

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE WISCONSIN STATE COUNCIL OF THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

VIVAT!

SEPTEMBER 2026 EDITION

FATHER LOCOCO

In Conversation With A Priest
of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee



**Knights of
Columbus®**
Wisconsin
State Council



Welcome to Vivat!

You likely opened this with wide eyes and peculiar interest. **This is different than anything you've likely seen.**

Welcome to Vivat!

Late last year, our Worthy State Deputy asked me to take a look at our State's brand, the way we communicate, and what some opportunities might be to increase ways people interact with the State Council.

It took a bit of time to review it all, take notes, ask questions, and formulate ideas. And Vivat is one of those ideas that made it out of the gates and into your home.

When the State Officers and Directors discussed *The Badger Buletin*, we knew a bulletin can be a ledger: meetings held, dollars raised, dinners served, filed away and forgotten by the following month.

But we wanted to build something more. Something to more profoundly help bring together Wisconsin, the

five dioceses within it, the 67 districts, and 308 councils.

What happens in Superior should be known in Kenosha by the time the coffee is poured. What a council in Madison learns the hard way should spare a council in Green Bay the same trouble.

This publication is not written for officers alone. It is written for every Knight in Wisconsin, and for the wives, children, pastors, and parishioners who stand alongside us. A publication that reaches only those already in the room has not done its job. We will meet readers where they are, in their inboxes, on their phones, or on our website, and we will give them something worth opening.

Our coverage will extend past the council hall. Charity in action, faith formation, the defense of life, the protection of families, the quiet work of the men who set up chairs and stay to stack them: all of it belongs in these pages. Where the Order takes a position, we will explain it. Where a council does something remarkable, we will show the rest of the state how it was done.

Words shape how readers understand themselves. If we write as though we are a service club, we will

become one. If we write as Catholic brothers under the patronage of Blessed Michael McGivney, formed by charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism, then that is what our sons will inherit. This publication will carry itself accordingly: serious, generous, unembarrassed by our faith, and confident in the good the Order does.

To make this real, I need you. Each of you is a correspondent. Send us your photographs, your parish partnerships, your failures worth learning from, and your successes worth repeating. Nothing is too small. A council that fed forty families is news. A council that recruited three men after Mass is news. We cannot report what we are not told.

Father McGivney began with a handful of men in a church basement, attentive to a need that others had walked past. That attentiveness remains our inheritance. The Lord does not ask us to be sufficient. He asks us to be present, and He multiplies what is offered.

When there is a need, there is a Knight. Vivat Jesus!

Dustin Beth

**Dustin Beth
Head of Content
Vivat!**

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STATE DEPUTY ROSS LARSON

FORWARD Together

Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism: Alive & Well in Denver!

I had the distinct privilege of representing Wisconsin to the Knights of Columbus 144th Supreme Convention in Denver, Colorado. It was an experience that was both inspiring and deeply encouraging. The Convention brought together Knights, families, clergy, and guests from across the United States and around the world. Not just clergy, but Cardinals, Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops, Monsignors, Priests and Deacons. From the opening Mass to the closing business session our days were filled with reminders of what it means to be Catholic and how the Knights give us the opportunity to live our lives, striving for heroic virtue.



Your 2026 Wisconsin State Delegates

when the world feels divided and families get pulled in so many directions, the message of Unity through Charity felt especially timely and inspiring. His Holiness, Pope Leo XIV offered a video greeting to the Convention, encouraging Knights to be “prophets of harmony” in our families, parishes, and communities. That phrase stayed with me throughout the week.

The most moving part of the convention was the opening Mass, celebrated with members of the hierarchy and multitudes of faithful priests, we Knights, wives and families, gathered in prayer. Archbishop James Golka, Ordinary of Denver reminded us that the work of the Order is not simply about programs or meetings, but about listening to God and serving His people. That message challenged me to think about how our own State Council can continue to grow—not only in activity, but in holiness, purpose, and service.

I had the distinct privilege of representing Wisconsin to the Knights of Columbus 144th Supreme Convention in Denver, Colorado. It was an experience that was both

The Supreme Knight's report and the awards sessions highlighted the enormous good being done by Knights around the world. We heard stories of Councils supporting pregnancy centers, helping families affected by war, strengthening marriages, assisting communities during disasters, and defending the dignity of life. These examples were a reminder that the Knights of Columbus is truly a global brotherhood, but one whose mission is carried out in very local and personal ways. Every pancake breakfast, food drive, prayer service, coat distribution, fish fry, and act of support for a parish family is part of something much larger.



I also appreciated the opportunity to meet brother Knights from other states and countries. I reminded them that although we are Brothers in Christ, the fact that Wisconsin can claim the only Marian approved apparition site in the Country, is proof that Mom loves us best. In the conversations between sessions, we shared ideas, discussed challenges, and encouraged one another in the work of building stronger

councils and more active parish communities. Denver itself provided a beautiful setting, through the smokey haze, the mountains in the distance and a spirit of hospitality throughout the convention.

I think we all returned home grateful, energized, and reminded that the Knights of Columbus is at its best when we put faith into action. The Supreme Convention was not just a gathering of leaders; it was a call to renewed service. As we look ahead to the coming year, may we Delegates bring that spirit back to our Councils, our parishes, and our families. In the One, We Are One.

Vivat Jesus!

Ross Larson is State Deputy of the Wisconsin State Council of the Knight of Columbus.



State Deputy Ross & First Lady Rebecca

Spiritual Renewal

WITH REVEREND FATHER D. JOSEPH REDFERN, STATE CHAPLAIN

In anticipation of our pilgrimage to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion on October 25, I thought I would provide some background in relation to the Shrine of Our Lady of Champion. I will also provide some practical information about the pilgrimage itself.

The story of Our Lady of Champion can be found on the website of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion, www.championshrine.org



Adele Brice was born in Belgium to Lambert and Catherine Brice on January 30, 1831. At a young age she suffered an accident which left her blind in her right eye. Upon receiving her first Holy Communion, Adele and a few close friends made a promise to the Blessed Virgin Mary that they would devote their lives to becoming religious teaching sisters in Belgium. This promise, made in her childhood, proved to be most difficult to keep, given the fact that her parents decided to move to the United States of

America alongside other Belgium settlers. After seeking advice from her confessor, she was assured that, being obedient to her parents, the Lord would provide an opportunity for her to become a teacher and sister, and that she could serve in that vocation in the United States of America.

The Brice family joined several Belgian families in traveling to the area near present-day Champion. Life was very difficult for the early settlers in that area. Adele often served her family's needs by taking grain to the grist mill. Adele had three encounters with Mary in 1859 which would lead her on her simple mission to become a teacher for the Lord and for the Blessed Lady. While Adele worked alone for some years, other women came to help her in her mission in Catholic education.

On October 8, 1871, almost twelve years to the date of Mary's last appearance to Adele, the Great Peshtigo Fire broke out. It is still considered to this day the most devastating fire in United States history, killing between 1,200-2,400 people and burning 1.2 million acres. Due to the high winds and dry grounds, the fire quickly became a storm of fire and roared like a tornado right toward the Shrine's grounds.

Before We Go: A Pilgrim's Introduction to Champion

Desperate for help, people from the surrounding countryside fled to the Chapel where Adele and her companions were praying for Mary's protection. Lifting the statue of Mary, those there that night processed around the sanctuary, praying the rosary and singing hymns to Jesus and the Blessed Mother. When the wind and fire threatened suffocation, they would turn in another direction to pray. Early the next morning, it is believed that a steady rain came and extinguished the flames of the fire.

