

# KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Divine Mercy of Jesus Council 17249  
August 2025 Volume 4 Issue 8



On Friday, August 15, the Catholic Church  
Will Celebrate the Feast of the Assumption of Mary



Catholics and many other Christians celebrate the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This significant feast day recalls the spiritual and physical departure of the mother of Jesus Christ from the earth, when both her soul and her body were taken into the presence of God.

Venerable Pope Pius XII confirmed this belief about the Virgin Mary as a dogma of Catholic faith in 1950, invoking papal infallibility to proclaim that the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever-Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory. The Church has celebrated the Assumption throughout its history. As the story goes, when Jesus was still on the cross, he said to the apostle John to take Mary under his care, which he did.

One day when he was visiting her, he discovered that she was not there. It has been said that no one has ever found anything personal

of hers. It is our belief that God assumed her, body and soul into Heaven.

The constitution also cited testimonies from the early Church fathers on the subject, and described the history of theological reflection on many Biblical passages which are seen as indicating that Mary was assumed into heaven following her death. Although the bodily assumption of Mary is not recorded in Scripture, Catholic tradition identifies her with the woman clothed with the sun, who is described in the 12th chapter of the Book of Revelation.

The passage calls that woman's appearance a great sign which appeared in heaven, "indicating that she is the mother of the Jewish Messiah and has "the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars." Accordingly, Catholic iconography of the Western tradition often depicts the Virgin Mary's assumption into heaven in this manner.

"It was fitting," St. John of Damascus wrote in a sermon on the assumption, "that she, who had kept her virginity intact in childbirth, should keep her own body free from all corruption even after death," and "that she, who had carried the creator as a child at her breast, should dwell in the divine tabernacles."

In Eastern Christian tradition, the same feast is celebrated on the same calendar date. Eastern Catholic celebration is preceded by a two-week period of fasting which is similar to Lent. The feast of the Assumption is always a Holy Day of Obligation for both Roman and Eastern-rite Catholics, on which they are obliged to attend Mass.



FROM AROUND THE WORLD  
OF INTEREST TO CATHOLICS

Athlete, convert to Catholicism,  
and future priest: The story of  
Josh Brooks

As breastfeeding groups begin  
admitting men, advocates launch  
new women-only effort

Damascus summer camps cele-  
brate 25 years of bringing youth  
to Christ

French bishops reveal 12 new  
abuse allegations

Illinois Newlyweds Share Their  
Love of Venerable Fulton Sheen

Getting Married at the Vatican:  
Catholic Couples Get a Taste of  
Heaven

3 killed, 10 wounded in Is-  
raeli strike on Catholic  
church in Gaza



## FROM THE DESK OF THE GRAND KNIGHT



GK Rocco Totino

### Officers' Meeting Grand Knight Report, July 2, 2025

1) Welcome to our first officers' meeting. Thank you for stepping up to take a leading role. Let's have fun and enjoy the ride. On behalf of officers, we extend our thank you to our PGK and PDGK for their leadership. Our council could not be in a better place.

2) Many of you are thinking what will be my contribution in the incoming year! I keep thinking of the Phrase, "Ask not what your council can do for you. Ask yourself what you can do for your council." Most of us are in our golden years. (forgetting the aches and pains) If you have a passion please volunteer your service. This council needs men willing and able to work events. Brother knights, I encourage you for the good of the order to have a conversation among yourselves, and form a committee of 3 to 4 knights. Speak with one of the directors who will provide guidance. When ready, present your proposal at an officers' meeting. You will be allowed 3 to 5 minutes to present your project.

3) As Grand Knight, I will meet regularly with Clergy, DGK, FS, Treasurer, Directors and Trustees. They will have input on the agenda and calendar. The GK is responsible to manage council activities and make sure the budget balances. Brother Knights input is welcomed.

4) We need to approve the coming year's budget. Ideally, it's done at the first General Council meeting in July. Thanks to the hard work of the past GK, DGK, Treasurer and Financial Secretary, and Chaplain's input, we have a budget ready for discussion at the August. Officers' meeting and will vote at our first general meeting in August. Our council receives many requests for money. Quarterly updates will tell us if we are under or over the budget, allowing the council to make adjustments.

5) Fr. Mike and Lecturer Tim Kunish are developing a Faith, Community Program revolving around our three degrees. Fr. Mike will soon advise on an agenda schedule. I look forward to these sessions. There is much to learn and share with fellow knights.

## LAUGHTER is the best MEDICINE

I'm not weird. I'm limited edition.

Why be moody when you can shake your booty?!

