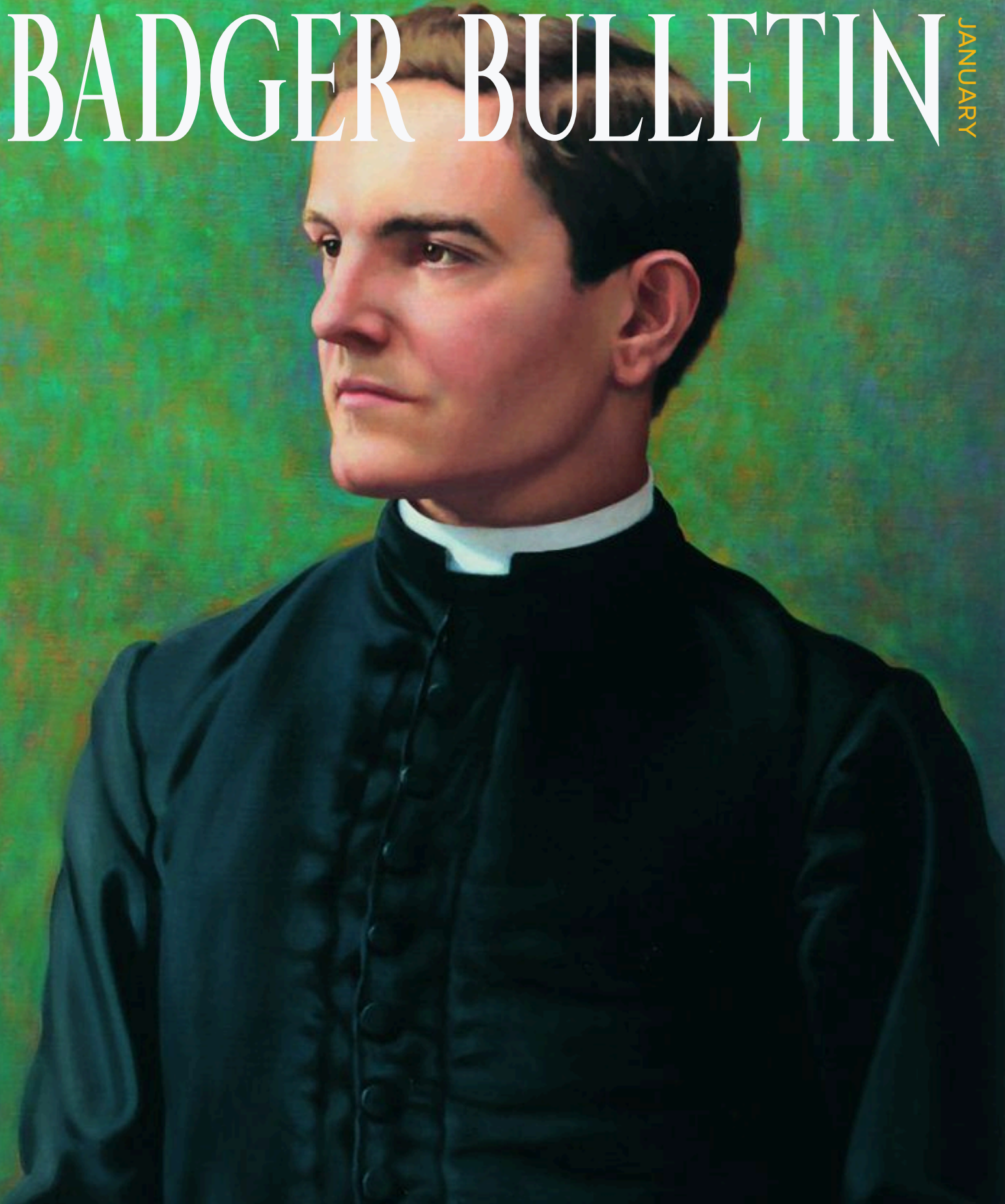




BADGER BULLETIN

JANUARY



Fraternal Benefit Event

Learn more about how you can align your finances with your faith.

Nowak Agency



Date: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 **Time:** 7:00 PM

Location: Zoom Webinar

Sponsor: Timothy Nowak Agency **Contact:** timothy.nowak@kofc.org

RSVP: www.kofcwi.org/Live-Events **RSVP by:** January 31, 2024



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STATE DEPUTY PATRICK REIFF



GREETINGS TO ALL AS we enter the year 2025. I hope everyone had a Blessed Christmas and a safe, healthy and happy New Year holiday.

In December, we held our Mid-Year Winter District Deputy Organizational Meeting in Stevens Point to bring our District Deputies up to date and to review their progress with their assigned councils for the first half of this fraternal year, and what direction we all need to pursue going into the second half.

Our goal is to stay On Mission with Blessed Father Michael McGivney's vision for the Knights of Columbus, providing Charity, Unity, Fraternity and to continue growing to ensure we are here to help those less fortunate for many years to come.

We were honored to have Past State Deputy (1998-2000) Wenzel Felber Jr. speak at our meeting. During PSD Wenzel's term, the Wisconsin Jurisdiction was at 40,000 plus members strong, and every council and district was active in fulfilling the vision of Blessed Father Michael McGivney.

Since that time our membership has declined to approximately 34,000 mostly due to many of our senior members passing on and taking a place with our Lord in heaven. May they all Rest in Peace.

We also realize the period of time that we all dealt with the Covid pandemic which had an impact as well as we stopped meeting together, going to Mass, inviting new men to join and our community access was extremely limited.

The good news is that we are growing again. Last year over 90,000 men joined the order worldwide and Supreme expects to easily pass that number this year worldwide. Young men are willing to join.

A recent survey by Supreme noted over 2,000,000 young men would be interested in joining a fraternal organization, and the reason they have not joined is because they were never asked.

I will be directing our state team to see what may have changed in Wisconsin over the years that has hindered use from maintaining that prior membership level. Your input is welcomed as well.

Supreme continues to offer a large variety of programs and webinars for us covering Life, Community,

Family, and Programs in general to promote reasons for families to join, renew a desire to live and support their faith, and return to Sunday mass as a family.

The other area I will be addressing is how our state organizational structure is currently functioning in supporting each other and you, our entire

membership in a timely and responsive manner.

We still have some open District Deputy, Diocesan Membership, and Program Coordinator positions to fill. As a result of these vacancies, those currently serving are spread too thin trying to cover those areas in addition to their own responsibilities. If you have the desire and interest in becoming more involved in our mission, let me know and I would be more than happy to discuss what opportunities are available.