Although the fire charred the outside of the Shrine's fence, it had not harmed the grounds. However, the area surrounding the grounds was destroyed, and the only livestock to survive were the cattle the farmers led to the chapel. While many deeper wells in the area went dry, the chapel's shallow well gave the cattle enough water to survive the heat.

Adele and her Sisters continued to teach and catechize the children long after the devastating fire. Their presence had a lasting effect on the people of the community. She lived out her ministry with zeal and love of God and Mary. Adele died on July 5, 1896, and is buried in the cemetery located near The Apparition Chapel on the grounds of the National Shrine.

For more information on this story and subsequent developments, please go to the official website of the

National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion, cited above.

If you are interested in joining the Knights of Columbus in their pilgrimage to Our Lady of Champion on October 25, 2026, please [click here](#).

Rev. Father D. Joseph Redfern is State Chaplain of the Wisconsin State Council of the Knight of Columbus.



AROUND THE DIOCESES

178 Steps.

Most Wisconsin churches you look at. This one you climb.

Holy Hill sits atop a glacial kame in the Kettle Moraine, the highest ground in southeastern Wisconsin, on roughly 435 wooded acres. The Basilica and National Shrine of Mary Help of Christians was completed in 1926 in neo-Romanesque style, and its twin spires carry for miles. Hundreds of thousands of people come every year. The Discalced Carmelite friars keep it.

The scenic tower is what people talk about. One hundred seventy-eight steps take you 192 feet up, and on a clear day the Milwaukee skyline shows itself some thirty miles east. Fair warning: the staircase is narrow, in places too narrow for two people to pass, and the climb is not for everyone. It closes for

winter. There is no charge, though donations are welcome, and an elevator serves the basilica level for anyone who needs it.

Inside, the stained glass and the artwork reward slow looking. So does a wall of abandoned crutches, left behind by people who came here to pray and believed something happened.

Outside, life-sized Stations of the Cross wind through the trees. Come in October and the hill does what the Kettle Moraine does best.

There is a cafe, a gift shop, daily Mass, and lodging by advance reservation if you want to make a retreat of it. It is well under an hour from downtown Milwaukee and it is the best-known Catholic site in the state, which is somehow the reason a great many Wisconsin Catholics have never been.

Go. Then climb.

If you go: 1525 Carmel Road, Hubertus, WI 53033. Schedule and tower hours at holyhill.com.



**ARCHDIOCESE of MILWAUKEE**

Established
November 28, 1843

Archbishop Jeffrey Grob

Diocesan Seat
Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist

Patron Saint
John the Evangelist

Parishes
102

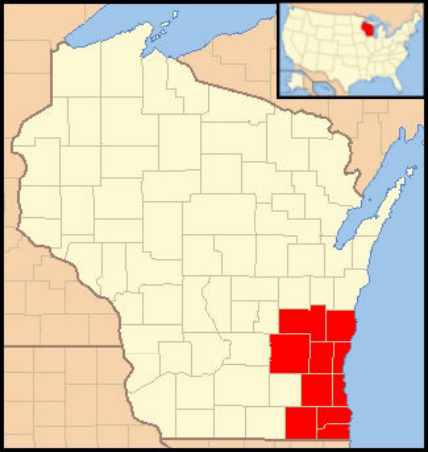
Catholics
509,903

Area
8,070 sq miles

Office in Charge
State Secretary Ernie Reinhart

Diocesan Director
Don McInnis

Councils
69



From the Badger Bulletin to Vivat!

CARRYING THE MISSION FORWARD

For many years, the Badger Bulletin has been a trusted voice for the Wisconsin Knights of Columbus. Month after month, it has carried the news of our State Council, shared messages from our leaders, highlighted the good works of councils across Wisconsin, and helped keep Knights and their families informed, inspired, and connected. We owe a debt of gratitude to everyone who contributed to its long and faithful service.

Now we turn the page to an exciting new chapter with *Vivat*, the new monthly digital magazine of the Wisconsin Knights of Columbus. While we honor the history of the Badger Bulletin, we should also welcome the fresh energy that *Vivat* brings. Its digital format, upgraded layout, magazine-style presentation, stronger visuals, and expanded features give us a renewed way to tell the story of who we are: Catholic men united in charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism.

Councils should see *Vivat* as more than something to read. Because it is digital, it can be shared easily with parish leaders, families, prospects, and especially younger Catholic men who may be looking for a meaningful way to live their faith, serve their parish, support their families, and build friendships with men who share their values. A well-designed digital magazine can show, in a visible and inviting way, the impact Knights are making in local communities throughout Wisconsin.

When we invite a man to join our Order, let us consider a simple but important new approach offered by Worthy District Deputy Vic Johnson: do not merely ask him to sign up—offer to sponsor him. Sponsorship is personal. It says, “I will walk with you. I will introduce you to the council. I will help you find your place.” That kind of invitation is stronger than a brochure, more welcoming than an announcement, and far more likely to help a new member feel that he belongs.

As *Vivat* begins, let us use it well. Share it with parish leaders. Place it where Catholic men and families will see it. Highlight council stories that show faith in action. Most of all, use it to begin conversations. The Badger Bulletin served us well and helped build a strong foundation. *Vivat* now gives us a fresh platform to carry that mission forward with pride, enthusiasm, and purpose. Vivat Jesus!



Ernie Reinhart is State Secretary of the Wisconsin State Council of the Knights of Columbus.

Do you know your State Team?

- Ross Larson, State Deputy
- Ernie Reinhart, State Secretary
- Dr. David Kreutz, State Treasurer
- James Vosters, State Advocate
- Justin Knapp, State Warden
- Patrick Reiff, Immediate Past State Deputy & State Training Director

- Les Kotera, State Membership Director
- Frank Hoppe, State Administrative Manager
- Dustin Beth, State Communications Director
- Erik Hayko, State Operations Director
- Scott Fromme, State Programs Director
- Andy Orgovan, State Evangelization & Faith Formation Director
- Ray Berres, Green Bay Diocese Director
- Tim Pierce, LaCrosse Diocese Director
- Dale Emmerton, Madison Diocese Director
- Don McInnes, Milwaukee Archdiocese Director
- Mark Rasmussen, Superior Diocese Director

What's That Tab?

Prospect

- Shows E-Members that joined via Supreme app or website
- Date field is used to transfer them into your council after they've completed exemplification
- With e-membership, new members have the ability to enter their own data, confirm their membership, and ensure that it is accurate!
- When do we get credit?** After your FS or GK enters the exemplification date, your council will get credit!

Candidate

- Used when **YOU** recruit a member locally or handling a transfer request.
- Can also be used for reinstatement.
- Basically, it's a digital Form 100.

Online Ceremonial
Access the Online Ceremonial Invite site by clicking this link!

Supreme Incentive Join & Serve Challenge

Grow our brotherhood while serving your community and win big!

This year let's kick start the giving season by growing our brotherhood and extending the invitation to have others join us in faith, charity and service to our local communities.

Fulfill your entire membership quota and participate in the Food for Families program by November 30th to qualify! (with the Food for Families application being submitted no later than December 31st, 2026)

Councils who qualify will receive 8 sets of custom embroidered KofC aprons and hats and will have a chance to enter to win an additional \$200 gift certificate to Knights Gear!

In my time traveling across the State of Wisconsin meeting many of you at Diocesan Meetings, District Deputy Meetings, and at your invites, I have found that Councils that excel at growth of their membership do one thing: **they don't invite members, they invest into growing.**

I'm not writing to ask you to spend money on fancy posters, lunches, or advertisements. I'm asking you to think about your message.

Think about why you are a Brother Knight.