Of course I talk to myself. Sometimes I need expert advice.

Somebody said today that I'm lazy. I nearly answered him.

I made a huge to-do list today. I just need to figure out who's going to do it.

It's OK if you don't like me. Not everyone has good taste.

I'm not saying I'm overreacting. But there are good times and there are bad times to hand me a chainsaw.

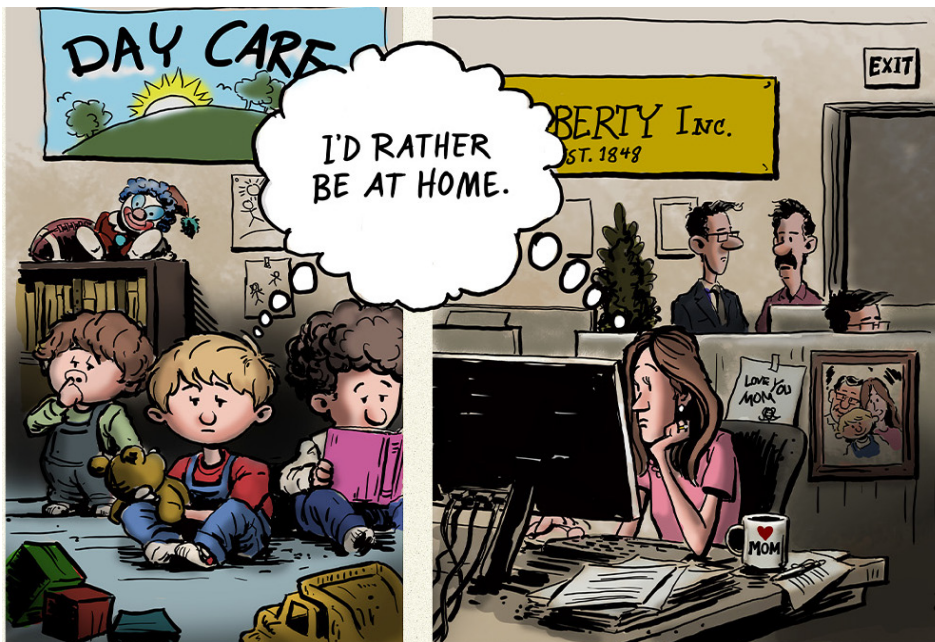
My brain says "crunches" but my stomach says "cupcakes."

Can you hear that? That's my pillow calling, and it gets really mean if I make it wait too long.

Could you point me to the bathroom? I have a stool appointment.

May I please be excused? My brain is full.

Organized people are those who are just too lazy to find their things.



## Knights of Columbus Council 17249 Elects New Officers for 2025 - 2026 Fraternal Year



You can see the entire list of names and officer positions on the last page.

DGK Rick Hendrickson, GK Rocco Totino, DD Bill McClelland, Fr. Mike, Trustee Pete McCabe, Trustee Bill Bannon



L-R Wayne Nunez, Tim Kunish, Pete McCabe, Bill Bannon, Pete Nunes, Bob Jodol, Rich Petit, Fred Belzel, Joe Ghezzi, Joe Coyne, Rick Hendrickson, Rocco Totino (Missing is Jerry Kleiber)



## Knights Work Together to Clean Grotto



L - R: Rocco Totino, Rick Hendrickson, Wayne Nunez, Bob Jodal, Dan Timmons, Rich Petit, Bill Bannon, Jerry Klieber, Dave Blazuk

## St. Thomas More's Head May soon Be Exhumed for Preservation and Display



Nearly five centuries after King Henry VIII had the head of Catholic martyr and statesman Saint Thomas More boiled and mounted on a spike, it may soon be exhumed for preservation and display.

Church officials have confirmed they are moving forward with formal requests to recover what is believed to be the saint's head from a family vault beneath the church.

If approved, the relic would un-

dergo extensive conservation and could be installed in a public shrine by 2035 — the 500th anniversary of St. Thomas More's execution.

St. Thomas More served as Lord Chancellor under Henry VIII but lost favor after refusing to support the King's break from the Catholic Church. His principled resistance to royal authority cost him his life, in 1535.

According to historical accounts, his head was secretly rescued by his daughter, Margaret Roper. She is said to have preserved it and eventually had it buried with her.

By 1578, both her remains and the head had been transferred to the family vault at St. Dunstan's, where they have remained undisturbed for centuries. Now, parish leaders are exploring how best to honor the relic's historical and spiritual significance.

A statement read to parishioners July 6 indicated that the parish council supports the exhumation, contingent on required approvals.