Vivat Jesus!

“A recent survey by Supreme noted over 2,000,000 young men would be interested in joining a fraternal organization. The reason they have not joined is because they were never asked.”



STATE CHAPLAIN

FR. BRIAN DULLI



AS ANOTHER YEAR BEGINS, let us remember that we have a short time in which to serve God. In his book, *Divine Intimacy*, (p. 100f), Fr. Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen meditates on the swift passing of the days of our lives which never return. Each of us must make the most of the time given to us.

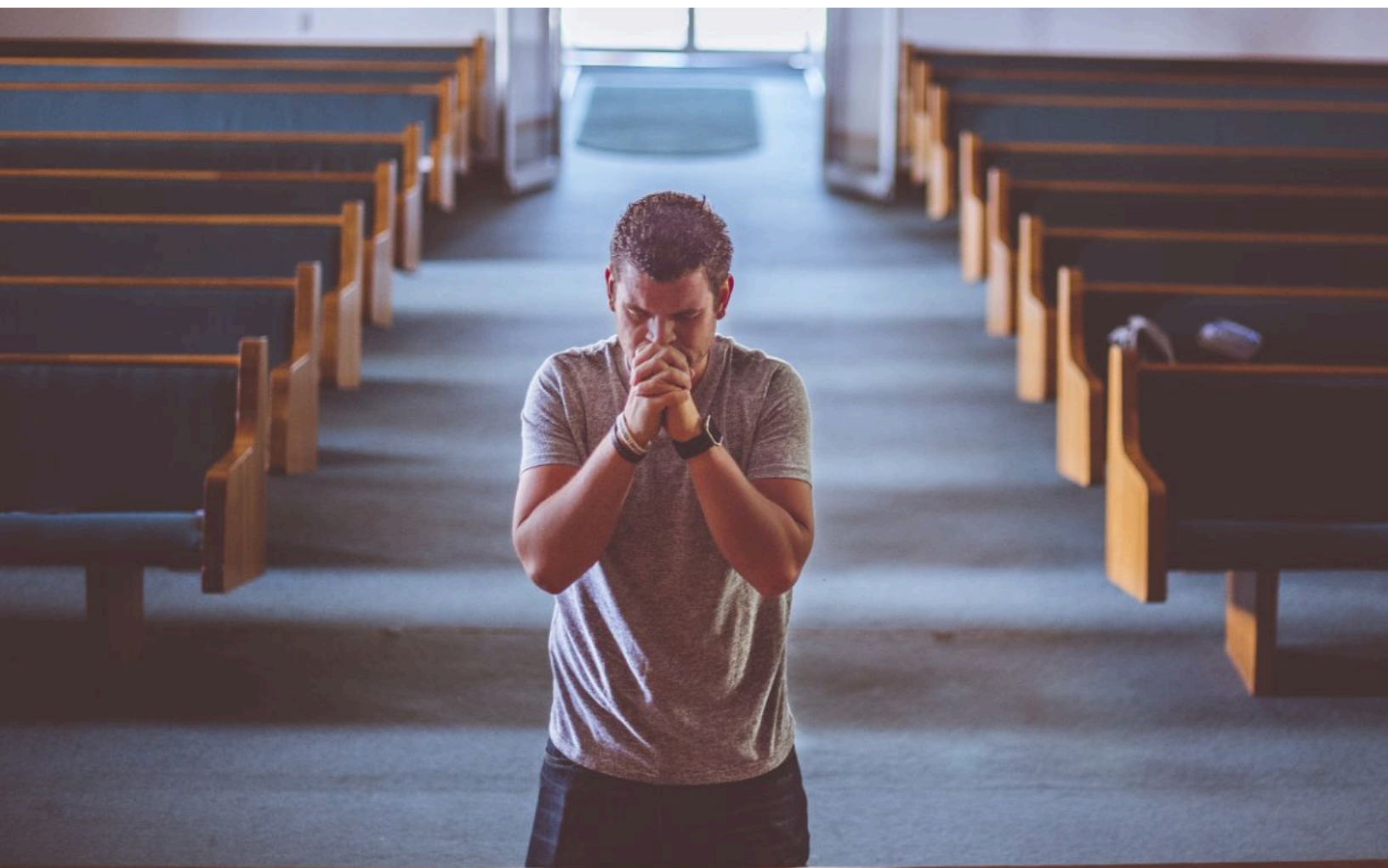
Fr. Gabriel describes the work that we each are given time to diligently carry out. It isn't just the work itself that matters to God. God cares about the way that we conduct ourselves in our

work. Most especially, each of us is responsible to undertake our work with love. At times we work well enough in the tasks that we are given, but still lack the fullness of love that we are capable of. Let us ask God to fill us with His divine charity. Fr. Gabriel says that God can restore all of the charity to our souls that we would have gained if we had acted such in the beginning. How good God is in His mercy.

Fr. Gabriel's reflection bids us to reflect on charity like it is an account that we accrue. When we acquire love, it is our own. Nobody can take it away. This is why St. Paul teaches that love is the greatest of all virtues. Love will last forever into the glory of eternal life.

Thank you for allowing me to share from this meditation. It was one of the most powerful pieces I have read in quite a while. As we have reflected on the nativity of Jesus, let us also remember that we each need to pray for a rebirth of charity in our own souls. It is not enough simply for us to know that we are loved, even by God. Our souls desire still more. We are not satisfied until we see God's love rooted from within our own hearts. This is charity, the greatest of the many gifts of our Lord, Jesus Christ. As we examine our lives in this new year, let us ask Jesus to endow our souls with supernatural charity.

Vivat Jesus!





STATE ADVOCATE DR. DAVID KREUTZ



A KNIGHT'S VIGIL ON CHRISTMAS EVE

THE AIR WAS CRISP on the evening of December 24th, and a layer of fresh snow blanketed the quaint town of Crestview, creating a picturesque winter wonderland. Twinkling lights adorned the local shops, and the cheerful sounds of Christmas carols filled the streets. Amidst the festive spirit, the smell of pine and cinnamon wafted through the air, wrapping the community in a warm embrace.

Among the townsfolk was Arthur, a dedicated Knight of Columbus. The Knight's heart was as big as the holiday spirit that surrounded him, especially when it came to vulnerable children. After taking the Praesidium youth protection training, Arthur was not only determined to ensure their safety but was also equipped with the knowledge and vigilance needed to recognize and respond to potential dangers.