Maybe it was your father. Maybe it was a friend. Maybe it is what you needed at the time when you were invited to join. Whatever the circumstance was, that was your reason for investing time into the Knights of Columbus.

Now, think about that same story for five or ten men in your parish. They likely have their own path, their own journey, and their own reasons.

It is up to us as Brother Knights to help our fellow Catholic gentlemen see the value of participation in the Knights of Columbus. If you thumb through this publication, you will see there are a ton of reasons. We richly invest into faith formation, into civic service, and into growing camaraderie.

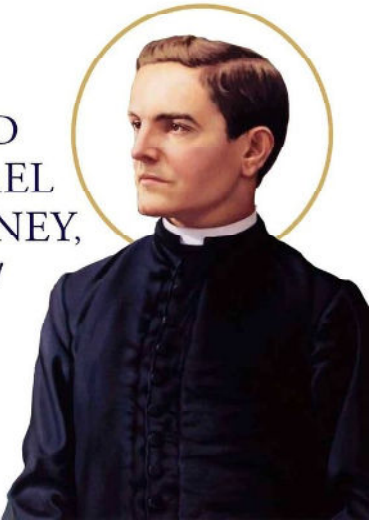
That is a conversation about investment into personal growth, faith formation, and our Holy Mother Church. *It's not about inviting members.*



In Fraternal Service, I am.

Les Kostera is State Membership Director of the Wisconsin State Council of the Knights of Columbus.

BLESSED
MICHAEL
McGIVNEY,
pray for us!



AROUND THE DIOCESES

Uphill Through the Woods

The Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe does not show itself from the parking lot. You start at the pilgrim center, and then you walk, uphill, on a wooded trail cut into the bluffs above the Mississippi. The church appears when the trees decide to let it.



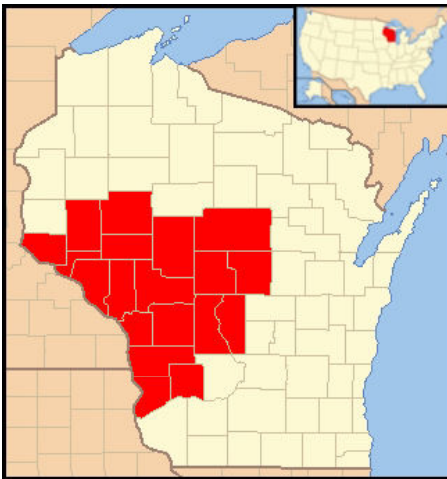
That was the design. The shrine occupies more than one hundred acres south of La Crosse. Ground broke in 2004, and Cardinal Raymond Burke dedicated the shrine church on July 31, 2008. The architect was Duncan Stroik, and the building is unapologetically classical: a real portico, real columns, and an interior that resembles nothing else built in Wisconsin this century.

Devotional areas and a votive candle chapel line the trail. The grounds hold Stations of the Cross, a rosary walk, gardens, and a memorial to the unborn. Mass and confession are offered daily, and here is a thread worth noticing: the priests who serve this shrine are Norbertines, the same order that has kept the abbey at De Pere since the 1890s.

Wisconsin is smaller than it looks.

The practical part is easy. Admission is free and always has been. The grounds are open daily, there is a full-service cafe and a gift shop, and the site is accessible, with golf cart transport for anyone who would rather not take the hill on foot. Most visitors give it two to four hours. A guided pilgrimage of the shrine church can be arranged with advance notice.

Come in autumn, when the walk up through the bluff timber turns out to be the best part of the day.



Established
March 3rd, 1868

Bishop Gerard Battersby

Diocesan Seat
Cathedral of St. Joseph the Workman

Patron Saint
Saint Joseph & Saint Francis of Assisi

Parishes
166

Catholics
156,000

Area
15,078 sq miles

Officer in Charge
State Deputy Ross Larson

Diocesan Director
Tim Pierce

Councils
62

If you go: 5250 Justin Road, La Crosse, WI 54601. (877) 799-4059. guadalupe Shrine.org.

STATE INSIGHTS

In my August article I provided all of you with a high-level view of what is planned for the states training program. Here are some updates on State Training.

Welcome to our State Trainers. Listed below our the team we've assembled as our State Training Team. Take a moment to review their skills and reach out to your Diocese's Trainer.

The State Training Team will meet virtually on the first Monday of each month to discuss how we can identify training needs, support our District Deputies, State Officers & Directors, and develop resource materials to distribute. We will also work to create a registration form for council officers to request specific types of training. **We formally plan to launch training by October 1st.**

Training Formats

One on One Trainings
A format that can be adopted at council level

Group Trainings
Format for trainings within Districts; grouped by experience levels

Virtual Training & In Person
Options for convenience, weather, and geographies

Training Formats
For usage at Diocese Tours & DD Organizational meetings

Why the big push for State Training?

Many individuals have accepted their roles without receiving the full training necessary to fully support their ability to fulfill accomplish their obligations on a timely & efficient basis. We are here to fix that.

We are here to help & show how easy it is to use the tools available and make the process easier

Others may be hesitant in accepting assignments because they don't fully understand the assignment.

We will be here to support & train those that may be interested in being more involved. With Supreme & the State moving to online reporting only vs manual reporting which will make everyone's role easier.

The individuals need to know how to use online reporting and we want to provide that skill level to all that we can going forward.

We are here to make your position easier to fulfill & your reports processing earlier.

We hope to see many of you at your scheduled Diocesan meetings for more information.

Patrick Reiff is Immediate Past State Deputy & State Training Director for the Wisconsin State Council of the Knights of Columbus.



STATE TRAINING TEAM

Patrick Reiff, State Training Director

Thomas Block, Milwaukee Trainer *FDD, Skilled in building training graphics & forms*

Jon Olson, Madison Trainer *Supreme Trainer, skilled in Supreme Online training aids*

Andy Krautkramer, LaCrosse Trainer *Seasoned Financial Secretary*

Michael Frase, Superior Trainer *Skilled in online usage, video aids, and AI applications.*

We are still seeking a Green Bay Diocese Trainer. Please reach out if you are a FS comfortable with Officer's Online.



Father John LoCoco is a priest of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, ordained in 2018. A graduate of Marquette University High School, he studied finance at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul before entering seminary, and completed his formation at the Pontifical North American College in Rome. He holds licentiates in dogmatic theology and canon law. He has served as a National Eucharistic Revival Preacher, vocation director, and currently serves as Judicial Vicar for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and pastor of St. John Vianney Parish and School in Brookfield. He is the fourth of eight children.

We recently had the opportunity to ask Father LoCoco some questions.

FROM THE COVER



Vocations aren't new in the LoCoco house. Pictured with his sister, Sr. Ancilla Joy, ACJ a Handmaid of Jesus

From football, to finance, and then to canon law. Is there a line running through that? If there is a line, it is discipline. I played football, wrestled, and ran track in high school, and athletics teach you early that nothing worthwhile happens without showing up every day, especially on the days you would rather not. Finance and later the law asked the same thing in a way, namely, that same attention to detail, patience with a process, and the humility to do the unglamorous work well. The priesthood asks for that, too.

Since 2012, Cor Iesu has run every Wednesday since 2012 and draws hundreds of people. Most parish programs don't survive their second year. What makes it so different? What lessons could you share?

I was grateful to oversee that apostolate from 2021 to 2024, and I want to be clear that I inherited it. When Father Luke Strand, now rector of St. Francis de Sales Seminary, opened the House of Discernment and began celebrating Cor Iesu, he never envisioned how fruitful it would become for the local Church. In those early years only a handful of people came. If there is one lesson, it is consistency. Every week, same time, same place, whether five people showed up or two hundred. That rhythm is what allowed it to grow. The other lesson is that the content never changed. Confession, a holy hour, and Mass. Young adults are not looking for a program; they are looking for Jesus and for one another, and if you give them those two things reliably, they will come back and bring their friends.



