



Supreme Master  
Michael McCusker  
suprememaster@kofc.org

# The Catholic Patriot

Supporting our Country, Community, and Church  
With

Respect and Honor

*Knights of Columbus Fourth Degree*



My Brother Sir Knights, Happy 124th Anniversary! Or, in other words, it's time to begin preparing on all levels of the Order to celebrate our 125th Anniversary on Saturday, February 22, 2025. In early summer, you will receive more information on how the Order plans to mark this historic occasion. In the meantime, begin in your own way on state, district, and local levels to discuss your plan of action for not only celebrating but increasing the number of knights in the ranks of the patriotic degree.

In last month's message, I focused on the words from Revelation "Behold, I make all things new!" Only a few weeks after I penned those words, I found myself at the Vigil Mass for the National March for Life at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., where, amazingly, Revelation 21:1-5a, was the first reading. No sooner were these powerful words of renewal read, when Psalm 117 followed, using the refrain "**You will be my witnesses to all the world.**"

Does this not more than adequately describe the Fourth Degree as the visible arm of the Order? More importantly, as we begin this 125th year of patriotic service, how can we be God's witnesses to all the world? In this call to witness, I am reminded of St. Francis of Assisi's powerful admonition to "preach the gospel at all times and if necessary, use words."

These are difficult days of discord in the world. Let us not add to the angry voices that seem to inundate all sectors of society. Instead, let us be witnesses to all the world by first being witnesses to the love of Christ. Let us not be so quick to judge others for their beliefs, but instead commit ourselves to listening to them, attempting to understand where they are coming from, and then lovingly responding as Christ's witnesses. As patriots, let us never forget that each of the nations comprising the Order were founded by men and women of varying opinions and beliefs who, nevertheless, were able to find common ground for the good of all.

Never forget that the word patriot comes from the word pater or father, meaning that a patriot is the son of the same father. Our one father is God in heaven. As His sons, let us, as brothers, begin this 125th year as His witnesses to the capacity to love and heal our broken world. Then, we will truly be patriots.

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| Director of Ceremonials<br>Micheal Thumm, FVSM<br>thummer75@md.metrocast.net<br>301-904-4373 | Director of Communications<br>Matthew Maly, PSD, FVSM<br>mattmaly602@gmail.com<br>405-708-1978 | Director of Membership<br>Bret Ladenburger, PSD<br>ladenburgerkofc@gmail.com<br>307-760-1003 | Director of Programs<br>Ron Boyce, PSD<br>rboyce39@aol.com<br>503-730-1986 | Director of Training<br>Michael Porter, PSD, FVSM<br>mjknight9282@aol.com<br>615-308-6777 | Director of Assembly Development<br>Dale Hofer, PSD<br>dalekofc@gmail.com<br>205-938-3253 | Administrative Assistant<br>Justyna Padilla<br>justyna.padilla@kofc.org<br>203-752-4437 |
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## Mary and Her Knights

Council and Assemblies team up to bring Mary back home to the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth Convent in Philadelphia.

Not to long ago, the Sisters were recently eating dinner when they witnessed a “disturbed young man” smash the Blessed Mother statue on their lawn.



Sister Michele, the Superior reached out to Rudy Muller, Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus St. Christopher Council 17997. Sister Michele was glad to hear Muller say, “We’re replacing that statue.” “It was very touching to hear that kind of response,” she said.

Knights of Columbus Councils St. Christopher 17997 and DeSoto 315 teamed with the Knights of Columbus St. John Neumann Assembly #933 and the League of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Police and Fire Association to raise money for a bigger new statue.



During KofC Council 17997’s second annual barbecue for the Sisters, the new Blessed Virgin Mary statue was dedicated and blessed.

People sang Immaculate Mary, and the Rev. Sean English – former parochial vicar at St. Christopher and now pastor at St. Stanislaus in Lansdale – offered prayer and sprinkled the statue with holy water. Sister Mary Annette Gailey, who is celebrating 25 years with the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, placed flowers in front of the statue. There are also lights for the statue.



