

Reflections for February

Lecturer Message – SK Gary Konopka

Pro-Life Movement

The month of January holds significant meaning for the pro-life movement as it marks the anniversary of the 1973 *Roe v. Wade*



Supreme Court decision. Since 1974, the March for Life has been held annually in Washington, D.C., around this date to serve as a peaceful protest and a "joyful witness" to the dignity of human life. Even following the 2022 *Dobbs* decision, which overturned *Roe v. Wade*, the march continues each January to advocate for legislative protections at both the state and federal levels and to foster a "culture of life" where abortion becomes unthinkable.

The Catholic Church has been a foundational supporter of the march since its inception. This support is rooted in the theological belief that human life is a gift from God that begins at conception and possesses inherent, unrepeatable dignity. Beyond the march itself, the Church emphasizes a "consistent ethic of life," connecting its anti-abortion stance to broader social justice efforts, such as supporting mothers in need through parish programs and advocating for the protection of all vulnerable populations. As Knights, we always support life.

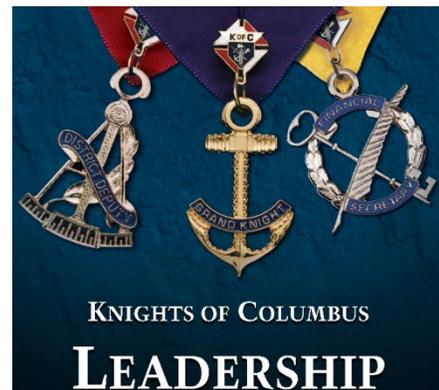
Deputy Grand Knight Message – SK Michael Ernst

Leadership That Lasts

"Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain." — Psalm 127:1

Most of what we discuss focuses on what we are doing this month or this year. Occasionally, it's important to step back and ask a longer-term question about how leadership itself is sustained — and whether what we are building is meant to last. True leadership is not measured by how well things

run while we are here, but by whether they still run when we are gone. Every organization faces the same question: do we rely on a few capable individuals — or can leadership reproduce itself?



For the Knights of Columbus, this is a structural issue. The men we hope will lead are not less faithful or committed. They live under tighter constraints: careers, families, and responsibilities. Yet much of our design still assumes open availability for multiple commitments. This gap between design and real life is where capacity is tested. When filling roles requires pressure, the system is pushed beyond what it can sustain. That can produce burnout and withdrawal, not leadership.

The real challenge is design. Are we building an organization that fits the lives of modern Catholic men — or one that functions only when a few exceed their limits? The future of the Knights will not be shaped by how strongly we recruit, but by whether the structure we invite men into is sustainable.