LoCoco, in the top right, was ordained in 2018

Shifting gears for a moment, you ran the Vocations Office for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. Besides financial support and prayer, what can a Knight of Columbus or Knights in a Council do to support vocations in their diocese?

Encourage your priests. Vocations come from parishes where the priest is at peace and visibly happy in his vocation, and a pastor who feels supported by his men is a pastor who can pour himself out for his people. That means showing up when he asks, not making him beg for help, speaking well of him to others, and telling him plainly when he has done something good. A young man watching that pastor will see a life worth wanting and so, a council that takes care of its priest is doing vocations work whether it knows it or not.

You did about 9 months in Fond du Lac and you were sent to hospitals. What impact did that start to your priesthood have on you?

A small correction for the record: I was never formally assigned to hospitals. During the worst months of COVID I was asked to step in and anoint the dying at the county hospitals, and I did, but it was never an appointment. That said, it shaped me. I saw a great many people die, and most of them died alone, with no family in the room and a priest in a gown and mask as the last face they saw. It taught me very early that the sacraments are not abstractions. When everything else has been stripped away, what remains is Christ coming to a person through the hands of a priest.

You come from a large family, four brothers, four sisters. How did your upbringing influence who you are as a pastor, a leader, and Catholic influence for good?

Growing up in a big family, Catholicism simply felt normal. The parts of my life that were constant, Mass, prayer, confession, retreats, devotions, were never presented as extraordinary. They were just what our family did, the way other families had their own rhythms. That has stayed with me as a pastor. I am not trying to make the faith exciting for people. I am trying to make it normal, something a family can build a life around without it feeling overwhelming.

What do Wisconsin Catholics get wrong about Wisconsin?

That because it was settled by so many German and other immigrants, it somehow isn't as Catholic as other places. Wisconsin is deeply Catholic! We have the only Church-approved Marian apparition in the United States at Champion, the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in La Crosse, and Holy Hill. We have seminaries, religious communities, and parishes that have been handing on the faith for a century and a half.

Father, you have 30 seconds with a Grand Knight. What goodness can you share with him?

Another priest once told me that there are days when you lay your head on the pillow at night and think, if my whole priesthood had been only this one day, it would have been worth it. I have had many days like that. Whatever you are doing for your council and your parish, do it so that you can say the same.

AROUND THE DIOCESES

A Quiet 160 Acres on the Fox River

Most Wisconsin day trips end at a gift shop. This one ends at Vespers.



Established
March 3rd, 1868

Bishop David Ricken

Diocesan Seat
St. Francis Xavier Cathedral

Patron Saint
Saint Francis Xavier

Parishes
193

Catholics
361,500

Area
10,724 sq miles

State Officer Designee
State Advocate James Vosters

Diocesan Director
Raymond Berres

Councils
71

day or overnight retreats. A short drive away, on the St. Norbert College campus, the National Shrine of St. Joseph holds the only papally crowned statue of St. Joseph in the country.

Go once. You will understand why they never left.

If you go: 1016 N. Broadway, De Pere. (920) 337-4300.

Schedule at norbertines.org.

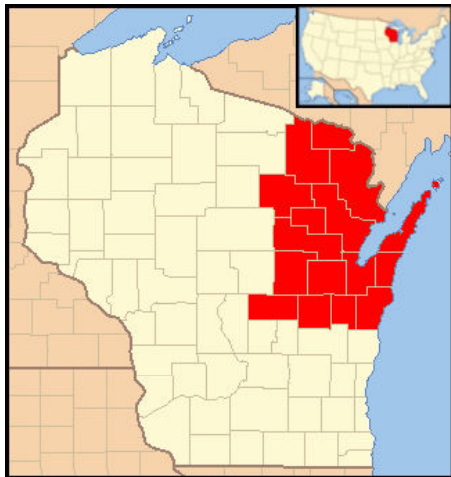
St. Norbert Abbey sits on 160 acres east of the Fox River, just south of Green Bay. It is not a restored site or a museum piece. It is a working monastery, home to men who have prayed the same hours here since the 1890s, and the doors are open.

It began in 1893, when three Norbertines left Berne Abbey in the Netherlands to serve Belgian, Dutch, and French immigrant families here. Their leader, Fr. Bernard Pennings, took a parish in De Pere. By 1898 the community was established, along with St. Norbert College. It is now the oldest Norbertine community in the United States.

The church rewards a slow walk. Wisconsin limestone quarried at Fond du Lac, a cruciform plan of choir, sanctuary, and nave. Taken together, the main stained glass windows carry a visitor straight through the liturgy of the Church. In the crypt below, Abbot Pennings and Abbot Sylvester Killeen are buried among artifacts displayed museum-style.

But the reason to come is the prayer. No ticket, no reservation. Lauds at 7:30 a.m. on weekdays, Mass at 4:30 p.m., Vespers at 5 p.m. daily, and Sunday Mass at 10 a.m. Hearing a full community chant the psalms is nothing like reading them.

The Norbertine Center for Spirituality inside the abbey keeps thirty guest rooms for



RAFFLE PROGRAM UPDATES

The Team welcomes its newest coordinator from the Superior Diocese – Eric Williams! Brother Eric comes from Christ the King Council 16691 in Superior and currently serves as Grand Knight. He is looking forward to serving the councils of the Superior Diocese with their State Charity Raffle Tickets reporting, deposits and any questions that may present themselves. As Brother Eric will be new to the Team – please be gentle with him! He will have a lot to learn in his first year and, again, is looking forward to it. He will have the backing and full support of the other Diocesan Charity Team members at his disposal. Eric's contact information will be provided inside the council ticket packets on the front instructional letter. Welcome Eric!

As we enter the month of September the State Raffle Ticket program will be kicking off the new sales year. The Committee has wrapped up preparing the packets for the program and are ready for distribution to the Councils and / or District Deputies at their respective Diocesan Meeting (Huddle). As tradition has been, council representatives pick up their packets and begin right away with the distribution of tickets to their members and encourage everyone to begin selling as soon as possible. Any council that is not represented at their Diocesan Meeting the District Deputy or Diocesan Director is responsible for ensuring the packets are distributed to those councils in a timely manner. As soon as the tickets get into the hands of the councils – Let the Selling Begin! A courtesy email will go out to all the District Deputy's in early September followed by another email to all council Grand Knights a short time later about the program updates and reminders. I'm sure there will be new council charity chairmen in some councils, and, in time, we'll capture those and include them in charity raffle ticket program updates.

Prizes will remain the same this season. I have received feedback from many councils throughout the State about ideas on how to improve and / or procure better sales for the program. Thank you to those who have shared their thoughts. I encourage you to provide feedback and other opportunities for improvement and will carefully and prayerfully consider them alongside with the Diocesan Coordinators. Feel free to email them to me anytime.

Please make special note of the updated Individual Charity Grant Request Application Form for the 2026 – 2027 fraternal year. Only this form will be accepted beginning September 1, 2027. The form is included with the ticket packets along with the Council Charity Grant Form that is due May 1, 2027. Both forms are also available on the new State Council website.

EVERYONE did a fine job last sales season in providing CHARITY efforts. That is the first VIRTUE of our Order and what comes from our FAITH and HEART. Only each member knows how well they did and how much impact they will make to those who are in need of our support during times of unique challenges, sufferings, and joys. When the Team receives a Thank You card for the contributions the REAL THANKS goes out to every member who sold a ticket and every person who purchased a ticket.