That evening, Arthur was running a few errands at the local grocery store, where a group of teenagers had set up a table to sell holiday candies for the Caring and Sharing Center. Their joyful laughter and enthusiastic sales pitches were infectious as they reminded shoppers of the true spirit of giving.

Arthur couldn't help but stop by, purchasing a few treats while engaging in light conversation with the kids. Their faces lit up, brimming with pride for their efforts to support those in need. As he turned to leave, a moment caught his attention—a man standing too close to one of the youths, his

demeanor overly friendly as he observed their candy selections.

A sense of unease stirred within Arthur. This man, with his flashy jacket and broad smile, seemed too invested in the young seller, his proximity crossing the invisible line between friendliness and something more sinister. Arthur's training kicked in. Observation was key, recognizing the abnormal in what appeared to be a typical holiday scene.

As the man purchased armfuls of candy, he leaned in closer, asking the young seller to help him with the "heavy" cargo to his car. A cold shiver ran down Arthur's spine. Memories of his training flooded back, stories of children lured away by strangers. This could be an innocent gesture, or it could lead down a dark path. Either way, his vigilance would not waver.

With an air of casual confidence, Arthur followed at a distance as the youth and the stranger disappeared from view. He remained aware of every detail, his heart racing at the thought of danger. This was the moment to put his training into action.

Instinctively, Arthur quickened his pace as he saw the door of the stranger's vehicle close, trapping the young seller inside. Adrenaline surged through him. This was it. The Knight knew he could not stand by and watch.

"Hey! Excuse me!" Arthur called out, striding towards the car with purpose. The stranger turned, surprise rising on his face, quickly turning to irritation. "What's going on here?" Arthur demanded, his voice steady, embodying the valor his title bestowed upon him.

"Oh, we're just chatting," the man replied with forced nonchalance.

"Just chatting? It looks like you were trying to take him away," Arthur countered, raising an eyebrow. The

younger teen peered through the window, wide-eyed and confounded, quickly understanding the gravity of the situation.

Immediately sensing the shift in dynamics, the man's facade cracked. "I was only being friendly," he half-heartedly protested, but Arthur stood his ground.

"Friendly doesn't involve shutting a child in a car. Step away from him, now." There was a firmness in Arthur's voice, a protective instinct driven by his training and the understanding of the magnitude of evil that lurked in the world. The Knight's presence was more than just a man; it was a shield standing between innocence and darkness.

As the confrontation escalated, Arthur's phone was already in his hand, the authorities informed of the situation unfolding. The urgency of the moment pressed upon him—a crucial affirmation of the importance of vigilance.

Moments later, police arrived, responding swiftly to Arthur's report. The man, suddenly aware of the gravity of his situation, attempted to flee but was swiftly apprehended. The young seller emerged from the car, shaken but unharmed, and the Knights of Columbus connection to the community had proven its worth.

Afterward, Arthur and the youth, now safe, recounted the evening's events alongside a gathering of the other volunteers outside the grocery store. They reminded one another of the importance of observation and discernment, knowing the difference between normal and abnormal behavior.

"As Knights, it's our duty to ensure safety," Arthur proclaimed as others listened attentively. "We are more than just volunteers; we are guardians for those who need us the most. The

STATE ADVOCATE

DR. DAVID KREUTZ

training we take, like the Praesidium youth protection training, prepares us to act when it matters. We may not always see the devil lurking—after all, he cloaks himself in every semblance of normalcy—but through awareness and action guided by our God, we find the strength to cast him out.”

The youth nodded, their faith in community renewed. It was a powerful

testament to the spirit of Christmas, the embodiment of vigilance, kindness, and protection for the most vulnerable among them.

And with that, under the twinkling lights of a Christmas Eve long remembered, Arthur knew he had protected more than just a child; he had safeguarded the spirit of the holiday itself. In his heart, he

understood that every Knight had a role to play, a possibility to fight against the wickedness of this world, and with hope, they would always be prepared to act in the protection of the innocent.

Vivat Jesus!

This story is a fictional story centered around the themes of a safe environment and the importance of vigilance.





STATE SECRETARY

ROSS LARSON



I HOPE YOU HAD a very blessed Christmastide, surrounded by family, friends, and the joy of the season. As we step into the New Year, I'd like to share a few important updates and reminders with you.

The State Convention Portal is now open and active! It is the duty of each Council to send the Grand Knight and Immediate Past Grand Knight to the convention, to make sure they are represented. Alternates can be sent, but representation is essential to directing the State efforts. I encourage you to take a moment to sign up your delegates for the 2025 State Convention, which will be held at the KI Conference Center in Green Bay. Registration packets were distributed at the Winter District Deputy Meeting, so your Council should have already received all the necessary details about the upcoming convention, please ensure that your delegates are registered soon. This year, all materials are color coded to help understand the different steps in the registration process. I highly recommend signing up online and pre-paying for this event, as well as for the State Deputy's Dinner and the Ladies Luncheon. Early registration can not only save your Council money, but also assist the State in planning and making sure the event is as enjoyable as possible for everyone involved.

Delegates to the 143rd Supreme Convention Washington, D.C. August 5 – 7, 2025

The Supreme Convention is one of the most important events for the Knights of Columbus, and each year,

our state is granted the opportunity to send ten delegates to represent Wisconsin at this prestigious event. The State Deputy Patrick Reiff and the Immediate Past State Deputy John Huttenhoff automatically serve as the first two delegates. The remaining eight delegates are elected by the delegates attending the State Convention. It is important to note that all delegates must be Third Degree Knights in good standing, and at least half of the selected delegates must be Insurance Members.

The Supreme Council provides a per diem reimbursement for delegates attending the convention, amounting to \$400 per day for three days, as well as mileage reimbursement at \$0.30 per mile for travel to the event. This financial support helps to make the experience more accessible to those chosen to represent Wisconsin.

Since 2020, the Wisconsin State Council introduced an excellent opportunity for members seeking to become delegates to the Supreme Convention. Candidates for State Office and those interested in serving as delegates were invited to submit a Resume and Nomination Statement, which were then posted on the State Website. This initiative was greatly appreciated by the membership, as it allowed delegates to review the qualifications and experience of those to be considered, prior to the State Convention. This has added a level of transparency and has strengthened the election process but also helped delegates make informed decisions when casting their votes.

We are again asking all candidates for State Office or a Delegate to the Supreme Convention to submit a Resume, Picture, and Nomination Statement to be posted on the State

Website by April 1. All submissions can be sent via email to [me](#).

