of the condition and affairs of the said reporting entity as of the reporting period stated above, and of its income and deductions therefrom for the period ended, and has been completed in accordance with the NAIC annual statement instructions and accounting practices and procedure manual except to the extent that: (1) state law may differ; or (2) that state rules or regulations require differences in reporting not related to accounting practices and procedures, according to the best of their information, knowledge and belief, respectively. Furthermore, the scope of this attestation by the described officers also includes the related corresponding electronic filing with the NAIC, when required, that is an exact copy (except for formatting differences due to electronic filing) of the enclosed statement. The electronic filing may be requested by various regulators in lieu of or in addition to the enclosed statement.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 19th day of February 2021.
MaryAnn Luczak, Notary Public
CARL A. ANDERSON, President
MICHAEL J. O'CONNOR, Secretary
RONALD F. SCHWARTZ, Treasurer

SEAL

OFFICIAL MAY 1, 2021:

To owners of Knights of Columbus insurance policies and persons responsible for payment of premiums on such policies: Notice is hereby given that in accordance with the provisions of Section 84 of the Laws of the Order, payment of insurance premiums due on a monthly basis to the Knights of Columbus by check made payable to Knights of Columbus and mailed to same at PO Box 1492, NEW HAVEN, CT 06506-1492, before the expiration of the grace period set forth in the policy. In Canada: Knights of Columbus, Place d'Armes Station, P.O. Box 220, Montreal, QC H2Y 3G7

ALL MANUSCRIPTS, PHOTOS, ARTWORK, EDITORIAL MATTER, AND ADVERTISING INQUIRIES SHOULD BE MAILED TO: COLUMBIA, PO BOX 1670, NEW HAVEN, CT 06507-9982. REJECTED MATERIAL WILL BE RETURNED IF ACCOMPANIED BY A SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE AND RETURN POSTAGE. PURCHASED MATERIAL WILL NOT BE RETURNED. OPINIONS BY WRITERS ARE THEIR OWN AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES — IN THE U.S.: 1 YEAR, \$6; 2 YEARS, \$11; 3 YEARS, \$15. FOR OTHER COUNTRIES ADD \$2 PER YEAR. EXCEPT FOR CANADIAN SUBSCRIPTIONS. PAYMENT IN U.S. CURRENCY ONLY. SEND ORDERS AND CHECKS TO: ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT, PO BOX 1670, NEW HAVEN, CT 06507-9982.

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PHILIPPINES — FOR PHILIPPINES SECOND-CLASS MAIL AT THE MANILA CENTRAL POST OFFICE. SEND RETURN COPIES TO KCFAPI, FRATERNAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT, PO BOX 1511, MANILA.

We are happy to announce that all Knights Gear purchases directly contribute to

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Knights of Charity

Every day, Knights all over the world are given opportunities to make a difference — whether through community service, raising money or prayer. We celebrate each and every Knight for his strength, his compassion and his dedication to building a better world.

Grand Knight Nicholas Zaso (front right) and other members of St. John Henry Newman Council 11323 at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Va., lead a eucharistic procession and rosary on campus. Carrying the monstrance is Father David Sherland, council chaplain, who asked the Knights to help organize the event for the intention of national unity.



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



‘I will give you my life.’

My vocation was born during a painful time. When I was 15, my mom was abducted and held for ransom in Haiti. In the confusion and despair that followed, I prayed, “Lord, your son died on a Friday and rose on a Sunday. My mother was taken this Friday — would you return her this Sunday? In exchange, I will give you my life.” I didn’t really know what I was saying, but I felt a peace to accept whatever the outcome would be. Thanks be to God, she was returned to us.

I believe this experience was the moment when God began to prepare me for my vocation. He brought many people into my life along the way to teach me how to pray and form me in my faith. The Lord brought us to Canada, and it was here that I eventually said yes to his call and entered seminary.

The rest of the journey wasn’t without its challenges, but by then I had learned to turn to the Lord and trust in his guidance.

Father Ronald Angervil
Diocese of St. Catharines
Our Lady of the Lake Council 4917