Thank you, again, for all the kind support and care your council puts into the CHARITY throughout the year!

Michael Haight is State Raffle Program Chair for the Wisconsin State Council of the Knights of Columbus.

COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT



Council #2487

Congratulations Oconomowoc Council #2487 who just met their full membership goal of 11 new members for the year.

As District 53 District Deputy Vic Johnson shared in his congratulatory message, "**Outstanding! 100%! Strong early starts make life a whole lot easier. Remember that growth is all about the strength and future of our Order. Let us not deny good Catholic gentlemen the corporate and spiritual benefits we all cherish as Brother Knights!**"

We congratulate Council #2487 on this monumental accomplishment and rejoice for the continued growth of our Order across Wisconsin.

Submitted by Vic Johnson, District Deputy.

STATE INSIGHTS

ID Grant Recipient Checks: At Diocesan Tours!

Dear Brothers,

Per the request of our WSD Ross Larson the State Treasury is working diligently to get you both the Council Charity and Intellectual Disability (I.D.) Recipient checks. If you turn in your requests for a State Charity Grant by the deadline of May 1st (extended to May 17 on the last day of the State Convention), you will be receiving a State Charity Grant at our specific Diocesan Tour Location.

The ID Grant Recipient checks will also be available at the Tours if your online form was completed by June 30, 2026.

There are some councils who have not designated a specific charity or didn't provide an EIN for a designated charity. If your council reviews the online form from 2026 and there are unallocated funds remaining, please contact me directly at dkreutz@wikofc.org and have the following information:

- The amount collected by the council
- The check number submitted to the state
- The organization(s) you wish to allocate funds to, either by percentage or amount
- The organization's EIN

Dr. David Kreutz is State Treasurer for the Wisconsin State Council of the Knights of Columbus.



Safe Environment Training: Action Required for Council Leaders Across Wisconsin

As part of our ongoing commitment to protect the vulnerable and uphold the highest standards of care, all newly installed **Grand Knights, Program Directors, Family Directors, and Community Directors** across Wisconsin have recently, or will soon receive an important email from **Praesidium Academy**. This message invites you to onboard and begin the Safe Environment training: **Preventing Abuse and Protecting Those We Serve**.

Please watch for this email carefully. Depending on your email provider, it may be filtered into your **Junk** or **Spam** folder. Every leader in these roles is required to complete the training, so timely action is essential.

If you do **not** receive the onboarding email by **August 15**, you may still access the training directly

1. Visit www.praesidiumacademy.com
2. Sign in using the **email address listed on your council's Form 185 or Form 365**
3. If you cannot log in, select **"Forgot Password"** to reset your credentials

Your diligence ensures that our councils remain safe, trustworthy, and fully compliant with Supreme's Safe Environment Program. Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to protecting those we serve.

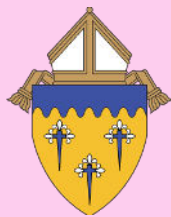
James Vosters is State Advocate for the Wisconsin State Council of the Knights of Columbus.



AROUND THE DIOCESES

The Island at the End of the Ferry Line

You have to take a boat to get to Mass. That is most of the appeal.



DIOCESE OF
SUPERIOR

Established
May 3rd, 1905

Bishop James Powers

Diocesan Seat
Cathedral of Christ the King

Patron Saint
St. Augustine of Hippo

Parishes
106

Catholics
78,826

Area
15,715 sq miles

Officer in Charge
State Treasurer Dr. David Kreutz

Diocesan Director
Mark Rasmussen

Councils
40

Madeline Island lies a few miles off Bayfield, the largest of the Apostle Islands and the only one with a town on it. The ferry runs from spring until the ice takes over. Up the hill from the dock in La Pointe is St. Joseph's, a parish whose congregation dates to 1838, making it the oldest continuous Catholic parish in Wisconsin.

The man who started it was Frederic Baraga, a Slovenian priest who arrived at La Pointe in July 1835 and dedicated a log chapel that August. By October he had baptized 148 people, most of them Ojibwe. He learned the language well enough to publish a grammar and a dictionary of it, traveled the south shore of Lake Superior on snowshoes, and became the first Bishop of Marquette. Rome declared him Venerable in 2012.



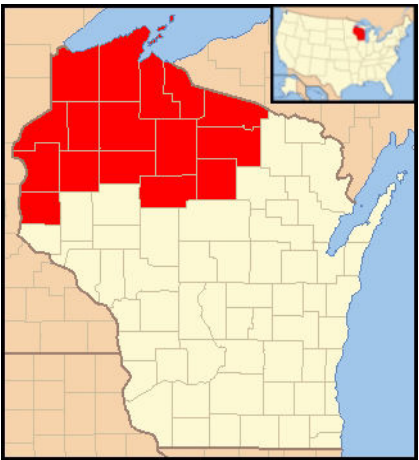
The island was a spiritual center for the Ojibwe long before Baraga landed, and it still is. The old mission cemetery at La Pointe, where Chief Buffalo is buried, was returned to Ojibwe stewardship in 1972. It is a burial ground, not an attraction, and it deserves to be treated that way.

The rest of the day fills itself. The Madeline Island Museum sits near the ferry landing. Big Bay State Park has sandstone bluffs and a beach on the open lake. The town holds a few hundred people and is in no hurry.

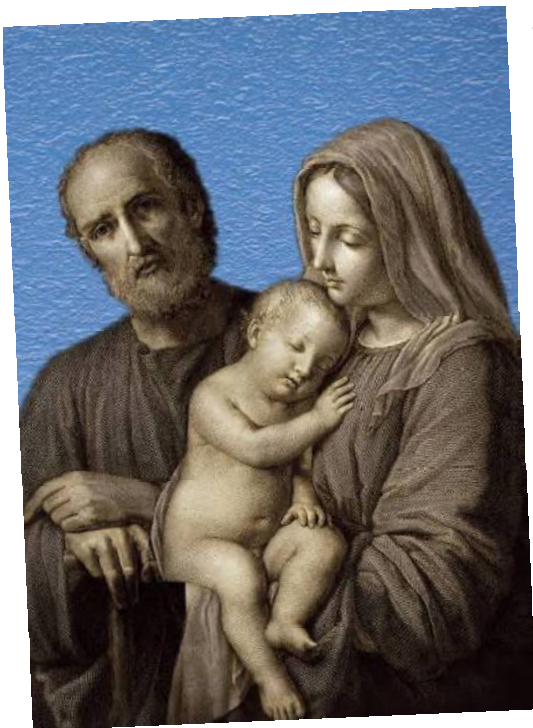
Check the parish schedule before you drive up. The church is seasonal, and so, in its way, is the island.

If you go: Madeline Island Ferry from Bayfield. St. Joseph's, La Pointe.

Confirm Mass times with the Diocese of Superior.



Family Leads Again: FIA Family



I hope you are enjoying your summer and spending lots of quality "Family Time"! I know in the Northeast part of the State we have been experiencing some hot temperatures. One nice thing about these temperatures is you don't have to shovel! We will be shoveling soon enough so please enjoy your summer.

I have copied some very nice information from Supreme for a reference point on how our State preformed this past fraternal year. Included is some of the data collected for "Faith In Action" program.

