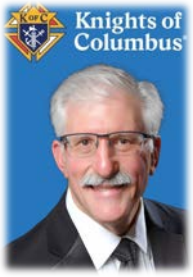
The Shield

Grand Knight's Message



Tom Krivchenia, PFN
Grand Knight
GrandKnight7109@gmail.com

Issue 09, September 2026

Next Council Meeting
Thursday, September 10 @ **7:00 pm**
in the Parish Center

View the Newsletter online at:
www.safetyharborkofc.org
Visit the State Website at:
www.floridakofc.org
Visit the Supreme Website at:
www.kofc.org

Worthy Brothers & Ladies
With Labor Day right around the corner, I hope you have a relaxing weekend and have had a pleasant, fun-filled summer. Now, with Summer winding down and Fall approaching later this month, we as Knights start to move forward into full gear with the start of all our programs. This past month we honored Fr. Michael McGivney on his feast day of August 13th with our Chaplain, Fr Theo, saying the 8:30 Daily Mass and paying tribute to Fr. Michael McGivney. Later that evening, at the Council meeting, our benefits advisor, John Ruckart, compiled an excellent history of our founder Fr. Micheal McGivney which I will include below. Thank you, John!

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Blessed Michael McGivney:
The Man Behind the Collar

Worthy Grand Knight, Officers, and Brother Knights,
Today, August 13th, we celebrate the Feast Day of Blessed Michael J. McGivney. As Knights, we all know the origin story. We know about the basement of St. Mary's Church in New Haven. We know it all started 1882, and we know about his vision to protect Catholic widows and orphans.

That history is part of our identity. But tonight, I want to step away from the textbook history for a few minutes and look at Michael J McGivney the man - his personal humanity, his grit, his lesser-known passions, and the profound pastor behind the founder.

The Date of His Feast

First, a quick detail about why we celebrate him on August 13th. Usually, a saint or blessed's feast day is placed on the date of their death - their entrance into heaven. Father McGivney died on August 14th, 1890, and he was born on August 12th, 1852. The Church intentionally set his feast day on August 13th, nestled directly between his earthly birth and his heavenly birth. It's a fitting placement for a man whose whole life was about bridging the gap between our daily, earthly struggles and our eternal calling.

Hard Work, Baseball, and a Saved Vocation

Before Michael J McGivney was a priest, he was a working-class kid who knew real hardship. At just 13 years old, he had to leave school to work 10-hour days in a brass factory in Waterbury, Connecticut, making spoons to help with the family finances. He understood physical labor, sweat, and financial worry long before he ever wore a Roman collar.

He left Waterbury in 1868 at the age of 16 to start seminary in Canada and was 5 years into his studies when tragedy struck. His father passed away in 1873. Michael had to pack his bags and drop out because his family simply couldn't afford the tuition without his father's income. His dream of priesthood, he thought, was essentially over.
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It was only saved because the Bishop of Hartford stepped in, recognized the young man's potential, and paid his remaining tuition out of diocesan funds to send him to St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore. Father McGivney's dream was finally a reality when he was ordained in 1877.

He was also a man of energy and passion. Long before the Knights were sponsoring youth sports, young Michael McGivney was a talented baseball player. During his time at Niagara University, he helped form and play on the seminary's baseball team.

He carried that same dynamic energy into parish life. He didn't just stay in the rectory - he organized drama clubs, choir performances, fairs, and sports games to keep young men engaged, out of trouble, and grounded in their faith. He was, by all accounts, approachable, warm, and deeply relatable.

The Heart of a True Pastor

When Father McGivney became a parish priest, his heart went far beyond the Sunday pulpit. In 1882, a parishioner died, leaving behind a family with no income. The local court was preparing to remove the children and send them to state institutions. Father McGivney didn't just offer condolences - he walked into the courtroom himself, something unheard of in that time as priests hardly left church grounds. He stood before the judge and personally volunteered to become the legal guardian of the young boy, Alfred Downes, ensuring the family stayed together and the boy was cared for.

Perhaps the most moving example of his priesthood was his ministry to a 21-year-old man named James "Chip" Smith. Smith was a troubled young man who had gotten into a drunken brawl and shot and killed a police chief in Waterbury. He was convicted and sentenced to hang.

Father McGivney visited Smith in his prison cell daily for months. He didn't abandon him, nor did he excuse his crime. He guided Smith to a profound spiritual conversion. On the day of the execution, Father McGivney was so overcome with grief and tears for the young man's soul that Chip Smith actually had to comfort him, saying: "Father, your counseling has made me a new man." Father McGivney walked beside him all the way to the gallows, praying with him until his last breath. That was the depth of his pastoral care.

A Radical Model of Lay Leadership

When Father McGivney brought together that small group of men in 1882 to establish the Knights of Columbus, those men naturally turned to him and said, "Father, you should be our leader. You should be the Grand Knight. "But Father McGivney firmly said, No. He made a deliberate, radical decision: this organization had to be led by the laity. He insisted on stepping back into the role of Supreme Chaplain so that Catholic laymen could step up, take ownership of their duty, and lead their families and communities. He didn't want a clerical dictatorship; he wanted an empowered lay fraternity. Every time we elect officers or run a council meeting or event, we are living out Father McGivney's original trust in us as laymen.

His Legacy Lives on

Father McGivney died at the young age of 38. He didn't die of old age; he died during the pandemic flu outbreak of 1889 and 1890 after working himself to total exhaustion caring for others. Michael J McGivney wasn't a distant figure sitting in a high office. He was a baseball-playing, hard-working, deeply compassionate parish priest who rolled up his sleeves, defended the vulnerable, visited the condemned, and believed in the power of Catholic men working together.

As we celebrate his feast day, let's ask for his intercession - not just that our council grows in numbers, but that we grow in the same spirit of quiet, practical, and courageous brotherhood that he lived every single day.

Blessed Michael J McGivney, pray for us.

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We had Coffee & Donuts on August 16th in the Parish Center for the first time in a couple years. It was nice having everything right there. I want to thank everyone who volunteered.

Tom Harkins	Betty D'Amelio	Margaret Krivchenia
Karen Jajuga	Joe D'Amelio	Tom Krivchenia
Gene Jajuga	Keith Taylor	Garrett Phoebe
Tom Stanko	Matt Sunski	Paul Harvey

The following week we grilled hamburgers and hot dogs for the Religious Education students and their families as they attended the orientations for the new year. I am so grateful to everyone who helped in various capacities at this special event for the families of our church.