At the State Convention, delegates will nominate and elect the eight additional delegates who will represent our state at the Supreme Convention. According to the State Council Bylaws, only seated delegates at the State Convention have the privilege of making nominations and voting, although non-delegates may still be nominated. It is also worth noting that previous delegates to the Supreme Convention should refrain from seeking a nomination, ensuring that other deserving members are given the opportunity to serve as Supreme Delegates.

Delegates to the Supreme Convention should be individuals who have demonstrated exceptional leadership and have made significant contributions in promoting the core principles of the Knights of Columbus: Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism. The accomplishments of those being nominated should be highlighted in a nomination speech to help delegates understand the impact these individuals have had on our Order and our communities.

We look forward to seeing many dedicated Knights step forward to represent Wisconsin at the 143rd Supreme Convention in our nation's capital, Washington D.C.. Your service as a delegate is a great honor and an opportunity to contribute to the ongoing growth and strength of our Order. Thank you for your ~~commitment to the Knights of~~ Columbus, and may we continue to work together to make a difference in the lives of those we serve.

Please accept Lady Rebecca, and my prayers and wishes for a blessed 2025.

Vivat Jesus!



SPOTLIGHT

Racine Firehouse Installs First Safe Haven Baby Box in the City

St. Lucy's Council 15659
Racine, Wisconsin

Every few days, another newborn is tragically abandoned in the U.S., often left in dangerous places rather than safely surrendered under the protections of state Safe Haven Laws. Now, Racine has taken a major step to save these vulnerable lives. On December 10, Racine Fire Station 4 unveiled Wisconsin's third Safe Haven Baby Box. Thanks to the combined efforts of the Racine Fire Department, the Racine Knights of Columbus, Pro-Life Wisconsin, and Wisconsin Right to Life, local parents now have a completely anonymous, secure, and compassionate alternative to abandonment.

The Safe Haven Baby Box, installed at Fire Station 4, 3829 Washington Ave., enables a parent to open a secure hatch and place their newborn inside a climate-controlled bassinet. Once the door closes, a silent alarm notifies first responders, who immediately ensure the infant's safety and arrange for proper medical care and placement. Under Wisconsin's newly expanded Safe Haven law, infants up to three days old can legally be surrendered without fear of prosecution, no questions asked.



This lifesaving resource took a year of careful planning and collaboration to bring to Racine. Community support was overwhelming: The Knights of Columbus and Pro-Life Wisconsin provided critical funding, and Governor Tony Evers recently signed legislation making baby boxes legal statewide. The Racine box is the 296th in the nation, each inspired by Monica Kelsey, who founded Safe Haven Baby

Boxes after learning she was abandoned as an infant herself.

"Racine is so blessed," said Philip Diehn, Grand Knight of Council 15659. "This Safe Haven Baby Box provides another way to save lives." Mayor Cory Mason applauded the project, calling it "a real gift to the community" and thanking the fire department and city council for their leadership.

For any parent in crisis, the Safe Haven Baby Box offers hope, compassion, and total anonymity.

If you or someone you know needs

help, call or text the 24/7 Safe Haven Baby Boxes hotline at 1-866-99-BABY-1 or visit shbb.org.





GENERAL AGENT *KENNETH BASEL*



HELLO, MY NAME IS Kenneth A Basel, (“Ken” for every occasion where I am not getting scolded by my mother.) I am proud to serve as the General Agent for the Knights of Columbus Insurance covering Southern Wisconsin market. It is an honor to be part of an organization that truly values community, faith, and service, and I am excited to share a bit about myself, my family, and my role here.

With a background in the insurance and financial services industry for the last 11 years, I have dedicated my career, which I consider my vocation to helping individuals, families, and businesses achieve their financial goals. I am also a licensed Investment Advisor Representative (IAR), which allows me to offer Catholic-approved mutual funds through Knights of Columbus Asset Advisors. This unique combination of roles enables me to

provide our members with financial products that are not only secure but also aligned with their values and beliefs. An important aspect of my position is recruiting and training new agents, as well as nurturing and growing our existing team. I am passionate about mentoring new talent, sharing my experience, and ensuring that each team member is equipped to provide the best service possible to our members. Together, we can strengthen our community and enhance the lives of those we serve.

On a personal note, I am fortunate to share my life with my wonderful wife, Tammy. We’ve been happily married for 15 years and are the proud parents of two daughters and twin stepdaughters, all of whom are now adults. As empty nesters, our house feels a bit quieter, but that quiet has been replaced by the love and energy of our two dogs, Banx and Hattie.

I believe that being involved in our community is essential, both personally and professionally. I am eager to connect with our members

and parishes through workshops, seminars, and community events, where we can discuss financial strategies and the values that unite us as Knights of Columbus. My goal is to create and nurture an environment where families feel empowered to make informed decisions about their financial futures.

As I embark on this journey as the General Agent for Knights of Columbus Insurance in Southern Wisconsin, I am committed to serving our members and helping them navigate their financial paths. I am excited about the opportunity to build lasting relationships, recruit new talent, and create a thriving team that is focused on our mission of recruiting new members, promoting financial security and enhancing lives.

Thank you for welcoming me into this remarkable community. I look forward to meeting all of you and working together to secure bright futures grounded in our faith and shared values!

Vivat Jesus!



MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

COREY COONEN



FULL DISCLOSURE, ONE OF the most difficult things for me to do each month is to try and find something ‘new’ to write on for these articles. After writing articles as a State Deputy and now the last 2 ½ years as a Membership Director—it’s hard to find always something ‘new’ and different to write on as most of these items over time seem to possibly be a broken record.

As we enter into 2025, we are halfway through the Fraternal Year. 6 months remain for Councils to reach their goals, as well as the State Council to try and get back on track with Membership Growth and achieving recognition from Supreme.

As someone that enjoys looking at the history of our performance over the years as well as comparing ourselves to other States and seeing any trends that are occurring, a few things that should be mentioned. Wisconsin closes the month of December ranked 40th out of 75 States. About 2 months ago Wisconsin was ranked closer to 30th in the order and 3rd in Division 2 States. At present, we are number 5 of 11 Division 2 State Jurisdictions. In order words, we rank in the middle.

At best in the last few years, Wisconsin finished 4th out of our division 2 counterparts and were ranked 29th for the Fraternal Year 2021-2022. In Fraternal Year 2022-2023, Wisconsin finished 5th in Division 2 and 41st overall (like where we currently stand). Both years we hit the Supreme Knight’s ‘Circle of Honor’

recognition. This goal is like a local council achieving Star Council. This is what all of the State Leaders and Diocesan Leaders are trying to achieve—to be recognized with the best of the best.