Below is our States data from last year. I am hopeful that OUR goal should be to surpass these numbers this year:

- Food for Families: \$ Donations: \$111,640**
- Food for Families: Lbs of food Donated: 106,592**
- Number of Coats Donated: 10,896**
- RSVP Councils Participating: 127**
- RSVP \$ Donations: \$197,453**
- ASAP Councils Participating: 67**
- ASAP \$ 1: \$234,045**
- Special Olympics Councils Participating: 49**
- Special Olympics \$ Donations: \$52,230**

Supreme also encourages every jurisdiction/ State or Province to organize at least one bed-building event with Sleep in Heavenly Peace before the end of the 2026 calendar year!

How will we know if Wisconsin is making progress toward these goals?

Throughout the year, councils will be reporting on their programs to the Supreme Council. They can submit that information in real time through Supremes online Fraternal Program Report. They should also submit applications for Food for Families, RSVP, and ASAP as well as a record of coats purchased.

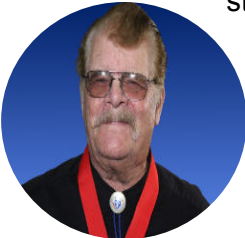
Based on that data, Supreme will provide State Program Directors with monthly reports highlighting our progress.

Please advocate for timely online reporting among our councils. It will make all the difference.

All councils should also strive to earn the Columbian Award, which honors excellence in programs. These guidelines and webinar both explain how to apply for the award, as well as recent updates on how to qualify as there have been some changes with both the Columbian Award and the Founders Award.

As always, continue to promote Food for Families, Family of the Month and other summer Family get togethers such as church picnics. Our Council recently helped our area Catholic school promote an Open House. There are numerous ways to enjoy Family activities especially during these summer months.

As Knights of Columbus we also must promote prayer within our Family. Remember: A family that prays together stays together.



I believe that's all for now. Until we meet again, take care, stay healthy, and may God bless us all. *Vivat Jesus!*

Jim Hooyman is Family Director for the Wisconsin State Council of the Knights of Columbus.

COR: Collaborate Not Compete

In last month's article I offered some thoughts about the Cor initiative and its role in helping us to answer the call to "refocus" our mission on evangelization. Our Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly recently called upon every council in the Order to implement Cor this fraternal year. This is quite a challenge! But

if we, as Knights, are serious about bringing Jesus Christ to the world, we should be excited about the possibilities that Cor brings to our efforts in evangelization.

The first step to begin your EFF / Cor journey is to PRAY about the initiative with your Council leadership. Be sure to include your chaplain! Ask the tough questions like, does your council understand its role in making disciples of Jesus Christ in the parish? Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance and wisdom in your planning and for the success of the EFF/Cor initiative in your parish.

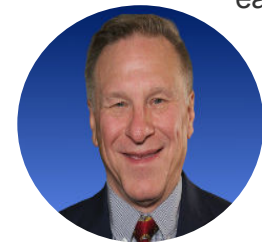
The next important step is for the GK to assign a Council EFF Director. Once an EFF Director has been identified, the GK needs to complete the Council EFF Submission Form as soon as possible using the following link:

[Council EFF Director Submission Form](#)

The EFF Director then needs to form a Council EFF/Cor Team to begin planning for Cor. Note, this team should always include the chaplain/pastor. The team should become familiar with all the materials and resources available on the Supreme website. Go to the following link to learn more: [Cor | Knights of Columbus](#)

Over the last couple of years, I have heard a variety of reasons some councils are not able to start Cor. By far the most common reason given is that Cor would "compete" with other men's group in the parish. If this is the case in your parish, there is a wonderful document available called [Working With Men's Ministries](#) that will help you to address this important issue. **The bottom line is to find ways to collaborate, not compete.**

Finally, don't forget to save the date for the upcoming pilgrimage to Our Lady of Champion on Sunday, October 25. This event is sponsored by the Wisconsin State Council and is open to all councils in the state, their families and parishes. It is currently scheduled to begin around 10am and concludes around 3:30pm. The day will include Holy Mass and a rosary procession. Be sure to look for registration notifications on the State website in late August or early September.



If you have any questions related to EFF or Cor, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am always available to help you and your councils to make disciples of Jesus Christ!

Andy Orgovan is Director of Evangelization & Faith Formation for the Wisconsin State Council of the Knights of Columbus.

Protect what matters most.

Cor

Men need authentic brotherhood.

Families need holy husbands and fathers.

The world needs courageous men to witness to Jesus Christ.

Open to All Men.

Knights of Columbus

Knights of Columbus, One Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510

AROUND THE DIOCESES

The Mound

In the far southwest corner of the state, where Wisconsin runs out and Iowa and Illinois begin, a hill rises out of the farmland. It is the highest point in Grant County, and for nearly 180 years it has belonged to Dominican Sisters.

Samuel Mazzuchelli got there first. An Italian Dominican who came to the American frontier at twenty-two, he spent his life raising churches, schools, and whole towns across the upper Mississippi, designing many of the buildings himself. In 1844 he put up a stone building on this hill. In 1847 he founded the congregation that lives there still. Rome declared him Venerable in 1993.



DIOCESE of MADISON

Established

January 9th, 1946

Bishop Donald Hying

Diocesan Seat

St. Bernard Catholic Church

Patron Saint

St. Raphael

Parishes

102

Catholics

166,923

Area

8,070 sq miles

Office in Charge

State Warden Justin Knapp

Diocesan Director

Dale Emmerton

Councils

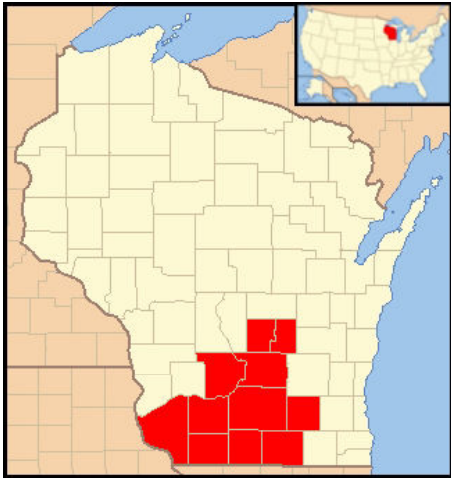
66

The stone building stands, and it now houses the exhibit on Mazzuchelli and the Sisters, open weekdays and free to walk through. St. Clara Chapel is worth the stop for the stained glass alone. Outside there is a labyrinth near the cemetery, farmland the Sisters work through a collaborative farming program, and a view that reaches into three states on a clear day.

One honest caution. The Mound is in the middle of a major renovation. The 1964 buildings are coming down, retreat and event offerings have been in flux, and what is open to the public has changed more than once. The Book and Gift Gallery has stayed open, and it still carries the Sinsinawa Bakery products people drive across the state line for. Call before you build a day around any one thing.

Go anyway. There are not many places in Wisconsin where you can stand in a room a missionary built in 1844 and buy bread on your way out.

If you go: Sinsinawa Mound, Sinsinawa, WI. Tours by request, (608) 806-6087. Confirm current access at sinsinawa.org.



State Programs

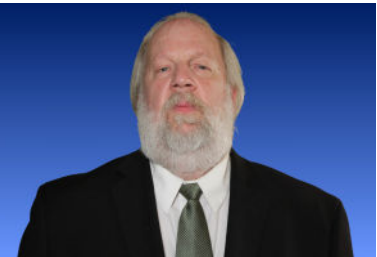
Brothers, allow me to introduce myself. My name is Scott Frome and I am honored to serve as the State Program Director. My job and goal is to make sure you are as informed about our programs as possible. I will use this column in Vivat to keep you up to date as possible.