Paul Harvey	Matt Sunski	Margaret Krivchenia
Keith Taylor	Jack Strehele	Tom Krivchenia
Karen Jajuga	Garret Phoebe	Richard LeClerec
Gene Jajuga	Katie Gonsch	Carlos Salazar
Jean Wozniak	Tom Wozniak	
~~~~~~

We ended the month donating $500 to the Youth of Espiritu Santo (YES) for their trip and other activities. In return, we will be able to have help with our dinner dances and fish fry's. We also gave our annual $ 2,500 ($1,500 Council & $1,000 Assembly) to the school. By giving them these donations, we will be able to advertise our events in their weekly newsletter. Being able to recruit kids for our programs and possible new members for the Knights is our goal in addition to procuring help for our dinner dances and fish fry's.

Please pray for Ed Amador and Amaro Lionheart who suddenly lost their father a few weeks ago. Ed is grieving greatly and this is affecting his overall health. Keeping him in our prayers will help him and offer him comfort and healing.

Update on Membership Dues

We are down to approximately **60 Knights who have not yet paid their dues for this fraternal year**. If you are among them, please take a moment to fulfill this important obligation to our Council.

Please mail your check, payable to "KofC Council 7109," to:

Tom Harkins | 10 Summerwinds Ln | Oldsmar, FL 34677

If you are experiencing **financial hardship or other circumstances** that make it difficult to pay your dues, please reach out to us. We are brothers, and we will do our best to work with you.

If you have decided that you no longer wish to remain a member of the Knights of Columbus, please contact **Tom Harkins** in writing and let him know of your decision so that we can properly update our membership records.

We appreciate your prompt attention to this matter. **Your membership and support are important to the strength of our Council and to the charitable work we do for our parish and community.**

Let's finish the fraternal year strong and continue to live out our commitment to **Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism.**

Thank you, Brother Knights, for your continued support of Council 7109!

Upcoming Events

We will have our first Dinner Dance meeting on Wednesday Sept 9th at 7:00 PM in The Gathering Room. We will discuss the theme, decorations, menu, table decorations, music and gift baskets for our fall Dinner Dance on Friday, October 23rd. All are welcome. I would like to see some of our cooks at this meeting.

The Ladies Auxilliary will start have their first meeting of the year on Thursday, Sep 10th in the Gathering Room at 7:00 PM.

We will be doing Coffee & Donuts and a Membership Drive on Sunday, Sep 20th in the Parish Center after all Masses. We will have a table set up in the Churches Ministry Fair in the Parish Center after all Masses Saturday & Sunday. We will be looking for many volunteers to help man the tables trying to recruit new members. We will need people to help with Coffee & Donuts after the morning Masses. I'm sure there will be many parishioners, especially, new members to the church, looking for something to get involved in.

- Council 7109 Officers Meeting – Thursday, Sep 3rd at 7:00 PM in the Gathering Room
- Happy Labor Day – Monday, Sep 7th
- Dinner Dance Planning Meeting – Wednesday, Sep 9th at 7:00 PM in the Gathering Room
- Monthly Rosary – Thursday, Sep 10th at 6:15 PM in the St. John Bosco Center
- Council Business Meeting – Thursday, Sep 10th at 7:00 PM in the Parish Center
- Ladies Auxiliary Meeting – Thursday, Sep 10th at 7:00 PM in the Gathering Room
- Pinellas Hope Food Prep – Thursday, Sep 17th at 8:00 AM in the Parish Center Kitchen
- Kimberly Home Workday – Saturday, Sep 19th at 7:00 AM in Clearwater
- Ministry Fair – Saturday, Sep 19th after all Masses in the Parish Center
- Coffee & Donuts - Sunday, Sep 20th at 7:00 AM in the Parish Center
- Ministry Fair – Sunday, Sep 20th after all Masses in the Parish Center
- KofC Membership Drive – Sunday, Sep 20th after all Masses in the Parish Center
- Tootsie Roll Drive – Saturday, Sep 26th after all Masses
- Tootsie Roll Drive – Sunday, Sep 27th after all Masses
- Council 7109 Officers Meeting – Thursday, October 1st at 7:00 PM in the Gathering Room
- KofC Family Picnic – Saturday, October 3rd at 11:00 AM -3:00 PM in Philippe Park Shelter # 5
- Program Directors Meeting – Monday October 5th at 7:00 PM in the Gathering Room



Keith Taylor
keithtaylor1@gmail.com
727.698.7331

Membership Matters

Find Your Brothers

No man is meant to go it alone.

But sometimes, that's exactly how Catholic men find themselves. Without the right network of friends, without the right models of faith and virtue to look up to, we struggle silently in our work lives, our faith lives and even our homes.

We need brotherhood - a brotherhood that pushes us to be better men, better husbands, better fathers.

That was true in 1882, when Father Michael McGivney founded the Knights of Columbus, and it's just as true today. Come and see what brotherhood with the Knights can offer you.

Recently, Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly commended the state deputies and chaplains for their accomplishments, noting that last year the Order welcomed more than 101,000 new Knights - the most since the end of World War I.

Supreme Knight Kelly also stated that "People often ask me…how are you doing that? The answer, really is that we're meeting the moment that we are in right now, in our culture, in our society. We're giving young men a sense of meaning and a sense of coherence and a sense of purpose."

"This is a powerful moment for the Knights of Columbus," the Supreme Knight said. "We are uniquely positioned to help young men put their faith into action, together with their friends. I think the Lord is opening a door for us at this point in our culture's history, and in the history of the Knights of Columbus, and now it's our job to seize the moment and move forward together."

In the state of Florida and across the country, our Order continues to grow. We need to extend the benefits of membership to all Catholic men. Without growth, our programs fail to have new ideas and become stagnant. The various charitable, church, council, and youth programs are what the Knights of Columbus are known for and those programs require new members.

All good works the Knights of Columbus do are founded on the core principles of Charity, Unity, Fraternity and Patriotism. Our Catholic faith teaches us to "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Members of the Knights of Columbus show love for their neighbors by conducting food drives and donating the food to local soup kitchens and food pantries, by volunteering at Special Olympics, and by supporting both spiritually and materially, mothers who choose life for their babies. Knights recognize that our mission, and our faith in God, compels us to action. There is no better way to experience love and compassion than by helping those in need, a call we answer every day.



Unity – Strength in Numbers

Informational Open House Schedule

2026	2027
Oct 14 | Dec 16	Feb 17 | Apr 14 | Jun 16

Unified Degree Ceremony Schedule

2026	2027
Oct 15 | Dec 17	Feb18 | Apr 15 | Jun 17

Look for more information from our Grand Knight

Council Membership Report

Total Membership	329
Insurance Membership	124
Honorary Life Members	60
Honorary Members	07
2026-2027 Membership Growth vs Goal	00/15
2026-2027 Insurance	00/02

Assembly Membership Report

Total Membership	125
Honorary Life Members	13
Honorary Members	01
2026-2027 Membership Growth vs Goal	00/06

Council Officers 2026-2027

Grand Knight	Tom Krivchenia, PFN	727.366.5422
Chaplain	Fr Theo Weria, ALCP	727.726.8477
Deputy Grand Knight	Edward Amador	305.606.8632
Chancellor	George Inderwies	727.647.1601
Recorder	Bill Krajeski	727.784.2817
Financial Secretary	Tom Harkins	727.772.0607
Treasurer	Jerry Custin, PGK, PFN	727.244.6464
Lecturer	Paul Harvey, PFN	727.286.7171
Advocate	Richard Resler	727.472.1651
Warden	Jim Lankford	813.455.2292
Inside Guard	Paul Cooper	727.736.6837
Outside Guard	Vincent Cristiano	
Trustee Three Year	Gene Jajuga, PGK, PFN, FFA	727.403.3261
Trustee Two Year	JJ Coyne, PGK, PFN	901.832.7332
Trustee One Year	Ken Seguin, PGK, PFN	727.331.7278
Regional Administrator	John Papa, PGK, PFN	727.482.3734
District Deputy	Alan Gauzens, PGK	727.483.8250
Fraternal Benefits Advisor	John Ruckart	813.855.5111
Special Assistant to the Council	Gary Murphy	
Special Assistant to the Council	Jacob Bandy	

Happy Birthday Brothers! Many Happy Returns!

Edward Amador, Victor Berggren, Mark Busing, Ernie Cline, Thomas Coughlin, Robert Deane, Sean Donahoo, Robert Dufour, Frederick Elfein, Robert Faw, Irving Hernandez, Joseph Hocherl, Timothy Kielich, Dennis Lentz, Dn Gregory Nash, Chris Nesci, Victor Nunez, Donald Palacheck, John Papa, Paul Pappas, Frank Pensebene, Andrew Rodnite, Guillermo Romero, James Rooney, Martin Spolarich, Roy Vanderveer

Prayers for the Sick

Marie Bishop, Sean Michael Cook (d), Tim & Barbara Rush, Ken Seguin, Susanne Papa (d), Ward Griffin, Elizabeth Inderwies, Linda Cooper (d), Bob Ehrman, Antonia Rosin (d), Frances Hamacher (d), Jacquline Barry (d), Mary Branham (d), Frank Schuster II (d), Kennedie McFadden, George Smith (d), Pauline Sager (d), Vicki Nolan (d), Steve Gorey (d), Felice D'Elia (d), Stanley Kwiatowski (d), Ethan Griswold (d), Dick LaLuzerne (d), Fr Rich Rosin (d), Mary Duelk (d), Tony Doyle (d), Mary Frances Lowe, Jim & Pat Nolf, Frank Diaz (d), Ed Warticki (d), Jack Mills (d), Bob Justiana, Kathleen Griffin, Evely Harvey (d), Jack Greenwald (d), Don Bishop (d), Frank Nunziata (d), Dave Weber (d), Nicholas Burriesci (d), Anthony Burriesci (d), Thomas Ziegler (d), Sal Burriesci (d), John Salesses (d), Zoe DuFour (d), Don Puchalski, Ed Fucillo (d), Pat Flynn, Rose Marie Harvey, Daniela Salazar, Kathy Akbari, Fr Michael Cooper, Terry Mueller, James O'Neill (d), Dn Dom Friscia (d), Julius Silva (d), Thelma Rochester (d), Rolando Kirk, Minnie Silva, Richard Cook (d), Ingrid Burriesci, Mark Feldman, Paul Barry (d), Ed Sleyzak (d), Nelson Amador (d), Joseph DiMattei, Robert Morgan