What’s different from these 2 years in reference is that for us to achieve this membership goal set by Supreme, we need to bring in roughly 20% more members than we did during those 2 Fraternal Years.

As we sit at the midway point, we are roughly 42% of the way towards our goal. We must work harder and be more vigilant in inviting every man the opportunity to be a Knight of Columbus, which is the challenge set forth to us by the Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly with his *Fishers of Men* initiative.

If each of our councils took the personal challenge to invite at least two new men into your council these next six months, then Wisconsin will once again achieve our Intake Goal. Sounds simple, right?

Unfortunately, our work is cut out for us, because in the first six months of this Fraternal Year, roughly 45% of our Councils have brought in a new member. That means that over half of our councils have yet to invite and bring into their council a new member this Fraternal Year. Why is that?

Membership Growth, absolutely, is a challenge, yet it is said that anything worth doing should be a challenge. The struggle is real, keeping on asking!

Do we not have programs that attract men to join? Do we not invite men to join when we conduct said programs?

Are we active in our Parish Communities, serving the needs of our

Priest? If so, maybe your priest can assist with making formal invites to potential new members.

We have so many opportunities in front of us with the programs that we conduct and the support that we pledge to our Parish families, yet if we fail at inviting new members to assist us in these efforts and to become a part of our Fraternity, then unfortunately we will only make our future that much more challenging to conduct the same programs and make the same efforts.

I have been blessed first-hand to have a role in the State leadership for the last 6 plus years and have seen first-hand the impact that our Culture of Life Grant Program, the Intellectual Disabilities (ID) Program, the Charity Grant Program along with our Distance Relief Program has for those organizations and individuals in need.

Where there is a need there is a Knight.

Let’s ensure that we can continue this mantra into the next many years by challenging our Council this January thru March to at least bring in two new members into each of our Councils by conducting drives or informal invites to men through the programs we will conduct.

It may sound like beating the proverbial dead horse, but simply put:

I have never heard a man regret joining the Knights because he was invited to join.

Let’s finish this 2nd half of the year strong in membership growth! We are here to help, so please let us know what we can assist you with.

Vivat Jesus!



ONLINE MEMBERSHIP

JOHN HUTTENHOFF, IPSD



AS OF DECEMBER 20, we have assigned a total of 272 new E-members since July 1. 43 of these joined in the past month. Thank you.

So far Councils have transferred 203 E-members into Councils this Fraternal Year. Roughly 46% of Council Intake this year has been through E-members. We are still a bit behind where we would like to be here.

We continue to focus on getting Every Council and Every District Active. We still have 194 Councils that have not brought in a new member this Fraternal Year. Given that we currently have 44 pending e-members from last year, and 101 more pending e-members from this year, we have a great opportunity to greatly reduce these numbers by reaching out to these E-members and inviting them to attend an Exemplification and Join a Council today.

Grand Knights and Financial Secretaries can find these Assigned E-

members on their Prospects Tab in Officers Online. Please make it a priority to reach out to these e-members this month and bring them into your Councils via an Exemplification.

As you are doing your programs & church drives, be sure to include the e-membership online invitation app in your invitation process to potential members.

WGK & WFS please frequently review your councils **Prospect** tab and if you are having difficulty in making contact, or any other issue, please email me regarding these outstanding assigned e-members and I will gladly assist you with reaching a remedy. Remember, The **Prospect** tab shows you e-members that have joined your council online via the Supreme app. and the date field is used when they have completed their exemplification. Prospect tab training is available at this [link](#).

Supreme presented a Webinar in December: Transferring Online Members to Council Membership. You can watch it [here](#).

The **Candidate** tab is what you use when you recruit a member locally or are handling a member transfer request or a reinstatement of a prior member. The candidate tab training covers new members and transfers into local councils. Here is the [link](#).

Again, the date field is the date they were exemplified by your council. Once you enter those dates in either tab, the members will be automatically transferred to your council's roster within the next week.

Do not send Form 100's to Supreme for new members, keep them for your councils records. If you must use a Form 100, scan it, and email it to Supreme. Keep the original for your council records.

If you have any questions or concerns, contact me, I am in your State Directory.

Together, Let's get it done!
Vivat Jesus!



MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL and a blessed New Year. Hope all is well with your families and friends.

Remember the proceeds of the raffle tickets you sell go to help families with unexpected financial needs. It is not too early to sell those tickets and turn those tickets into your council chairman, so that we can start building

those proceeds. The first turn-in for deposits was due mid-December. Please send what you have sold to your Diocesan Charity Coordinator. Next turn-in date is by mid-February. Reminder they cannot be shipped through the US Postal Service.

I would like to announce Michael Haight, La Crosse Diocesan Coordinator, has accepted the position as Assistant State Director of the Charity Committee. Michael has served the charity raffle committee for

several years. My professional career is involved in the merging of three parishes into one parish, which has brought additional responsibilities. I appreciate Michael for stepping forward to help us out. The plan would be for Michael and myself to work together over the next six months with Michael to become the State Charity Director. Please pray for the continued success of charity raffle program throughout this transition period.

Vivat Jesus!

SPOTLIGHT



4th Degree Exemplification Ceremony in Platteville



STATE COMMUNITY & YOUTH PROGRAM DIRECTOR *BILL FRAYER*



HOPE YOU HAVE HAD a wonderful Christmas Holiday! Looking forward into January with the start to the second half of our '24-'25 Fraternal Year, there is still much to be done. As I write this, I've just heard of the passing of former President Jimmy Carter, arguably the guiding light behind the Habitat for Humanity program for decades. He and his wife Rosalyn literally helped to build many thousands of homes for the poor in their years of leadership and service with Habitat around the world. I can think of no better way to honor his memory and better time to increase our KC involvement with Habitat than to have every Council in Wisconsin go out of their way to get involved in a Habitat project in your area this month! Be it on the job, fundraising and making a donation, volunteering at their Re-Store outlet or all the above, let's focus on this Community program this month.

Beyond that, there's still time to do a late winter or spring Coats for Kids Drive, fundraise and purchase Wheelchairs, organize or complete a Helping Hands project or get involved in Disaster Preparedness in some capacity. Don't let the cold and snow bog down your activity level!