I'd like to also highlight the team that help do that: **Dan Miller (Life), James Hooyman (Family), Luke Millman (Faith), and Dan Montain (Community)**. They help support a larger group of individuals spread across the State, Dioceses, and Districts in running the various programs we conduct through the year. **We are all here to help you navigate the many opportunities for high quality programs and achieve great success.**

A Brother Knight asked me: **What is the secret to successful programs?** The answer is simple. The **Fraternal Planner** is a huge asset to planning out your program year. **Be sure, also, to fill out your Form 10784 as early and often as you can.**

Finally, our state website, www.wikofo.org/For-Members/Programs is a great resource to see all of the programs available to you to activate your faith, community, and unity. **It's a great way to show that we are *The Strong Right Arm of the Church*.**

If you need any support, the State Programs Team is here to support you. Please reach out to any of our Directors, your Diocesan Program Coordinator, or myself. We will be happy to help.



Scott Frome is State Programs Director for the Wisconsin State Council of the Knights of Columbus.

PROGRAMS TO NOTE

Punt-Pass-Kick 2026 Council: 7/1 - 9/30 Results to DPC 10/1 Diocese: 10/3 - 10/24 Results to State: 10/25 State: <i>(Late Oct - Early Nov)</i>	Fall 2026 Soccer Council: 7/1 - 10/1 Diocese: 10/3 - 10/24 State: TBA	Catholic Citizenship Essay Writing: 10/1 - 11/30 Collect: 12/1 - 12/15 Judging: 12/15 - 12/31 Due to FIA: 1/1/27 Winners Announced: 2/1/27	Hockey LOCAL COMPETITION 10/1 - 5/31/27
Free Throw 2027 Council: 11/23/26 - 3/1/27 District: 3/5/27 - 3/21/27 Diocesan: 3/22/27 - 4/19/27 State: (Tent: 4/24/27 or 5/1/27)	Knowledge Contest Council: 12/1/26 - 3/21/27 Results to DPC: 3/24/27 Diocese: 3/24/27 - 4/18/27 Due to FIA 4/19/27 State: (4/24/27 or 5/1/27)	Keep Christ in Christmas Council: 12/5/26 - 12/31/26 Winners to DD: 1/1/27 District Winners: 1/15/27 Diocese Winners: 2/1/27 State Winners: Feb - March	

Culture of Life Essay
Writing: 1/1/27 - 3/19/27
Collect & Judge: 3/20 - 3/31
Participation Report: 4/15
State Diocese Winners: 4/30
Diocese Winners Announced: 5/9
State Winners: 5/16
Recognition: State Convention

Update: Wisconsin Special Olympics Fall Games Change

We have been made aware that the Wisconsin Special Olympics Fall Games have been moved from Wisconsin Dells to DeForest this year.

Dates: September 18th, 2026

As usual, we will host the Pancake Breakfast (9/20/2026) for athletes and their families. Please check the state website for additional information.

The List You Didn't Make

September arrives with paperwork. Shoes and a backpack, the supply list, the sports physical, the immunization record. And somewhere in the stack, the emergency contact form.

Every fall, parents across Wisconsin fill out that form without thinking much about it. But look at what it actually asks. Who comes for my child if I cannot? Who has authority to act on my behalf? Who does the school call when I do not answer?

Those are serious questions. We answer them for a school day. Almost no one answers them for a lifetime.

Father Michael McGivney understood the difference. When his own father died in 1873, he left seminary and went home to help support his mother and his siblings. He knew what happened to Catholic families when the wage earner was gone: property sold, households broken up, children placed with whoever could take them. In 1882 he gathered a small group of men in the basement of St. Mary's Church in New Haven and built an answer. Protection for the widow. Stability for the orphan. That was the founding purpose of this Order, and it has not changed in one hundred forty-four years.

So while you are filling out forms this month, answer three more questions. Not paperwork. Just an honest hour at your own kitchen table.

How long could your household continue if your income stopped? Not in theory. Count it. Most families find the answer is measured in weeks, and the discovery is uncomfortable enough to be useful.

Is your beneficiary designation current? This is the quiet one. Marriages, births, and losses change who should be named, and the form does not update itself. A wrong name on a beneficiary line causes real damage at the worst possible moment, and it is among the easiest things here to fix.

Does your spouse know where everything is? The policies, the accounts, the agent's phone number. Knowledge that lives in only one head is not protection.

You do not have to solve all of this in September. Start with a conversation. As a member of the Knights of Columbus, you and your family can sit down with your field agent and review what you already have, what it actually covers, and where the gaps are. It takes less time than a parent-teacher conference and, in my experience, it is considerably less stressful.



Brothers, we ask a great deal of our young families. We ask them to volunteer, to give, to raise children in the faith while working full time. The least we owe them is the thing Father McGivney built this Order to provide.

When you sign that emergency contact form this month, you are answering for one school day. **Answer the longer version too.**

Ken Basel is General Agent for the Knights of Columbus in SE Wisconsin.



Building A Stronger Order Together

On July 24, 2026, in the small town of Rudolph, Wisconsin, the Patriotic Degree Sir Knights from the Eastern and Western Districts joined forces for the funeral mass and procession of Private Elmer Blonien who was a World War II veteran who was captured by the Japanese and died in captivity and was buried in a mass grave. His remains were recently identified and the family requested the Sir Knights to participate in his funeral. Over 70 Honor Guard Sir Knights from all areas of the state of Wisconsin were present showing the way a true Knight supports his virtues of charity (we all gave of our time), unity (this was a multiple District and multi-assembly turnout), fraternity (we all worked together as Brother Knights) and Patriotism (we supported the family of a deceased veteran). The family was in awe of the turnout of Knights of Columbus and still is talking about it to others.



That is what it means to practice your Knighthood and live it with passion. Knights coming together to do what we do best. As Sir Knights, we strive to not only support our country and our veterans but to also assist with all the projects that we, as Brother Knights do on a daily basis. The way Councils and Assemblies work together shows the health of a community and of our Knights. While the Sir Knights might be the visible arm of the Knights, we continue to be third degree knights who participate fully in all the activities of an active Council. But to remain the visible arm of the Knights of Columbus, we need more good men from the third degree to step up and become Sir Knights. Our state officers would like nothing better than to see 500 or more brother knights become Sir Knights in this fiscal year. We have two upcoming opportunities.

The first is in Berlin Wisconsin in the Eastern District on September 19, 2026. The second is in Tomah, Wisconsin in the Western District on October 17, 2026. As we draft this article, we will have had an exemplification in Plover, WI in which members from both Districts became Sir Knights. **Please strongly consider joining that group of men that wish to further their journey in the Knights of Columbus and become a Sir Knight.**

As of September 1, 2026, Tom Eder of Chippewa Falls becomes the new Western District Master and Jack Wrbanich had his term as Master renewed for an additional two years. The Wisconsin Districts are in good hands and will continue to grow in numbers and the programs that people identify with the Knights. Western Wisconsin District Master Duane Zaborowski ended his term as Master on August 31, 2026 and will continue to work with Master Tom Eder and Master Jack Wrbanich in continuing to grow the programs and membership of the Patriotic Degree in the State of Wisconsin.

Remember, you do not have to purchase a uniform to become a 4th degree member. We encourage men to get the uniform but there are many opportunities to show your patriotic spirit without the uniform.

Vivat Jesus! God Bless all of the Knights of Columbus!

Master Jack Wrbanich, Master Tom Eder and Former Master Duane Zaborowski



Need Help With Ultrasound Fundraising Campaign?

There is a great pro-life organization out in Yelm, Washinton called [4US](#). They will help with 25% of the cost of the ultrasound. Yes! Half of your council's obligation!

Want to get involved in purchasing a Baby Box for a Milwaukee Firehouse?

Contact [Dan Miller](#) for more information.

Congratulations!