Please pray for all our sick and deceased Brothers, Ladies, and family members. Please report illnesses and deaths to Sir Knight Frank McEwen, at 727.239.2687 or fmcewen99@gmail.com

Support Our Vocations Fund



Austin Smith

Mark Wegener



Thank you for your continued support of the Vocations Fund. As most of you know we are making annual donations to two seminarians. Austin and Mark are located at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary. Austin Smith is from Nativity parish in Brandon. Mark Wegener is from St. Anthony the Abbot, Brooksville.

Please get your name on the list by giving $5.00, $10.00 or whatever you can in support of this worthy endeavor! We need to continue to support these young men and vocations, but it will take everyone's help. Thank You!

Edward & Violet Amador, Mark Barrett, Donald Borbath, John & Betsy Clarke, Kevin Cordaro, John Coyne, Joseph & Betty D'Amelio, Douglas & Carol De Wolfe, Peter Demzak, Michael & Mary Kathleen Dixon, Terry & Shirley Drake, Robert & Zoe Dufour, Walter Feble, Patrick Flynn Sr, Michael & Lisa Furman, Thomas & Anne Harkins, Thomas Hart Jr, Paul & Rose Marie Harvey, David & Donna Heezen, George & Claire Inderwies, Eugene & Karen Jajuga, Shawn & Pattie Jajuga, Gregory & Kim Juedes, Michael & Katherine King, Dan & Donna Kistel, William & Katherine Krajeski, Frank & Deborah Laffey, Stephen & Ellen Leger, John Lenehan, Milton Levine, Amaro Lionheart, Doug & Kelly McCall, Michael & Maria McCarthy, Frank & Cindy McEwen, Charles McEwen Sr, Kevin McMullen, Stuart Miller, John & Morgan, Thomas & Carolyn O'Rourke, John & Susanne Papa, Gerald & Holly Pappa, Paul & Virginia Pappas, Robert & Vickie Pickard, Donald & Alexis Reed, Richard Roberto Jr, Guillermo Romero, John & Kathleen Ruckart, William & Mary Scott, Kenneth & Gabriella Seguin Sr, Jason Seguin, Michael & Melissa Short, John & Kay Strehle III, Matthew & Julie Sunski, Walberto & Ramona Vazquez, Paul & Josefina Vilchez, Mario & Judy Zaccaria, Justin Appel, Fred & Caroline Bennett, Frank & Angela Di Mattei, Philip & Jane Farney, Mark & Elaine Feldman, Thomas Fitzpatrick, Charles & Raquel Friesema, John & Peggy Gohman II, James Haitz, Irving Hernandez, Joseph & Sandra Hocherl, Christopher & Celise Jones, Robert & M.A. Justiana Sr, Matthew Killeen, Steve Kindrick, Tom & Margaret Krivchenia, Gerard Lobo, Patrick Mackin, Jerry Maratea, Frank & Juliann Marsalek, Clifford & Michelle Merz, James & Phyllis Montali, Chris & Leah Nesci, Frank Pensabene, Miguel & Sammantha Perez I, Garrett Phoebe, Juan & Rosemary Romero, Peter & Susan Salesses, Robert Shafer, Morgan Sheafer Sr, James & Karin Smith, Thomas Smith, Thomas & Janet Stanko, James & Darlene Stanley, Chuck & Elizabeth Sullivan, Alvah & Margaret Vankleeck, Steven & Jaclyn Verba, Timothy Weber Sr, Joshua Wisnowski, Patrick & Joan Alix, Dennis & Joyce Ayral, Patrick Carroll, Joseph Celic III, Sylvia O'Neill, Frederick & Christi Elflein, Zach Faraone, Joel & Karen Gray, Mark Gurley, Kenton & Sue Heuertz, William Kasak, Thomas Kukulski, James & Maria Lankford, Brian & Angela Lawandus, Albert Masselli, Christopher Mazzone, James & Patricia Nolf, Brian & Lisa O'Connor, Robert Papariella, Mark & Christine Peterman, Daniel & T Peterson, Glen Pettersen, Christopher & Carol Purcell, Carlos Salazar, Massimo & Valeria Simeoni, Bryan & Krista Snyder, Lawrence & Corinne Steinhardt, Jugdesh & Sucheta Sujanani, Keith & Griselda Taylor, Charles & Sharon Warrington Jr, Eugene Wolanin

Total Collected to Date: $1202.88

S.O.S.
Support Our Seminarians



Father Theo Weria, ALCP
Chaplain

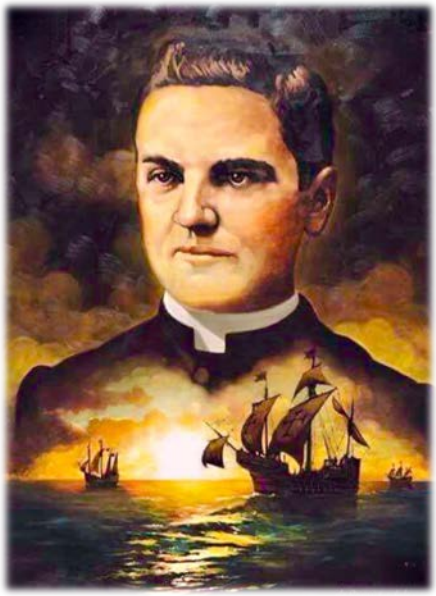
Chaplain's Corner

Charity lived in our present time.

Last month on 13th of August, we observed the Feast of the Blessed Michael McGivney, the founder of the Knights of Columbus. We know about his role in the work of evangelization through charity. In this present time, life shows that charity is not just a sharing of the money we have, but a life or virtue of seeing another person's needs as our own duty and responsibility. Jesus highlights the essence of charity as he summarizes the law and the prophets with the great commandment as we read in Mathew 22:37-39, a call to "Love the Lord your God and love your neighbor as yourself." Wherever we are, we encounter several moments whereby our charity is greatly challenged. We hear about people who live in isolation, others experience the threat and impact of natural disasters, and many others migrating all over the world because of wars, persecutions, as well as inflation.

Those moments are not bound to one place or few people but felt all over. This calls and reminds us to continue to cultivate the spirit of humility and gratitude because we believe that God created us and know that we are not self-sufficient, but dependent on God. With the spirit of Blessed Michael McGivney, guided by the Gospel in evangelizing and responding to the needs of others in our time, we need continue to live that love in action or charity.

Jesus shows us the love of God. After the resurrection, He sent the Holy Spirit to help us live and bear witness of our charity to all people. Through charity, we have the proof that God's goodness is positive, it is present, and powerful here and now. In solidarity, may we continue praying for the cause of canonization of the Blessed Michal McGivney.



Service Program Directors 2026-2027

Program Director	Edward Amador	305.606.8632
Membership Director	Keith Taylor	727.698.7331
Faith Director	Mark Peterman, PFN	727.403.5993
Community Director	Mike King	727.453.8843
Family Director	Matt Sunski	727.423.9524
Public Relations Director	Amaro Lionheart	305.761.3419
Life Director	Jack Strehle	727.433.0081
Vocations/Prayers	Frank McEwen, PGK, PFN	727.239.2687
Retention Coordinator	Ken Seguin, PGK, PFN	727.331.7278



SK Edward Amador
Deputy Grand Knight
Edamador00@gmail.com

Deputy Grand Knight's Report

Building the Next Chapter Together

Brother Knights,
As we begin this new chapter, I find myself thinking less about what we have accomplished in the past and more about what we can build together moving forward. Our council has a tremendous foundation. We have Brothers with years of experience, Brothers who consistently volunteer, Brothers who bring new ideas, and Brothers who quietly contribute in ways that are sometimes never seen. All of those contributions matter. But a strong foundation is only valuable if we continue building upon it. That is where I believe our focus needs to be this fraternal year.

Everyone Has a Role
One of the things I want to emphasize during my time as Deputy Grand Knight is that **everyone has a role in the success of this council**. You do not need to be an officer to lead. You do not need to chair a committee to make a difference. You do not need to attend every event to contribute. Sometimes leadership is simply recognizing where you can help and stepping forward. Maybe that means volunteering at a Fish Fry. Maybe it means helping with a parish activity. Maybe it means attending a council meeting and offering an idea. Maybe it means bringing your family to an event and helping strengthen the fellowship within our council. And sometimes it is as simple as asking another Brother, **"How can I help?"** T hose small decisions are what keep an organization moving.

This is also where Matthew Kelly's message about **Holy Moments** continues to provide a meaningful perspective. We often think of making a difference as something large or extraordinary. But many of the most important moments are ordinary decisions made with the right intention.

A Brother who decides to volunteer. A Brother who welcomes someone new. A Brother who checks on someone who has been absent. A Brother who offers his time when something needs to be done. A Brother who chooses to encourage rather than criticize. Those are all opportunities to create a Holy Moment. And when dozens of Brothers make those choices together, the impact becomes significant.

Our Council Needs Your Participation
As you look at the council calendar this year, I encourage you to think beyond simply asking, **"What events are coming up?"** Instead, ask: **"Where can I contribute?"** Our events and programs do not happen because a calendar says they should. They happen because Brothers are willing to put in the work behind them. The planning. The preparation. The setup. The participation. The cleanup. The follow-up. And everything in between. I would like to see more of our Brothers finding their place within that process. We have an incredible amount of talent within Council 7109, and I believe there are Brothers who have skills, experience, and ideas that we have not yet fully tapped into.

If you have an idea, share it. If you see something that needs to be done, offer to help. If you have a skill that could benefit the council, come to the meeting and bring it up for discussion, and if you have been sitting on the sidelines for a while, perhaps this is the fraternal year to step back into the action. There is a place for you.

Growing Our Brotherhood
Another important part of building the next chapter is making sure we continue to grow our membership. We have learned over the years that membership is not simply a numbers exercise. Every new Brother represents another Catholic man who has decided that he wants to put his faith into action through service, charity, fraternity, and fellowship.