Thank you to the eighteen dedicated members representing six (6) Assemblies of the Minnesota District Knights of Columbus Fourth Degree who participated in the Mass of the Holy Spirit at the Xcel Energy Center, celebrated by the Most Reverend Bernard A. Hebda, Archbishop and the Most Reverend Michael J. Izen, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. Special thanks to Former Masters Philip Harter and Robert Mathewson for participating.





## Assembly Training Challenge

Monthly challenge: Ask your Faithful Navigators to set up monthly training from the Drill Manual and the Manual of the Sword. This can be short 10-15 minute sessions that help prepare the members for call outs of all kinds.

Michael J. Porter, PSD, FVSM, Director of Training

***This month's suggestion:***

### Honor Guard / Without Swords

1. When leading a procession of dignitaries **without swords**. The Honor Guard is led to the rear of the church by the C.C.C. or M.
2. They will proceed in a column of twos by way of the center or main aisle from the rear to the front of the church, at which point the C.C.C. or M. shall **"Halt."**  
The Honor Guard will **"Halt"** in their places.
3. The C.C.C. or M. shall immediately **"About Face"** which will be the signal for the Honor Guard to **"Face"** toward the center of the main aisle.
4. The C.C.C. or M. will stand at the center of the aisle and begin to render a **"Hand Salute."** In unison with the C.C.C. or M., the Honor Guard will assume the **"Hand Salute"** position. This position is held while the procession at the rear of the church proceeds forward between their files.
5. After the celebrant passes his position, the C.C.C. or M. shall step forward to signal the Honor Guard to **"Return to Attention,"** take one **Pace** forward, **"Face"** towards the altar and **"Fall In"** behind the C.C.C. or M. The columns shall follow the lead of the C.C.C. or M., processing to the front cross aisle. The two files of Sir Knights separate by bowing to the altar and turning at the front cross aisle toward their respective side aisles.
6. The Honor Guard will proceed to the rear of the church. They will enter their designated pews from the side aisle and remain at **"Attention"** until all are in place.
7. Thereafter, they will follow the C.C.C. or M. in sitting, standing and removing the beret and tucking it under the belt, near the right hip over the right trouser pocket.

## Dates to Remember

### April 2024 Biennial District Meetings

#### April 22, 2024 Quarterly Training

*"Preparing Program Award Submittals"*

All assemblies are doing great at programs. It is a shame that we don't hear about all of them in your annual program reports. This training will assist District and Vice Supreme Master in developing tools to help your assemblies create a successful Award Submission. We will also discuss on your role in getting submission to Supreme in timely manner.

### Communication is the Key to Success



Ever heard the saying "A Leader is Only as Good as the Message they Communicate"? It is a fact in every business, organization, and yes, even families. Remember back to marriage counseling, your priest said "communication is the key to a long marriage. I might add positive communication to the above statement. Nevertheless, without good communication we really never get started. Think about it, would you ever got that first date without communication? I spent 21 years communicating to Volunteer Firefighters and learned one important thing: communication varies based on who you are working with.

This is true about assembly leaders as well, you have to understand their issues and obstacles before your can effectively communicate and motivate. The best method to understand others is to listen to what they are saying. Yes, good communicators listen before speaking. Actually, good communicators listen 70% of the time. Leaders that listen to those they lead are generally more respected. A leader that is respected can motivate those they lead. When leading volunteers you must be willing to listen if you want to be heard.

Matt Maly PSD, FVSM, Director of Communication

## Father McGivney Military Chaplain Scholarship

The Knights of Columbus Father McGivney Military Chaplains scholarship program was established in 2011 to help fund the education of seminarians preparing to become Catholic chaplains in the U.S. Armed Forces.

There are around 1.8 million Catholics served by the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA (AMS), worldwide. The Archdiocese has barely a third of the number of chaplains needed to meet the needs of those Catholic men and women. This is why AMS, created the "Co-Sponsored Seminarian Program" to recruit priestly vocations for the benefit of the armed forces. The military archdiocese contracts with participating dioceses and religious orders to fund 50 percent of the cost of a seminarian's five-year education. The seminarian is committed to three to five years of service as a military chaplain under the auspices of the military archdiocese.