Congraulations to Brother Knights at St. Maria Goretti #17899 who raised dollars to purchase a brand new ultrasound machine for Our Lady of Hope Clinic. This effort was made possible in partnership with Supreme Council & 4US!



ASAP GRANTS

For every \$500 your council or assembly donates to a pregnancy resource center or maternity home (up to \$2,000), the match it with \$100. But, you have to apply for it! You only need two forms, a Donation Receipt Letter and a W9.

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 any time.

You can also purchase Pro-Life license plates. The more plates we have on the road, the more the pro-life message will be shared, and the more money there will be for the Pregnancy Resource Centers. The extra \$25 you pay for the plate is **tax deductible** if you itemize on Schedule A.

Vivat Jesus!

Dan Miller is Life Director for the Wisconsin State Council of the Knights of Columbus.



SPOTLIGHT

Meals for 100 Youth

The brothers of the Knights of Columbus at Holy Mother of Consolation, in Oregon, WI, provided a meal at the conclusion of SHINE, a three-day event for 100 youth from fifth grade to seniors, providing 50 service projects, including serving the elderly, weeding gardens, visiting senior centers, painting, and needed work at the churches of St Cletus Parish. The youth were inspiring in the difficult work they provided and the face of Jesus they saw in the people they served.

Submitted by: Mark Miller, Past Grand Knight



BIBLES FOR YOUTH

Brother Knights from #973, St. John Neumann Council Kenosha donated over \$2,000 worth of The Story of All Stories Bibles to All Saints & St. Joseph Catholic Academy Catholic Schools. As Grand Knight Ben Traczyk shared, "this is great for today's youth as it weaves in salvation history into one cohesive narrative with fantastic illustrations"

Submitted by: **Ben Traczyk, Grand Knight**



Kornfest Run 2026

The brothers of the Knights of Columbus Council #9385 Holmen, WI held their annual Kornfest Fun Run on August 15th as part of the weekend festival which has been held in the Holmen area since the 1960's.

Submitted by: Wisconsin State Communications Office



HONOR HIS LEGACY.

Advance His Cause.

STRENGTHEN YOUR FAITH

During the Jubilee Year of Hope.

As the Church celebrates the **Jubilee Year of Hope**, Catholics everywhere are called to renew their faith and walk more closely with Christ. What better way to respond than by drawing inspiration from our founder, **Blessed Michael J. McGivney**, who gave his life to strengthening families, building parish communities, and bringing hope to those on the margins.

1

SUPPORT HIS CAUSE FOR SAINTHOOD

Join in prayer and support the cause for the canonization of Blessed Michael McGivney.

2

DEEPEN YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE

Seek his intercession during this Jubilee of grace and grow closer to Christ.

3

WITNESS TO OUR CATHOLIC HOPE

Publicly witness to our faith as a member of his spiritual family.

Membership is free and open to all who believe in his mission.

Guild members receive inspiring newsletters, spiritual reflections, and invitations to special devotions honoring Blessed McGivney.

LET'S HELP MAKE OUR FOUNDER A SAINT.

FATHER MCGIVNEY GUILD

Jack Wrbanich, PSD
McGivney Guild Chairman

JOIN TODAY. BE INSPIRED. MAKE AN IMPACT.

koec.org/mcgivneyguild

BLESSED MICHAEL J. MCGIVNEY, PRAY FOR US!



**Knights of
Columbus®
Wisconsin
State Council**

Encounter Jesus Through The Blessed Mother

Fall 2026 Pilgrimage

Our Lady of Champion at The National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion.

In 1848, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared and the site has become a humble and peaceful place of prayer and refuge.

As you seek to grow your faith, you won't want to miss this incredibly moving opportunity.

Saturday, October 25th, 2026

Mass, Lunch, Divine Mercy Chaplet

Suggested Lunch Contribution:
\$25.00

Details & Registration
www.wikofc.org/champion2026

FROM THE EDITOR

Brothers, few among us would dispute that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word Made Flesh who dwelt among us, is the greatest human being ever to walk the earth. Nor would many hesitate to place His Virgin Mother, Mary, right beside Him as the Queen of all Saints. But I invite you to consider another question: Who comes next? I believe a strong case can be made that St. Joseph stands as the greatest human being after Our Lady. If you already share this view, wonderful! But if you aren't so sure, I hope you'll read on and allow me to share why exploring this belief has transformed my own faith life.

On August 21, I completed the 33-day preparation for *Consecration to St. Joseph* by Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC. Through this journey, I formally adopted St. Joseph as my spiritual father—seeking his intercession and guidance as a Catholic man, brother, son, husband, uncle, godfather, and God willing, a future father.

St. Joseph is the ultimate model of authentic manhood. Entirely obedient to God's divine plan, he served as a devoted husband to Mary and a faithful provider for Jesus. Imagine Our Lord's earthly upbringing: Jesus observed His foster father praying constantly, cherishing His mother, and dedicating himself to honest, hard labor. St. Joseph offers us a deeply relatable and actionable pattern for living out our faith in daily life.

As Fr. Calloway points out, devotion to St. Joseph has experienced a remarkable resurgence over the past

A Model to Live By

century. More than ever, the Church is recognizing his extraordinary sanctity. Throughout his book, Fr. Calloway weaves together inspiring reflections and quotes from saints who held a profound love for the Holy

Patriarch—including St. Thérèse of Lisieux. We are invited to explore St. Joseph's heroic virtues, miraculous wonders, global patronages, and even documented apparitions.

Growing up, I often overlooked St. Joseph. Because Christ and the Blessed Mother rightfully receive primary devotion—and because there wasn't a universal devotion like the Rosary dedicated specifically to him—Joseph remained in the background for me. Yet his quiet courage and hidden sanctity provide a powerful blueprint for Christian holiness today.

As Knights of Columbus, I am convinced that St. Joseph can serve as a vital patron and guide for our councils and our families. I warmly encourage each of you—whether individually or together as a council or small group—to undertake the 33-day consecration to St. Joseph. Take

the time to get to know and love your spiritual father.

Vivat Jesus!

Joshua Hopper is Editor of The Badger Bulletin



Vivat! wants you! *Content, story, and shout-out guidelines.*

Vivat! welcomes the contributions from across the State Council. We love sharing stories of Knights, their families, and Catholics across Wisconsin making a positive, uplifting, impactful, or supportive difference.

Have a story, column, or idea?

Email those to publications@wikofc.org. Content must be received by the **15th of the month** for consideration in the next edition of Vivat! **Interviews and staff contributed stories take additional time.**

For stories or shout-outs

Please be detailed, descriptive, and concise. Include relevant photos, links, and attachments in your submission. **Please limit stories to no more than 800 words.** Please note that submission does not guarantee inclusion.

Vivat reserves the right to

moderate our content, modify submissions, and reject content that does not meet our standards of integrity, values, or journalistic integrity.



Knights of Columbus[®] Wisconsin State Council

The Back Cover Artwork:

Raphael painted The School of Athens between 1509 and 1511 for the room Pope Julius II used as his private library, and it says something that a pope hung the great pagan philosophers on his own wall, confident that reason and revelation answer to the same Author. Beneath its vaults, Plato points upward toward eternal things while Aristotle extends a hand over the earth, and around them the hall fills with men in conversation: Pythagoras writing, Euclid bent over his compass, Diogenes stretched across the steps. That is the arrangement of a council, older men teaching, younger men leaning in to watch, all of them in one room because the work is done together and not alone. Raphael put himself at the far right edge, looking out at the viewer rather than at the philosophers, and every Knight should recognize that look: it asks whether you will stand at the edge of the room or step into it.