What the parish council has agreed to, subject to all the right permissions being granted, is to exhume and conserve what remains of the relic, which will take several years to dry out and stabilize.

The parish is considering placing the conserved relic either back in the vault or in a visible reliquary. Community members are invited to share their thoughts, as many visitors have long expressed a desire to view the relic.

The effort would require approximately £50,000 in donations to fund professional archaeological and conservation work. Initial feedback from parishioners has been positive.



## Pope's Childhood Home to be Restored

In a unanimous vote at a special board meeting, the village council of Dolton, Illinois, voted to purchase the childhood home of the first U.S.-born pope, Pope Leo XIV.

Newly elected Dolton Mayor Jason House called for the vote, even though several of them opposed the home purchase by the cash-strapped village.

Amid the pushback from Dolton residents who complained about the dilapidated state of local roads and the village's high debt, Mayor House said the purchase would eventually pay for itself, calling it a historical opportunity.

In Dolton, the per capita income is \$29,776 and 20% of the residents live in poverty.

Trustee Edward Steave referred to the busloads of people in and out of the village to see the house since the pope's election, emphasizing the economic benefits visitors to the historic site would bring to the community.

Trustee Stanley Brown said that while he is not a Catholic himself, he is a Christian who would like to help out the Catholics.

"I just believe in this opportunity that's been given us, and I believe in waiting on the Lord," Brown continued. "He's here to strengthen our town, so don't let this opportunity get away from us!"

"We have been put on the back burner, but now we have the opportunity to get on the front burner, and we don't want to let this opportunity get away from us," he said.

Dolton City Attorney Burt Odelson agreed, saying that a world of opportunity has opened for the small suburb, which is like no other place in the world.

"Things are just going to get better and better for the people of Dolton," Odelson said.

"The pope's house continues to draw in people, bringing new energy and at-



tention to our village. This increased traffic represents a new day in Dolton — full of potential, progress, and promise," the village wrote on its Facebook page.

Speaking to the press after the meeting, House said he hopes to close the deal on the house purchase within two weeks and hopes the house can be converted into its ultimate form within 30-60 days.

## Maine Lawmakers Demand Dismissal of Community College Professor Who Mocked Christian Student's Faith



Nearly 50 Republican lawmakers in Maine recently urged Eastern Maine Community College (EMCC) to terminate a professor accused of discriminating against a student's Christian beliefs.

The legislators called on EMCC to fire English professor Carol Lewandowski, alleging that she made "inappropriate and discriminatory comments" to a conservative student in one of her classes.

"Attempts to intimidate and silence students — especially based on religious status, ideology, and political affiliation — are completely unacceptable and run counter to the goals of higher education," the lawmakers said.

The controversy began when Katherine

Parker, a student in Lewandowski's oral communications class, went public with feedback she received on an essay about gun rights. Parker read excerpts of the professor's remarks, which were hostile toward her Christian beliefs and conservative views. Parker had written an essay supporting the Second Amendment, which prompted sharply worded and personal responses from Lewandowski.

Among her remarks, Lewandowski mocked Parker's Christian faith with the comment, "Wasn't your former speech a testimony to finding Jesus? Did Jesus pack heat?" Parker was also accused of "proselytizing in a college class."

Lewandowski dismissed Parker's topic as 2nd amendment nonsense and stated she could not fairly grade the paper due to her disdain for Parker's misinterpretations of the second amendment.

"You and your ilk drive me nuts with your hypocrisy,"

In 2024, she canceled a Zoom session the class was scheduled to have the day after Donald Trump won the election, telling students that she was too upset to teach or even communicate in any way, shape, or form. Someone else noted that they found

it unprofessional for Lewandowski to cancel the class, and she described the outcome as akin to "a death in the family," because she cares about the country as much as she does her family.

The lawmakers condemned the professor's comments as anti-religious bias.

"We are profoundly concerned by the professor's flippant mockery of the student's Christian faith, and we will do everything in our power to defend the right to worship everywhere in Maine," the lawmakers said.

EMCC confirmed to Maine that it had received the letter and said its leadership took action upon learning of the situation. "We are currently engaged in taking appropriate steps as required by law and collective bargaining agreement," a college spokesperson said. Citing personnel rules, the school declined to comment further.

Lewandowski has not responded publicly. However, EMCC has since reassigned her class to another professor, who informed students they would be restarting the course with a new curriculum and would not be required to complete past assignments.

## Suggestions on How to Dress for Church Activities



Dressing up for church is important and not just "Mass. That's because there are other church services besides Mass, such as Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, baptisms, weddings, going to confession, and more.