But recruitment cannot rest on the shoulders of one person. It never should. If you enjoy being a Knight, tell someone why. If an event has made an impact on you, invite someone to experience it. If you have a

Catholic brother, son, son-in-law, grandson, friend, neighbor, or coworker who is eligible, **have the conversation**. You don't have to give someone a speech about the Knights. You simply have to tell your story. *"This is why I became a Knight." "This is what we've done together." "Come to an event and see what we're about."* Sometimes the invitation itself becomes the Holy Moment. We should never assume that someone is not interested simply because they have never asked about the Knights. There may be a Catholic man sitting in our parish right now who would gladly serve alongside us if someone would simply extend the invitation. **Be that Brother.**

A Personal Note of Gratitude
The Faithful Navigator's message later in this newsletter speaks more personally about the difficult circumstances my family has recently experienced, including the sudden loss of my father and the challenges that have followed. I encourage you to take a moment to read his message. I mention it here because it reinforces something I believe is at the very heart of what our Council and Assembly should represent: **we are supposed to be there for one another.** We celebrate together. We serve together. We pray together. And when life becomes difficult, we stand together. I have seen that spirit of brotherhood demonstrated throughout our council, and I hope we continue strengthening it within our council.

None of us knows what another Brother may be carrying. A little patience, a kind word, a phone call, or an offer to help may mean far more than we realize. That, too, is putting our faith into action.

The Four Pillars in Practice
As we move forward, I would like us to keep the four pillars of the Knights of Columbus visible in everything we do: **Charity. Unity. Fraternity. Patriotism.** Not simply as words, but as actions.

Charity asks us to look beyond ourselves and serve those who need us.
Unity reminds us that we accomplish more when we work together.
Fraternity challenges us to strengthen the relationships between Brothers and their families.
Patriotism calls us to honor our country, our veterans, and those who have sacrificed in service to others.

These principles give us a framework for who we are. Our challenge is to live them.

The Next Chapter Is Ours to Build
Brother Knights, despite the challenges and downturns as I entered into office, I am excited about this fraternal year and what we can accomplish together. But I don't want our success to be measured only by the number of programs we complete or events we hold. I want us to measure success by how many Brothers became more involved, how many people we helped, how many families we touched, how many Catholic men we invited, and how many opportunities we recognized to put our faith into action. That is the kind of growth that lasts.

So as we begin this journey together, I ask each Brother to make one commitment: **Find one place where you can do more.** One event. One committee. One Brother you can encourage. One Catholic man you can invite. One person you can help. One opportunity to serve. One Holy Moment. If every Brother did just one more thing, imagine what we could accomplish together.

I look forward to serving with all of you and helping our council continue to grow, strengthen, and flourish throughout this fraternal year.

Thank you for your confidence, your support, and most importantly, your willingness to serve. Let us make this a year where we don't simply talk about being Knights, we show what it means to be one.

Reminder: Your Dues Matter, Please Pay Immediately
When we fall behind on our dues, it doesn't just affect the council, it takes resources away from the charitable causes, families, veterans, parish programs, and communities that depend on our support; paying your dues is one simple way every Brother can help us continue our mission.

Vivat Jesus!



SK Edward J. Amador, MPS, FN
Deputy Grand Knight
Barney Gonyea Council #7109
Knights of Columbus



John Ruckart
Field Agent
John.Ruckart@kofc.org

Knights of Columbus INSURANCE
YOUR SHIELD FOR LIFE

Fraternal Benefits Advisor Report

I want to start off this month's message with an interesting, but lesser-known story about Father McGivney. We know our Founder cared deeply about the lives of his parishioners and strengthening their sense of community. He was also very practical about what a parish community most often needs: money.

One fall, with St. Mary's in debt to creditors, he led an ingenious combination fundraiser and social event. St. Mary's hall turned into a coffeehouse filled with music, dancing, skits, dessert and, of course, coffee, which was a profitable draw at the time. The party was only supposed to last one night, but the people of New Haven kept coming and drew it out for a week! In the end, Father McGivney was able to pay down a good amount of the debt - and further solidified his reputation as a priest deeply embedded in the life of his parish.

Father McGivney recognized and valued the things that really matter: God. Fellowship. A sense of belonging and the space to reinforce those ties of friendship, mutual support and common faith.

Brothers, September is Life Insurance Awareness Month, but what I'd like to propose is that we think of it as "The Things That Matter" Month. What does your family value? What are the pillars of your family culture? What do you want to preserve for them when you're no longer here?

Life insurance can be a big part of that. Maybe you want to protect the home that shelters your family, that's set the stage for so many memories and is a safe haven for your children to return to. Maybe you want to ensure that your children - or grandchildren - will have access to high-quality education. Or maybe you want to safeguard a family business or a similar legacy that can continue to provide for your loved ones.

We can talk about these options and more, and whether they might best be covered by temporary or permanent policies. Ideally, I want to help you match your insurance coverage not just with your basic needs, but with the things that your family deems most important to preserve.

This month, I challenge you to think about what those things are. And if you don't have a plan to protect them, give me a call.

Vivat Jesus!
John D Ruckart, FICF
813.855.5111

Book an appt with me here:
https://bookRuckart.flkofc.com/

Learn about our investments:
https://info.kofcassetadvisors.org/meet-john-ruckart

LADIES' AUXILIARY

Welcome back ladies to a great year ahead for our Ladies Auxiliary! I pray that everyone has had a safe and memorable summer. Looking ahead, we will have another busy year calendar of events our Knight's Council. Thursday, September 10 will be our first meeting starting 7 PM in the Gathering Room. I'm sure everyone will be excited to see each other and share their summer adventures. However, we do have a lot to discuss, October's planned full breakfast and October's Ranch themed dinner dance. Yeehaw! Get your boots and denims ready! Planning details will be presented by Margaret Krivchenia, such as needs for the Ladies gathering up items for our beautiful baskets and decorations. It's' a blessing to belong to such a charitable group and may God bless you and family always. Until we meet again.



SK Edward Amador
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Faithful Navigator's Log

Growing Together in Faith, Service, Brotherhood, and Purpose

Brother Knights,
As I shared in my remarks at our recent induction ceremony, I believe that our Assembly has a tremendous opportunity before us. We already accomplish great things in service to our Church, our country, our veterans, our communities, and those in need. The charitable work of the Knights of Columbus is something of which we should all be extremely proud. But my hope for this fraternal year is that we continue to grow not only in **what we do**, but also in **who we are becoming**.

I want our Assembly to be a place where we grow together as Catholic gentlemen. A place where we support one another, pray for one another, encourage one another, and challenge one another to become better husbands, fathers, sons, brothers, and Knights. I believe that when we intentionally strengthen our relationship with God, everything else we do become more meaningful.

This is where the message of Matthew Kelly and *Holy Moments* continues to speak to me. A Holy Moment is often not some great or dramatic act. Sometimes it is simply choosing to do what is right when you have every reason to remain comfortable. It is choosing to serve when someone needs help. It is making the phone call. It is showing up. It is extending the invitation. I t is praying for someone when they are hurting. It is being present for a Brother when life becomes difficult. Those moments define us. And as Knights, they should become part of who we are.

Growing Our Assembly Through Service
As part of our continued growth as an Assembly, I would like to make a special appeal to our Fourth-Degree members to consider becoming involved with our **Color Corps**. The Color Corps is one of the most visible representations of the Fourth Degree and the principle of patriotism for which we stand. Whether we are participating in a Mass, a funeral, a patriotic ceremony, a community event, or another important occasion, the presence of the Color Corps represents our respect for faith, country, and the dignity of the event. If you have ever considered joining the Color Corps, I encourage you to prayerfully consider taking that step.