On the Youth programs front, we have the following:

- ♦ Citizenship Essay Council winners should have been sent to DPCs by December 31. The Diocesan winners should be to me by January 15.
- ♦ Christmas Poster Council winners should have been sent to DDs by December 31. This District winners are due to the DPCs by January 15 and to James Vosters by January 31.
- ♦ Culture of Life Essays are due to be written in January and February; due to Councils by March 15; judged and winners sent to DPCs by March 31. Current information is on the State website.
- ♦ Any fall Soccer results should be now in my hands. Soccer and

Hockey Council contests can be held indoors in January-March.

- ♦ Window for Knowledge and Free Throw Council Contests is now open in January and February. Current information packets for both contests are on the State website. Council level test links have been sent to Grand Knights, DDs, DPCs.

For the Knowledge Contest, Councils can run contests up to March 20.

For Free Throw, Councils can run contests up to March 2. District Free Throw Contests will be run March 7-23. If only 1 Council in a District does Free Throw, then they can also go up to March 23 for their contest.

Diocesan Contests for Knowledge and Free Throw will be held between March 29-April 27. The State Contests will be held in Wisconsin Rapids at Assumption High School on Saturday, May 3.

Hope you all have a happy, blessed, healthy and safe New Year!

Vivat Jesus!



FOURTH DEGREE

JACK WRBANICH

DUANE ZABOROWSKI



THE FOURTH DEGREE OF the Wisconsin Knights of Columbus has two scheduled exemplifications: April 12 on the Eastern Side and May 3 on the Western Side. Both exemplifications will be special events honoring the 125th Anniversary of the Fourth Degree of the Knights of Columbus. These will be historic celebrations at each location with the goal of 125+ new candidates at each location. Your challenge is to find those men that will become Sir Knights at these exemplifications. We realize that this is a large number of men as candidates, but we have the full support of the State Officers as well as Supreme. We ask all Assembly leaders to recruit 1-5 candidates to send to these events. We also ask each Council Grand Knight and Financial Secretary to also recruit 1-2 candidates to become Sir Knights. If everyone makes this attempt, we will be successful in achieving the goals set by Supreme.

If your Assembly or your Council has brother knights interested in joining the Fourth Degree, please contact Master Jack Wrbanich or Master Duane Zaborowski about the situation. Master Duane has a special exemplification scheduled on Sunday, January 12, 2025 near Superior. We will bring in Brother Knights into the 4th degree. If you can make that event, please reach out to Master Duane. This might be one of the final times to participate in the "old" exemplification as the degree will change effective February 23, 2025. Both the Eastern Master and Western Master will consider scheduling a local

exemplification to get men into the 4th degree especially taking into account your location. We hope that have large exemplifications to attract more men to the Fourth Degree. Please talk to your area Master to get more information.

The Fourth Degree is currently in the final two months of conducting a census of the entire Knights of Columbus membership to establish a record of service in the Korean and Vietnam Wars. We would also like to document service of deceased members for these two wars. For the Korean War, you need to have served between June 25, 1950 – July 27, 1953 and have been either on permanent assignment or temporary duty for 30 consecutive days or 60 non-consecutive days within the country of Korea. For the Vietnam War, you must have served between July 3, 1965 – March 28, 1973 and have been on permanent assignment or temporary duty for at least 30 consecutive days or 60 non-consecutive days in combat with a unit directly supporting military operations in Southeast Asia. If your Assembly has not reached out to you or your Council, please reach out to either your Assembly or to one of the Masters with the above information. We will need to know the years/dates in service and the branch of service. The Masters have a deadline of February 28th to submit this information to Supreme.

Members of the Patriotic Degree are an integral part of the Order, and we serve our brother Knights, we proudly foster patriotism in each nation in which we are active and we act on what is right and honorable. Being an honor guard is only part of the Fourth Degree. The uniform is what makes us visible but it is the other things that we do that will make us more visible as

Knights. Even without the uniform, you can still participate in funerals, masses, meals, and help out your parish and your priests. You can try spearheading a fundraiser for a pregnancy center and get the matching funds from Supreme, help at the various services provided for veterans.

Honor Flights from the state of Wisconsin will be resuming in the spring. Stay tuned to future newsletters for exact dates and locations. You can support Honor Flights by making donations to support a veteran being on the flight, being in attendance when the flight returns from Washington D.C. and greeting their return or write letters to be given to the veterans at Mail Call on the flight.

Finally, a word to our Faithful leaders of our Fourth Degree Assemblies. It is never too early to start completing the paperwork for the various awards such as the Patriotic Award and the Civic Award. The District Masters do realize that you do all this work and don't always get recognition for it. We know it is not about the recognition here on earth, but it does matter to Supreme. We have 55 Assemblies in the state of Wisconsin, we should have all 55 Assemblies receive one or both of the above awards which could then be delivered to your assembly by the Masters. Remember to complete two more forms: (1) a listing of your new Assembly officers by August 1st and (2) your annual Assembly audit report. These last two are mandatory. Please complete them as soon as possible.

"Sir Knight" is not just a title, it is an Honor. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Vivat Jesus!



Ultrasound Projects

St. Gianna Clinic in De Pere, Our Lady of Hope Clinic in Madison, and Women's Care Center (Farwell Ave.) Milwaukee. Congratulations to Councils #10714, #17889 & #3562 for your leadership in these ultrasound initiatives. Lake Geneva Council #1647 is organizing a ultrasound project for New Day Women's Clinic in Delavan, details forthcoming! If your council would like to help, please send your checks to the names and addresses listed on this page.

Special Olympics

The Wisconsin Knights of Columbus have agreed to have boots on the ground for all Special Olympics of Wisconsin (SOWI) statewide events. There are five events (Fall Games, Bowling, Winter Games, Spring Games, Summer Games). We look forward to seeing your council at one of their statewide events!

SOWI State Bowling Tournament: A Great Success

Hundreds of Special Olympian Bowlers set their sights on Weston, Wisconsin the weekend of December 7-8, and what a great time the athletes had! There were many great competitors from all over Wisconsin! Many thanks to the many Knights that I saw there who were helping out.

Next up for the Special Olympics of Wisconsin: Winter Games!

Saturday, February 8 @ 8:00 am
Sunday, February 9 @ 5:00 pm
Location: Nine Mile Forest and Granite Peak in Wausau!

Wausua Area Knights! We need your help to feed about 150 athletes on Sunday, February 9 at the Nine Miles Recreational Forest, located at 8704 Red Bud Rd. in Wausau, WI. Below are a few details that I found in the notes:

- Service at Nine Mile Forest
- Cook away from Nine Mile and bring it to
- SOWI will have some Nescos available
- Pancakes, sausage, juice, coffee
- Power for Nescos
- Breakfast from 8:30-9:30 am

Contact Dan Miller if you can help with this project!