Whenever we go to church, we always encounter God. It is essential to give God our best. We may not be wealthy and able to afford expensive clothing, but even simple clothing can be made to look good. God is not impressed by how much we spend on clothing or hairdos. He is honored when we try to show respect for him and his house, even when we put on tasteful yet simple clothing.

The reason that dressing modestly

and respectfully for church is important is that it is an external sign of what we believe interiorly. Dressing appropriately is a crucial way to show our respect for God and the sacraments, most especially the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The Mass and sacraments are sacred gifts from God, and the Eucharist is the very presence of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Some people want to blur the lines between the inside and outside of the church doors, as if it's all the same. It isn't the same, however, just as the inside of our home is not the same as our driveway. If there were no difference between the two, then we could park our cars in our kitchens!

The same is true of what we do in church and what we keep out of church. The sacred space inside the church is distinct from the profane space outside the church.

When we cross the threshold of the church doors, we are entering sacred space. The sacred realm of God's house demands that we pay honor and respect to him when we are visiting him. As the priest wears special clothing to celebrate the sacraments, we, too, are to wear clothing that befits the occasion.

Our clothing should be modest. Modesty is part of temperance. It avoids the extremes of shabbiness and dazzling apparel. Today, however, the tendency is toward showing too much skin (even outside the church) rather than extravagant clothing.

Skimpy and overly tight clothing, more akin to beachwear, don't belong in the house of God, plain and simple. Never mind the near occasion to sin we may cause someone!

Modesty, the Catechism states, is decency. It protects our innermost being, refusing to unveil what should remain hidden. This is part of the reason that veils are often used to cover tabernacles and chalices: they point to the hidden sacredness that they cover.

Someone will object that we should come as we are to church because it's what's on the inside that counts, not the outside. It's true that the inside is essential. But the inside (the soul) never comes without an outside (the body). The human soul is important, but so is the human body. We are temples of the Holy Spirit, and that includes our bodies and souls.

When someone says that God sees what's on the inside, it's as though they think that God doesn't care about the outside. Another person will make the minimalist claim: "At least I'm in church; who cares what I wear?" God sees everything, including our efforts to offer him the best we have. He sees our heart, and one way we express what is in our heart by what we wear.

Interestingly, immodestly dressed men and women are given shawls to cover bare shoulders and legs at the major basilicas in Rome and elsewhere. Let's hope it's not time for us to do the same here at home.

## Future Saint an Avid Mountain Climber

When alpine climber Edoardo Ricci clips into a harness or prepares for a steep ascent in the Alps, he says a silent prayer to Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati.

"I think that I was saved by him," Ricci said, recalling the moment an avalanche struck during a ski tour. "I was the victim of an avalanche, and I survived without any injury."

Ricci and others who love to hike, climb and ski in the mountains will soon have a patron saint for their high-altitude pursuits.

As the Catholic Church prepares to canonize Frassati — a 24-year-old Italian from Turin who died of polio in 1925 — a new generation is rediscovering his passion for the peaks and his profound spirituality, captured in his now-famous phrase: to the heights.

"Mountain alpinism is a way to, you know, touch the untouchable," Ricci said. "When you are alone or just with a couple of friends, you can see and you can feel the silence. You can feel ... very close to God."



## Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.

And kindle in them the fire of your love.

Send forth your Spirit,  
and they shall be created.

And you will renew the face of the earth.

Lord,

by the light of the Holy Spirit  
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.

In the same Spirit

Help us to relish what is right  
and always rejoice in your consolation.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



# KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.



## Council 17249 Divine Mercy of Jesus Officers for 2025-2026

Officers for fraternal year. 2025/2026

Chaplain:	Fr Mike O'Brien
Grand Knight:	Rocco Totino
Deputy Grand Knight:	Rick Hendrickson
Chancellor:	Joe Coyne
Recorder:	Bob Jodal
Financial Secretary:	Fred Belzel
Treasurer:	Rich Pettit
Advocate:	Pete Nunes
Warden:	Joe Ghezzi
Inside Guard:	Wayne Nunez
Outside Guard:	Joe Moore
1- Year Trustee:	Jerry Kleber
2- Year Trustee:	Bill Bannon PDGK
3- Year Trustee:	Pete McCabe PGK
Lecturer:	Tim Kunish
Program Director:	Rick Hendrickson
Membership Director:	Jim Cullinan
Faith Director:	Pete Nunes
Family Director:	Mike Keeser
Community Director:	Pete Ganio
Life Director:	Kevin Manning
District Deputy:	Bill McClelland PGK
Field Agent	Tony Crevello
Newsletter Editor	Jim Hand