We are also looking for a brother who would be willing to serve as a **Color Corps Understudy or Alternate Commander**, working alongside our Worthy Color Corps Commander. This is an important opportunity to prepare the next generation of Color Corps leadership. The Brother who takes on this responsibility would work closely with the Commander, assist with training and ceremonies, maintain readiness, and become familiar with the responsibilities of leading the Color Corps. When necessary, he should be prepared to step in and serve when the Commander is unavailable.

This is not simply a title. We are looking for someone willing to **learn, train, assist, and prepare**. If you are interested in becoming more involved with the Color Corps or would like to learn more about the Understudy role, please reach out to me or our Worthy Color Corps Commander.

We need Brothers who are willing to step forward, not only for today, but to ensure that the traditions and mission of the Fourth Degree remain strong for the future.

Our Calendar Is a Call to Action
I would also ask every brother to take the time to review the **Assembly calendar of upcoming events**. Our calendar is more than a list of dates and activities. It is a roadmap of opportunities to serve. Each event represents a need. Each need represents an opportunity for a brother to step forward. Whether it is attending an event, helping with planning, volunteering during the event, supporting our veterans, participating in a ceremony, assisting with setup or cleanup, or simply spreading the word, every contribution matters.

I encourage you to look ahead at the calendar and ask yourself: Where can I help? Where can my family participate? What event can I support? What Holy Moment is God placing in front of me? We cannot continue to place the responsibility for the work of the Assembly on the same few Brothers. I believe we have many talented, faithful, and capable men within this Assembly. My hope is that we can work together, share the responsibility, and allow more brothers to become involved in the work that makes our Assembly strong.

Supporting Our Upcoming Golf Tournament
We also have an upcoming **golf tournament**, and I encourage every brother to help support this important cause. Even if you are not playing, there are many ways to help. You can spread the word, share information about the event, encourage friends and coworkers to participate, help identify potential sponsors, make a donation, volunteer your time, or simply help promote the cause within our community.

Events like this require the support of many people to be successful. One conversation can lead to a new golfer. One email can lead to a sponsor. One invitation can lead to a donation. One act of support can make a difference for the people and organizations we are trying to serve. That is the ripple effect of our actions. We may not always see the full impact of what we do, but God can use even our smallest efforts for something greater. I ask each of you to please help us make this upcoming golf tournament a success. Spread the word and help us support the cause.

Brotherhood in Our Most Difficult Moments
Brother Knights, I would also like to take a personal moment to thank all of you. On **August 6**, the Amador family suffered a sudden and unexpected loss with the passing of my father. His death came as a shock to all of us and left our family in a state of deep sorrow, disbelief, and emotional uncertainty. Even as we try to process this loss, the grief has been overwhelming.

At the same time, I have also been dealing with significant health challenges related to my blood sugar. I have experienced multiple hypoglycemic episodes, and my doctors are continuing to work with me to get everything properly regulated. It has been a difficult time for my family and me, and I humbly ask that you please continue to keep us in your prayers.

But during this difficult time, something else became very clear to me.
Brotherhood is real. The same principles I spoke about during my induction ceremony supporting one another, being present for one another, and putting our faith into action, were demonstrated to me and my family in ways that I will never forget. To every Brother, Sister, family member, and friend who reached out, sent a letter, offered prayers, offered up a Mass for my father, attended the services, called to check on us, or simply asked how we were doing, **thank you**. Your kindness mattered. Your prayers mattered. Your presence mattered. Sometimes, during the most difficult moments of our lives, the greatest gift someone can give is simply letting you know that you are not alone.

The Brotherhood That Showed Up
I want to offer my deepest and most sincere gratitude to **Deacon Greg Nash and his son, Matt**, who traveled to Miami for two days and were present with us during this incredibly difficult time. Deacon Greg not only presided over the services, but throughout this entire process, he was there to offer advice, counsel, spiritual guidance, and the steady presence of a true Brother. **Deacon Greg, my Brother, I am forever grateful to you.** You demonstrated the true meaning of brotherhood. You were there not simply with words, but with your time, your presence, your faith, and your love for my family. You showed me what it means to truly be there for a Brother.

I also want to offer my heartfelt thanks to my Brother **JJ Coyne**. JJ also traveled to Miami and was there for my family and me during one of the most difficult moments of our lives. From the beginning of this journey through its conclusion, he chose to stand alongside us. There are moments in life when you truly learn who will stand beside you. **JJ, I am indebted to you, my Brother.** Your friendship, support, and presence meant more than I can adequately express.

I also want to sincerely thank:
Wally and Ramona Vasquez, Gene and Karen Jajuga, Paul and Rose Marie Harvey, Tom and Margaret Krivchenia, Robyn Viatonski, Bill and Marie Galant, Frank and Cynthia McEwen, Dr. John Gohman, Pat and Chris Nocerino, Tom Wozniak, Matt Sunski, and so many others who reached out to our family. If I have unintentionally missed someone, please do not take offense. Our world has been turned upside down, and we are still trying to process

everything and put the pieces back together by the grace of God. Please know that **every prayer, every message, every Mass, every letter, and every act of kindness has been received with tremendous gratitude**.

Holy Moments in the Most Difficult Times
Matthew Kelly writes about choosing to do what is good in the moment before us. For me, the last several weeks have shown me that Holy Moments are not always planned. Sometimes, a Holy Moment is a phone call when someone is grieving. Sometimes, it is a Mass offered for a family. Sometimes, it is traveling several hours simply because your Brother needs you. Sometimes, it is sitting beside someone in silence. Sometimes, it is a prayer. Sometimes, it is simply showing up.

I have experienced those moments firsthand. And I will carry them with me for the rest of my life. My father's passing has reminded me how precious and uncertain life can be. We do not always know what tomorrow will bring. We do not know when someone may need us. We do not know when one simple decision may change the course of someone's day or perhaps their life.

That is why we must not wait to do the good that God places in front of us. Call the Brother. Attend the event. Volunteer. Pray. Forgive. Invite. Show up. Serve. Be present. Create the Holy Moment.

Moving Forward Together
As we continue through this fraternal year, I return to the message I shared at my induction:

This is not a one-man show. Our Assembly will only become stronger if we all participate. The work before us belongs to all of us. The mission belongs to all of us. The opportunities for growth belong to all of us. And the responsibility to support one another as Brothers belongs to all of us. The four pillars of our Order **Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism** are not merely words we say or principles we display. They are meant to be lived. We live **Charity** when we serve those in need. We live **Unity** when we work together toward a common purpose. We live **Fraternity** when we stand beside one another through life's joys and struggles. And we live **Patriotism** when we honor and serve our country, our veterans, and those who have sacrificed so much for the freedoms we enjoy.

My prayer for this Assembly is that we continue to grow in all four. Not simply by adding more events. Not simply by attending more meetings. But by becoming more intentional about how we live as Catholic gentlemen. By becoming better husbands, fathers, sons, brothers, and Knights. By strengthening our relationship with God. By supporting one another. And by remembering that sometimes the greatest thing we can do for someone is simply be there.

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve as your Faithful Navigator. I am grateful for the confidence you have placed in me, and even more grateful for the love and support that my family and I have experienced during this difficult time.

Together, with God at the center of our lives, I believe we can continue to build an Assembly that is strong in faith, united in brotherhood, committed to service, and prepared to answer the call when our Church, our country, our community, or a Brother needs us.

Thank you, Brothers.

May God bless you, your families, our councils, our Assembly, and the work we do in His name.