Dan.M@ProLifeWI.org
262-993-6262

More detailed information can be found at specialolympicswisconsin.org.

Safe Haven Baby Boxes

There has been a lot of discussion about the Safe Haven Baby Boxes and how the KofCs can get involved. Elkhorn just cut the ribbon at their firehouse on Monday, November 25th. [Click here for pictures!](#) The Knights Of Columbus took lead roles in making these baby boxes available. Racine is ready to go as well. Their ribbon cutting event was on December 10. I am told that Sturgeon Bay is organizing one at their local hospital!

- Money: Councils can sponsor an installation, in full or in part, through Safe Haven Baby Box, Inc. or through a grant fund set up through Pro-Life Wisconsin. Specific project sponsorships must have a signed contract with Safe Haven Baby Boxes, Inc. The effort can also be sponsored by

writing checks to Pro-Life Wisconsin with "Baby Box" in the memo, which help provide money for the funds. Donors who want the tax write off should be instructed to send their donation either to Safe Haven Baby Boxes, Inc. and have them earmark it for a Baby Box in Wisconsin, or to Pro-Life Wisconsin, with Baby Box in the memo line of your check.

- Get the ball rolling in your community to have one installed. Start with your fire chief. These boxes must be installed in an area that is manned 24/7/365, typically a police station, hospital ER or local fire station. Call Safe Haven Baby Boxes, Inc. at 888-742-2133 to get started.

Ultrasound Projects

17889

St. Maria Goretti Council
GK Justin Knapp
255 Park St.
Oregon, WI 53575
(262) 994-0319
jwknapp98@gmail.com

10714

Fr. Claude Allouez Council
Peter Tilleman
3155 E River Dr.
Green Bay, WI 54301
920-737-0630
ptilleman@gmail.com

3562

Kettle Moraine KC
Tyler Feldkamp
211 Park Ave.
Pewaukee, WI 53072
920-205-7483
tyler.feldkamp@gmail.com



ASAP Grants

Hopefully the month of December left your council's checking account EMPTY after giving away all your money to pregnancy centers in your area! For every \$500 (up to \$2,000) you gave to a maternity home or pregnancy center, Supreme Council will give that non-profit entity another \$100! But, you have to [apply for it!](#) Always best to apply online! If you need help with that, let me know and I'll help walk you through it or you can

give me the information and I will apply for you online!

Choose Life Wisconsin Grant Fund

Any pro-life pregnancy center or maternity home can apply for a grant from Choose Life Wisconsin, the Choose Life Plate People! Apply at ChooseLifeWisconsin.org any time.

More Choose Life Wisconsin plates means more money for Choose Life Wisconsin to help the pregnancy centers of Wisconsin. It's only another

\$25 when you renew your registration on your car! 100% of those funds go to the pregnancy centers! Currently, we have about 2,500 plates on the road. Every pro-life person should have these plates proudly displayed on their car! [Apply here for your Choose Life Plates!](#) The application is a PDF and you have to mail it in with your check.

Vivat Jesus



PUBLIC RELATIONS

JACK WRBANICH



AS WE USHER IN a new year, Councils across Wisconsin are reaffirming their commitment to fostering stronger, more meaningful connections within their communities and parishes. Through refined public relations strategies, Councils should aim to highlight their longstanding values—charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism—and ensure that their

service projects and faith-inspired initiatives receive the visibility they deserve.

Key PR resolutions for the coming year include more consistent use of social media platforms to share Council success stories, enhanced collaboration with local media outlets to promote upcoming events, and modern, user-friendly newsletters that clearly present their mission and achievements. By prioritizing transparent communication, Councils will strengthen relationships with parishioners, neighbors, and civic

leaders, ultimately drawing more people into their charitable works and spiritual activities.

These renewed PR efforts will help reinforce the Knights of Columbus' position as a trusted community partner and a force for good. In the year ahead, Councils should strive to ensure their traditions are preserved and more widely understood, inviting others to join them in building a more compassionate, service-oriented world.

Vivat Jesus!



FAITH PROGRAMS

DENNIS BEDNAREK



CHRISTMAS DAY HAS PASSED with the birth of our Lord but remember the Christmas season does not end until the feast of the Three Kings that was on the 12th day after Christmas. However, the church often moves this day to be celebrated on the 2nd Sunday of the New Year, which this year falls on January 12th. Some eastern European cultures extend the Christmas season until Candlemass which is based on Lukes Gospel 2:22-40 where Jesus was presented at the temple the 40th Day of the Christmas season or February 2nd. Regardless of your tradition I hope you and your Families continue to have a merry and glorious Christmas season.

As we leave the Christmas season we need to start planning ahead. Ash Wednesday this year is March 5th and marks the beginning of Lent. You may think that it is 3 months away but in reality it is only 9 weeks away and only two membership meetings for you to plan your Lenten programs. Your January meeting should include a discussion on what Programs your council will do for Lent in preparation for the holiest week in the Church. Some programs for Lent to consider are: weekly Stations of Cross, sponsoring a Faith based a Speaker, and Spiritual Reflection programs such as Into the Breach that are geared for Lent. But do not limit yourself to just these, many councils have great creative programs. Also keep in mind that Holy week is the celebration of the First Eucharist and on Easter a Eucharistic procession is very common. If your Council does not have a Eucharistic Canopy or

baldacchino for outdoor processions, please consider a fundraiser in your parish to get one for your Parish which will enable them to have Eucharistic Processions more frequently.



Sacred Heart of Jesus icon

The new Pilgrim icons featuring the Sacred Heart of Jesus will be in Wisconsin shortly for multiple years, so if your council does not get it this year you will still get multiple opportunities in the future. The icon is based on the image popularly associated with devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus that is currently in the Gesù. It symbolizes Christ's love, compassion and mercy. Each framed icon bears the blessing of Pope Francis

While I have created a schedule for the icon I will not release the schedule until the icons are in Wisconsin with the initial supply of literature. It has been rumored that we will have 6 icons but we were only given four icons in the past so I want to assure the schedule I created will be viable. My plan is to start the rotations in each of the cathedrals of our five dioceses. The

first pass of the schedule is currently in the hands of the Diocesan Directors for review. However, no starting dates are established yet. Upon receipt of the icons the schedule will be sent out by flock notes to all DD's and GKs, as well as published on the State website.