Through this scholarship, the Order hopes to ensure the future development of the Co-Sponsored Seminarian Program, and increase the number of Catholic chaplains, to serve the Catholic men and women in uniform today. The Archdiocese of Military Services USA continues to recruit military chaplains at a great cost, and our Order-wide fundraising projects help support the program, which is led by Fourth Degree members, the patriotic degree of the Knights.

Supreme Master Michael McCusker would like to see a concentrated effort on this program during the winter & spring months. Our Assemblies need to inform our council members about the need to support the Father McGivney Chaplain Scholarship program, and to see if those councils that have Pennies for Heaven Funds would like to participate in this program. Let's help the Archdiocese of Military Service and our armed service men and women have a Catholic Priest available during their service.

These funds will help produce a new generation of much-needed Catholic chaplains to minister to U.S. military personnel and their families. For inquiries on making donation to the Military Chaplain Program, please see below:

If you need to reach the Office of Charitable Giving you can do so Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00am to 4:30pm Eastern:

Phone:1-800-694-5713

Email: [info@kofccharities.org](mailto:info@kofccharities.org)

Ron Boyce, PSD, 4<sup>th</sup> Degree Director of Programs



As a defender of the family, the Knights of Columbus were asked to lead the 51st Annual March for Life in Tucson AZ on January 20th.



This event started with a Mass for Life celebrated by Bishop Weisenburger followed by the march to Holy Hope Catholic Cemetery. Fourteen Sir Knights processed into the church. The route from the Cathedral to the cemetery covered approximately 5-miles.



As the Fourth Degree Ceremonial Director, I am here to assist the Vice Supreme Masters in any ceremonial area, primarily to help you schedule, plan, and conduct ceremonials. The use of the spread sheet to track Exemplifications is a great tool in getting us all to move forward in this area. If you haven't yet scheduled exemplifications throughout your province, or let me know of them, please work to get that done. So far we have scheduled 219 Exemplifications for this Fraternal Year and brought in 3,402 new sir knights that I am aware of. If you haven't told me the results of your exemplifications, then please do so. The Supreme Master is reviewing my draft of the updated drill manual. Also, I stand by to assist with the rollout of the updated Fourth Degree Ceremonial. In the future, expect a ceremonial for the hand down of the Provincial Sword! I'm here to help with all things ceremonial! Send me your questions, and let me know what you need!

Micheal Thumm  
Ceremonials Director

## **A New Year Offers a New Start in 2024**

On January 13, 2024, a Fourth Degree Exemplification was held at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Sun City West, Arizona. Former District Deputy and current Faithful Navigator, Sir Knight Joseph Shanks, an Air Force Veteran, the Class Honoree congratulated a class of 39 Sir Knights. The impression upon the new Sir Knights again was amazing, as one of them came to me saying, "Thank you, I am all fired up". It was also a welcome relief to have young Sir Knights, age 18 and 28 participate in this Patriotic Exemplification. Along with a priest there was also a Sir Knight who is serving our country in the US Air Force and a yet another from the Chandler Police Department.





Right To Life Mass held Annually at Saint Patrick's Cathedral in New York City on Sunday, January 14, 2024. Sir Knights from the First and Second Districts of New York and from the First and Second Districts of New Jersey attended as our continued joint shared support of each other for special events. Knights are pictured with NY Associate State Chaplain Father Brian McWeeney.

Guard was lead by District Master John Brandon (right) Former Vice Supreme Master Walter J. Wych (center) and District Master Mike Tully (left)



New Mexico's Santiago Assembly is fully active serving Color Guards for many events. Many of these involve local schools; serving at boys' and girls' basketball games in both Taos and Questa. This year, for the first time, they served Color Guard for a State Cheer Competition in Questa.

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Thank You for all the grant information this month. Keep it coming so we can highlight what your doing.

**Keep up the great work!**

Your 4th Degree Staff

Please send all newsletter information to

**[kofc4thnews@gmail.com](mailto:kofc4thnews@gmail.com)**