Vivat Jesus!

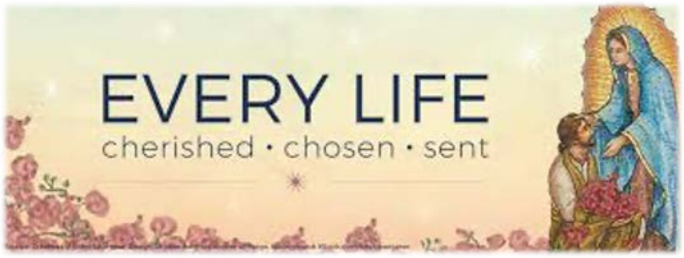


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When the Sword Pierces the Heart:
September and Our Lady of Sorrows

September enters quietly, almost as if creation itself knows what the Church is asking us to contemplate. The brilliance of summer begins to soften, the evenings grow shorter, and shadows stretch farther across the earth. There is a solemn beauty in this changing light. I t feels as though the world is being invited to slow down, to become still, and to look toward Calvary, where beneath the Cross stood a Mother whose heart had been pierced by a sorrow deeper than words could ever fully describe. September is traditionally dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows, and through her the Church places before us one of the most powerful truths of the Christian life: suffering does not have to destroy the heart. When united to God, suffering can become prayer, sacrifice, love, and ultimately a path toward grace.

Long before Mary stood beneath the Cross, the shadow of that Cross had already entered her life. In the Temple, the aged Simeon looked upon the infant Jesus and told His Mother that a sword would pierce her own soul. Imagine hearing those words while holding your newborn child. Imagine looking into the face of the infant Messiah, seeing His innocence, feeling the warmth of His small body against your own, and carrying within your heart the knowledge that somewhere beyond Bethlehem and Nazareth, sorrow was waiting. Mary did not know every detail of what would come. She simply trusted God. That trust would be tested again and again, through the flight into Egypt, the loss of the Child Jesus in Jerusalem, the growing opposition to His ministry, and finally the road to Calvary.

The Church remembers these mysteries through the Seven Sorrows of Mary: the prophecy of Simeon, the flight into Egypt, the loss of the Child Jesus, meeting Christ as He carried His Cross, witnessing His Crucifixion, receiving His lifeless body, and watching Him laid inside the tomb. These are not merely scenes from sacred history. They are the wounds of a mother's heart. Each sorrow reveals the cost of loving completely. Each one teaches that fidelity is not proven when life is easy, but when everything familiar has been stripped away and faith is asked to stand without understanding.

There is perhaps no image more haunting than Mary beneath the Cross. The sky has darkened. The crowd mocks. Soldiers stand nearby. Blood runs from the hands she once held when they were small. The brow she kissed as a child is crowned with thorns. The voice that spoke the universe into being now struggles for breath. Before her hangs the Son she carried within her body, the Child she protected, the boy she watched grow, the Messiah she knew had come from God. She cannot remove the nails. She cannot stop the soldiers. She cannot silence the crowd. She cannot take away His suffering. She can only remain beside Him, and that is exactly what she does.

There is enormous spiritual power in that act of remaining. The world often tells us that power means control, that strength means fixing what is broken, defeating what threatens us, or escaping what causes pain. Mary reveals another kind of strength. She teaches us that sometimes love has no power to change the circumstances before it, but it still has the power to remain faithful. Sometimes we cannot cure the illness, repair the marriage overnight, bring the dead back home, force the wandering child to return to the faith, or erase the wound that someone carries. Sometimes all we can do is stand beside another person's Cross and refuse to leave. Mary shows us that this too can be holy.

This is why devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows is not a devotion to despair. It is a school of courage. Mary's tears do not reveal weakness. They reveal the depth of her love. Her sorrow does not separate her from God. It draws her more deeply into the mystery of her Son's sacrifice. She teaches us that faith and grief can inhabit the same heart, that a Christian may weep and

still trust, that a Catholic may suffer and still hope, and that a wounded heart does not have to become a hardened heart.

Every family eventually discovers its own Calvary. There are mothers whispering prayers beside hospital beds. There are fathers carrying burdens their children may never fully understand. There are husbands and wives struggling through seasons they never imagined when they exchanged their vows. There are parents who continue praying for children who have wandered from the Church. There are veterans carrying memories that never completely leave them. There are widows and widowers who still look toward the place where someone they loved once sat. There are people who have repeated the same prayer so many times that they have begun to wonder whether heaven still hears them. Our Lady of Sorrows speaks to all of these hearts because she knows what it means to love in the presence of helplessness. She understands what it is to stand before something that cannot be changed and still choose faith.

September makes this meditation even more profound because the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross is celebrated on September 14, followed immediately by the Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows on September 15. The Church places these mysteries beside one another almost like two panels of the same sacred painting. First, we are asked to behold the Cross, then we are asked to behold the Mother standing beneath it. First, we contemplate the immeasurable sacrifice of the Son, then we contemplate the human heart that remained faithful beside Him. The Cross reveals how far God is willing to go for humanity. Mary shows us how deeply humanity can answer that love.

The month also surrounds this sorrow with signs of hope. On September 8 we celebrate the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, remembering the birth of the woman who would one day become the Mother of God. On September 12 we honor the Most Holy Name of Mary. Near the end of the month, on September 29, the Church celebrates Saints Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, the Archangels. Gabriel announced God's plan to Mary. Michael reminds us of the reality of spiritual battle. Raphael reminds us of the healing power of God. These feast days together form a powerful spiritual pattern. God calls, suffering enters, faith is tested, and grace remains.

September therefore asks something of us. It asks whether we will merely admire Mary's sorrow or allow it to change the way we carry our own. It asks whether we will pray when prayer feels difficult, remain faithful when answers do not come quickly, forgive when wounds still hurt, and stand beside those who are suffering when there is nothing we can do to fix their pain. It asks whether we will take up the Rosary again, meditate upon the Seven Sorrows, spend time before the Crucifix, visit the lonely, comfort the grieving, and offer hidden sacrifices that only God will ever see.

And when our own sorrow arrives, as it eventually does for every human heart, September points us toward the Mother beneath the Cross. Mary saw the stone rolled across the tomb. She experienced the silence that followed. She knew what it was to stand in the darkness between promise and fulfillment. Yet the tomb was not the end. The stone moved. Christ rose. Death surrendered to life. This is the great Catholic answer to sorrow. We do not pretend suffering is painless. We do not pretend death does not wound us. We do not deny the tears of Calvary. We proclaim that the Cross is not the final word.

The sword may pierce the heart, but it cannot possess it. Sorrow may enter our lives, but it does not have to conquer them. Darkness may surround us, but it cannot extinguish the light of Christ. Mary teaches us that faith sometimes means standing beneath the Cross long enough to discover that God is still present even when we cannot see what He is doing.

So let September become a month of holy remembrance. When our hearts are pierced, let us remember hers. When our prayers feel unanswered, let us remember her fidelity. When we are tempted to run from suffering, let us remember the Mother who remained. And when the night seems endless, let us remember what came after Mary's darkest hour.

The tomb opened. Christ rose. Sorrow gave way to glory.

Ad Jesum per Mariam. To Jesus through Mary.

Vivat Jesus.

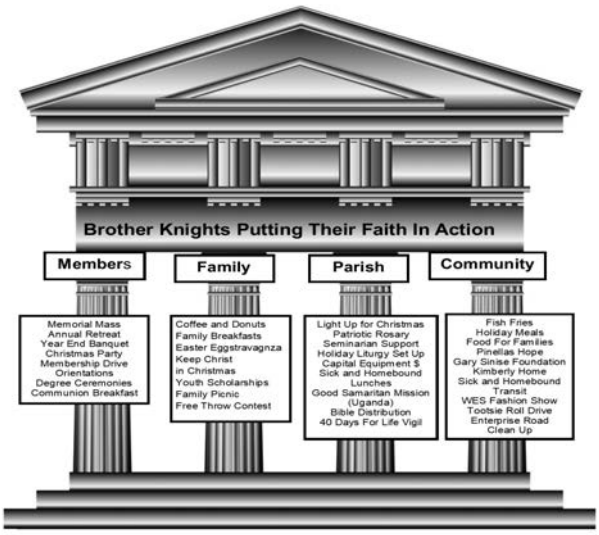


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BUILD THE COMMON GOOD

This is a very important Psalm, especially considering this month's editorial comment on the seventh commandment. Arguably, David is the most important King in the history of Judaism. Christ's Incarnation is in the line of David. He is that important. David was also a prolific author of Psalms. Yet David blessed as he was, like all men, was broken and flawed. Many of his Psalms are of praise and thanksgiving to God. In others, he recognizes his transgressions and seeks God's mercy, forgiveness and the strength to be a good servant. But yet, despite his power, he always recognized that his Lord was the source of his "power". He recognized that he was made in the image and likeness of God and his role was to reflect that both as a "man" and a King. Psalm 23 fully proclaims the Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I lack and he commits to dwelling in the House of the Lord all the days of his life. There are many great hymns based on David's Psalms. One I like is based on Psalm 91 and reflects his need for God's strength. **You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord, Who abide in His shadow for life, Say to the Lord, "My refuge, My Rock in Whom I trust." And He will raise you up on eagle's wings, Bear you on the breath of dawn, Make you to shine like the sun, And hold you in the palm of His Hand.**