The rotation will be by Council rather than by District. However the Diocesan Directors, District Deputies and myself will help you in any way that we can. Remember the Grand Knights will be the prime responsible person when your council receives the icon. You are responsible to coordinate the transfers to and from your Council as well as the services. Remember to utilize your councils faith director and programs director to assist you. Each council will have the icon for one week to make scheduling easier and to allow multiple events especially in councils that may be serving multiple parishes.

With each icon there will also be bag containing program resources. This bag should remain with the icon and if resources become low I should be notified to order replacements from Supreme. In each bag, there will be a log book where each council should enter each service they have with the icon. On June 1st, the log books need to be sent to me and you will receive replacements to travel with the icon.

Remember, this is an icon of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and we are still in a period of Eucharistic revival. It would be ideal if each service with the icon included a Holy Hour. As you schedule these services, do not forget to invite your local Fourth Degree Assembly and have an Honor Guard to add to your service.

Supreme will be having more literature and supplies in the upcoming weeks to share with council on the Sacred Heart icon. They will be

FAITH PROGRAMS

DENNIS BEDNAREK

introducing a home enthronement program with framed or unframed images of the Sacred House and ceremony booklets to consecrate families to the Sacred Heart. I will be sending out notices as receive them



from Supreme.

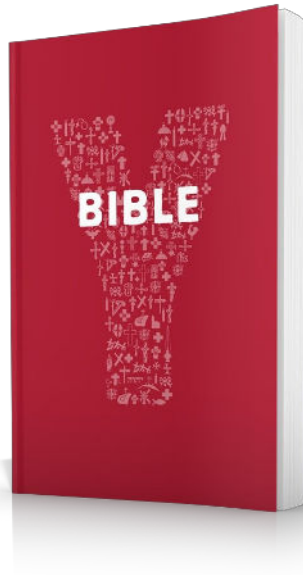
Silver Rose

The jurisdictions schedule for the Silver Rose will be released by Supreme any day now. Therefore, I'm now opening up requests for the Silver Rose. The final schedule will be released prior to our State convention as usual.

The Councils that hosted the Silver Rose last year will have a low priority for getting it this year. The highest priority will be for the Hispanic councils based on the fact that none hosted it last year and Our Lady of Guadalupe has special significance to for those of Hispanic ancestry. Remember, we have over three hundred councils in Wisconsin. Unless we can hold it longer than last year,

only 28 councils will be able to host this year.

Send your requests to me at FDBednarek@gmail.com with the subject being "Silver Rose Request." In your request please include the name of the parish or parishes that services will be held at your council number, and the name, phone number, and email of the person who will be your councils contact.



Sacramental Gifts

This year Easter falls on April 20th which starts the season in the church for the most first Communion are celebrated as well as Confirmations. This is the third year we will have the YouCat Bibles available to Councils to use as Sacramental Gifts for the Confirmation. In the past we had sold over 1,300 of them in 2023; over 1,100 in 2024; and we have nearly 600 orders so far in 2025. I will continue taking orders between now and mid-February

for delivery by Easter. As you can add up the numbers our current inventory is down and we will make an additional order based on the requests and orders we receive.

I am hoping to have an announcement of other offers for Sacramental Gifts in the near future. I'm looking currently at several possibilities for the future:

- ♦ *For Baptisms:* A small gift for the mother and the Father to remember their child's Baptism.
- ♦ *For First Communicants:* A *Lives of the Saints Book* that they use as a reference throughout their lives and when they will be picking a confirmation name.
- ♦ *For an alternative option:* I have discovered there is a considerable difference in preferences between various student bibles. We would still keep the YouCat Bibles for those currently using them.
- ♦ *For RCIA or Adults entering the Church:* I would also like to make the Catechism of the Catholic Church available.

These costly options will not happen all at once; however, I'm hoping on slowly growing this program so the we can support our councils based on offering them a discount based on our larger quantity orders. We will need the support of our Clergy on selections and the State Officers for approvals especially as related to the budget.

Vivat Jesus!

ON MISSION: FAITH IN ACTION



SUPERIOR



Lighting the Way for Life: A 23-Year Tradition of Faith and Remembrance

St. Croix Council 1762 recently held its annual "Light up a Light for a Life" Prayer Program. This meaningful tradition begins at the start of Advent and continues until the Sunday closest to the anniversary of Roe v. Wade. Brother Knights gathered at the Memorial for the Unborn for prayer and the lighting of trees for life, symbolizing hope and remembrance. Father John Gerritts led the group in worship, offering a powerful message of faith and unity. For 23 years, the Council has faithfully carried out this Life program, underscoring their commitment to the sanctity of life.



MILWAUKEE



26 Degrees of Devotion: Nativity Blessing and Rosary at St. Therese

St. John Neumann Council #973 held its Nativity Blessing at St. Therese. I truly love all the children that came and prayed the Rosary in 26-degree temperature. God Bless our children!



Shoutout to the South Milwaukee Knights Crew!

A huge thank you to the amazing team who came together to prepare and serve the Community Meal at the First Congregational Church. Your hard work, kindness, and dedication made a meaningful impact on our community. Moments like these remind us of the power of service and the strength of unity. Thank you for embodying what serving with purpose and heart means.



LA CROSSE



Faith in Action: Sharing the Christmas Spirit with the Community

Council members of John F. Kennedy Council 1257 in Eau Claire came together to set up the Nativity scene and "Keep Christ in Christmas" banner at Regis High School, facing Hastings Way. This cherished annual tradition serves as a visible reminder of the true meaning of the season. We are grateful to Regis High School for providing such a prominent location, allowing our message to reach the broader community and inspire reflection during this holy time of year.



St. James Round Table Ushers in Advent with Annual Breakfast

John F. Kennedy Council 1257's St. James Round Table in Eau Claire recently hosted its annual Advent Breakfast. This cherished tradition brought together parishioners and community members for a morning of fellowship, reflection, and preparation for the Advent season. The event featured a delicious breakfast and an opportunity to unite in faith as we anticipate celebrating Christ's birth. We are grateful to everyone who attended and contributed to making this gathering a success.



Holmen Knights Make a Difference with Project SEARCH Donation

'Tis the season of giving! Knights of Columbus Council #9385 in Holmen, WI, proudly presented Project SEARCH with a \$1,500 donation. Last year, the Council was introduced to the program through a member whose niece participated in Project SEARCH. Witnessing the tremendous growth and opportunities the program provided her, he was inspired to recommend it as a deserving recipient of the Knights' charitable efforts. The Council is honored to support such a meaningful initiative that empowers individuals to reach their full potential.

**In service to One.
In service to all.**