PSALM 23

The LORD is my shepherd; there is nothing I lack. In green pastures he makes me lie down; to still waters he leads me; he restores my soul. He guides me along right paths for the sake of his name. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff comfort me. *You set a table before me in front of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6Indeed, goodness and mercy* will pursue me all the days of my life; I will dwell in the house of the LORD for endless days.

Special Announcement



Golf Tournament



Photo Gallery



SK Matt Sunski
Honorary Life Membership



Brother James McCarthy
New Third Degree



Brother David Hale
New Third Degree

Award and Certificate Presentation

WGK Tom Krivchenia presents…



SK Mike & Sue Engelmann
July 2026 Family of the Month



SK Doug de Wolfe
Service Award for State Raffle

Op-ed

THOU SHALT NOT STEAL
MORALITY AND THE ECONOMY

Anyone listen to Father Mike Schmitz Catechism in a Year? It's on Hallow for free. I recently listened to a couple segments on the Seventh Commandment. This tracked perfectly with this month's Psalm as well as current events in our society. Below is a reflection on the Catholic Catechism take on "stealing". It's much broader than simply taking a can of soda off a grocery store shelf. You can steal ideas. You can plagiarize words. You can steal human lives through the evil of abortion. You can redirect human lives through economic and government systems. That is, you can steal God given freedoms and beliefs.

This article reflects on a core value of our Declaration of Independence that our inalienable rights come from our Creator and not other broken men, Kings or not. This is what makes David's word in Psalm 23 so prescient. Here's what the Catechism has to say economic systems, the value of work and the pursuit of happiness. Paragraphs 2424 and 2425 relate: A system that "subordinates the basic rights of individuals and of groups to the collective organization of production" is contrary to human dignity. Every practice that reduces persons to nothing more than a means of profit enslaves man, leads to idolizing money, and contributes to the spread of atheism**. "You cannot serve God and mammon."** The Church has rejected the totalitarian and atheistic ideologies associated in modern times with "communism" or "socialism." She has likewise refused to accept, in the practice of "capitalism," individualism and the absolute primacy of the law of the marketplace over human labor. Regulating the economy solely by centralized planning perverts the basis of social bonds; regulating it solely by the law of the marketplace fails social justice, for "there are many human needs which cannot be satisfied by the market."

Thus, the Catholic Church rejects communism and socialism and refuses to fully accept the potential reaches of capitalism. She cautions against the primacy of the marketplace over human labor. There is a key difference, capitalism is not identified as either atheistic or totalitarian. Paragraphs 2430 and 2431 addresses the inherent value of honest labor as well as the role of government in protecting our economic "pursuit of happiness" following the core principle that human rights come from the Creator.

"Economic life brings into play different interests, often opposed to one another. This explains why the conflicts that characterize it arise. Efforts should be made to reduce these conflicts by negotiation that respects the rights and duties of each social partner: those responsible for business enterprises, representatives of wage-earners (for example, trade unions), and public authorities when appropriate. The responsibility of the state. "Economic activity, especially the activity of a market economy, cannot be conducted in an institutional, juridical, or political vacuum. On the contrary, it presupposes sure guarantees of individual freedom and private property, as well as a stable currency and efficient public services. Hence the principal task of the state is to guarantee this security, so that those who work and produce can enjoy the fruits of their labors and thus feel encouraged to work efficiently and honestly. Another task of the state is that of overseeing and directing the exercise of human rights in the economic sector. However, primary responsibility in this area belongs not to the state but to individuals and to the various groups and associations which make up society."

This is very important and complex explanation. It recognizes that man's rights come from the Creator and these include economic rights of fair wages and personal property. It also recognizes the existence and responsibilities of human governance in securing and protecting those rights. As Christ said to the Pharisees when questioned about Roman money, "Whose image is on the coin? Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." Father Schmitz puts it a little differently. The Church is responsible for principles. The government is responsible for policies.

In our Constitutional republic we get to choose policies that match our principles. Our church rejects "communism" and "socialism" as they are atheistic. Our church also notes that "capitalism" can be totalitarian and full of wanton greed. We get to choose a government that will best tie our principles to our policies, **"You cannot serve God and mammon."** Choose wisely. Know your principles.

From the Desk of Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly…

A Time for Witness

This milestone anniversary year in the United States invites Catholics to renew their commitment to Christ, country and the common good

By Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William E. Lori

As our nation approaches the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, we find ourselves invited into a moment of profound reflection and renewal. Anniversaries are not merely occasions for nostalgia or celebration. Authentic remembrance always orients us toward renewal; it calls us to consider not only who we have been, and who we are becoming - but, by God's grace, who we are called to be.

This anniversary can be a moment of grace if embraced also as a moment of responsibility. For while we rightly take pride in the achievements of our nation and the vibrancy of our Catholic faith, we cannot ignore the fractures, wounds and crises that mark both our national life and, sadly, even at times our ecclesial life. The task before us is not to romanticize the past but to offer a hopeful and credible witness today.

At the heart of this witness is a truth the Church never ceases to proclaim: The human person finds his or her full meaning and dignity only in Jesus Christ. As the Second Vatican Council teaches, "Christ … fully reveals man to man himself and makes his supreme calling clear" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 22). Our reflections on politics, culture, unity and civic responsibility must therefore begin - and end - with Christ, who reveals both the dignity of the human person and the path to authentic freedom.

BEING CATHOLIC IN AMERICA

Among the first words of Pope Leo XIV's pontificate was a call for unity - unity in the Church, and unity among the peoples of the earth. Unity is not a strategy; it is grounded in Christ, who prayed that his disciples might be one. Unity is not uniformity. It is harmony in diversity. It is the recognition that we belong to one another, even when we see the world differently.

Unity requires responsibility. It calls us to be united first in faith and service, thereby strengthening the communion of the Church, while simultaneously working for the good of the communities and nation in which we live.

From the beginning, Catholics in this country have wrestled with how to live faithfully in a culture that does not always share or support the Gospel. The Catholic experience in the United States has always included both gratitude and tension - gratitude for the freedoms we enjoy, and tension when those freedoms are used in ways that wound human dignity. Yet our history also shows that these tensions can be navigated with integrity. Catholics do not need to abandon their faith to participate in public life, nor do they need to abandon public life to remain faithful. Instead, our faith offers the compass we need to walk this path with clarity and hope.

Being Catholic in America has never meant uncritical allegiance, nor has it required withdrawal. It means allowing the Gospel to form our conscience, guide our choices and inspire our commitment to the common good. When we do that, we contribute not only to the unity of the Church but also to the healing and strengthening of our nation, helping it grow into the best version of itself, even when the journey is difficult.

THE WITNESS OF BLESSED MICHAEL MCGIVNEY

At this pivotal moment in our nation's life, we are blessed with a distinctly American witness in Blessed Michael McGivney, whose life embodies the virtues our time so desperately needs.

As a parish priest serving immigrant families, Father McGivney recognized the concrete wounds of his people - economic insecurity, social exclusion and cultural suspicion. His response was not ideological, but incarnational. He founded the Knights of Columbus, which fosters charity, unity, fraternity and a patriotic love that seeks the good of the nation without sacrificing fidelity to Christ.

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Father McGivney understood that charity is not abstract sentiment, but love made visible through solidarity and sacrifice. He understood that fraternity flows from baptism, not from political alignment. He understood that authentic patriotism is not blind allegiance, but a commitment to help one's country live up to its highest ideals.

In Father McGivney, we see a lived Christological anthropology: a man who knew that to follow Christ is to serve the whole person - body and soul - and to build communities where dignity is protected and hope is sustained. His witness reminds us that love of country and love of neighbor are not rivals, but companions, when rooted in the Gospel.

THE ROLE OF VIRTUE IN PUBLIC LIFE

A healthy republic does not rest solely on the strength of its institutions, its courts, or its electoral systems. It rests, above all, on the character of its people. The Founding Fathers themselves understood this well. John Adams famously wrote that the Constitution was made "only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other." His insight resonates deeply with the Catholic tradition, which has long taught that political life - not unlike personal life - requires virtue. Law guides and establishes structure, but virtue is what animates.

In our times, many of the crises affecting our political culture - polarization, suspicion, hostility and the temptation to reduce opponents to caricatures - are ultimately crises of the human heart. They arise from habits of vice: pride, anger, rash judgment, fear and greed.

A renewed political culture will not emerge from policy changes alone. It will require the cultivation of virtue, which begins in individuals and takes root in families. From there, virtue radiates outward into society.

For this reason, the renewal of our political culture cannot begin in legislatures or courts; it must begin in the places where the human heart is first formed. The family is the primary school of virtue, where patience, honesty, responsibility, forgiveness and concern for others are learned through daily life. …

The classical and Christian traditions identify four cardinal virtues - prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance - which form the moral framework needed for healthy political engagement. These virtues do not belong only to one party or ideology. They are the shared moral grammar that enables people of goodwill to work together for the common good.

A BEACON OF HOPE

In the midst of political upheaval, the Church does not withdraw from public life, nor does she align herself with any partisan identity. She remains what she has always been: a sacrament of unity, a beacon of hope and a teacher of truth. Her mission is not to win elections, but to form saints. Not to secure power, but to proclaim the Gospel. Not to mirror the divisions of society, but to heal them.

Our nation needs Catholics who embody this mission - women and men whose lives witness to the dignity of every human person, whose love bridges divides, whose courage resists hatred and whose faith insists that despair does not have the final word. The civic landscape may look dark at times, but the Church has lived through darker times and emerged stronger, purified and more faithful. So, too, can our nation.

The saints and countless others throughout time did not wait until circumstances were perfect before offering their lives. They responded to God's call amid turmoil, uncertainty and division. They remind us that hope is not optimism; it is fidelity. Hope is the quiet, steady conviction that God is at work even when we cannot see the path ahead.

As disciples of Christ and citizens of this great nation, we are called to that same hope. We are called to participate in the renewal of our political culture not out of fear, but out of love — love for God, love for neighbor and love for the country that has been entrusted to us. We are called to be saints for our time.

May God bless you and may God bless the United States of America.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The preceding text is excerpted and adapted from In Charity & Truth: Toward a Renewed Political Culture*, Archbishop Lori's pastoral letter of Feb. 9, 2026. The full letter and related resources are available at archbalt.org/charity-and-truth.*

From the Florida State Council Chamber…

Membership Is Our Lifeblood

The future of the Knights of Columbus is not determined by chance - it is shaped by the leadership of men who are willing to invite, inspire, and serve.

Every successful council is built on members who understand that leadership is more than holding an office. True leadership is setting the example, strengthening our faith, serving our parish, supporting our families, and extending a hand to the next Catholic man who is searching for purpose and brotherhood.

Membership is the lifeblood of our Order. Every new member brings new ideas, new energy, and new opportunities to expand our charitable mission. When we invite one man to join, we are not simply increasing our numbers - we are strengthening our Church, our councils, and our communities for generations to come.

As Knights, we are called to be visible witnesses of Christ through charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism. Our actions speak loudly, but our invitations can change lives. A simple conversation after Mass, an invitation to a council event, or sharing your own experience as a Knight may be exactly what another Catholic man needs.

Let us challenge ourselves to lead by example and to make membership growth a personal mission. If every Knight invited just one qualified Catholic man to join, our councils would flourish, our charitable works would multiply, and Blessed Michael McGivney's vision would continue to grow stronger than ever.

Together, let us build a legacy of faithful leadership, vibrant councils, and committed Catholic men who answer God's call to serve.

Lead With Faith. Invite With Confidence. Serve With Purpose.

Vivat Jesus!

State Deputy
Michael P. Gizewski

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A Prayer for the Family

Composed by St. Mother Teresa

Heavenly Father,
You have given us the model of life in the Holy Family of Nazareth. Help us, O Loving Father, to make our family another Nazareth where love, peace and joy reign. May it be deeply contemplative, intensely eucharistic, revived with joy.

Help us to stay together in joy and sorrow in family prayer. Teach us to see Jesus in the members of our families, especially in their distressing disguise. May the eucharistic heart of Jesus make our hearts humble like his and help us to carry out our family duties in a holy way.

May we love one another as God loves each one of us, more and more each day, and forgive each other's faults as you forgive our sins. Help us, O Loving Father, to take whatever you give and give whatever you take with a big smile.

Immaculate Heart of Mary, cause of our joy, pray for us.

St. Joseph, pray for us.

Holy Guardian Angels, be always with us, guide and protect us.

Amen.



Knights of Columbus®

Prayer for the Canonization of Blessed Michael McGivney

Founder of the Knights of Columbus

God, our Father, protector of the poor and defender of the widow and orphan, you called your priest, Blessed Michael McGivney, to be an apostle of Christian family life and to lead the young to the generous service of their neighbor. Through the example of his life and virtue, may we follow your Son, Jesus Christ, more closely, fulfilling his commandment of charity and building up his Body which is the Church. Let the inspiration of your servant prompt us to greater confidence in your love so that we may continue his work of caring for the needy and the outcast. We humbly ask that you glorify Blessed Michael McGivney on earth according to the design of your holy will. Through his intercession, grant the favor I now present (here make your request).

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

What's Happening?

Council Calendar of Events…

September 2026

- 09/09 | Wed 7:00p Dinner Dance Planning Meeting
- 09/10 | Thu 6:15p Rosary
- 09/10 | Thu 7:00p Council 7109 & Ladies Auxiliary Meetings
- 09/17 | Thu 8:00a Pinellas Hope Food Prep & Delivery
- 09/19 | Sat 8:00a Kimberly Home WorkDay
- 09/19 | Sat 3:30p Ministry Fair
- 09/20 | Sun 7:00a Coffee & Donuts
- 09/20 | Sun 8:00a Ministry Fair & KofC Membership Drive
- 09/26 | Sat 4:00p Tootsie Roll Drive
- 09/27 | Sun 8:00a Tootsie Roll Drive

Assembly Calendar of Events…

September 2026

- 09/14 | Mon 7:00p Golf Tournament Committee Meeting
- 09/24 | Thu 7:00p Assembly 2474 Monthly Meeting
- 09/28 | Mon 7:00p Golf Tournament Committee Meeting

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Knights of Columbus

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Prayer for our Nation

God our Father, Giver of life, we entrust the United States of America to Your loving care.

You are the rock on which this nation was founded.

You alone are the true source of our cherished rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Reclaim this land for Your glory and dwell among Your people.

Send Your Spirit to touch the hearts of our nation´s leaders.

Open their minds to the great worth of human life and the responsibilities that accompany human freedom.

Remind Your people that true happiness is rooted in seeking and doing Your will.

Through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, Patroness of our land,
grant us the courage to reject the "culture of death."

Lead us into a new millennium of life.

We ask this through Christ Our Lord.

Amen.

