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MAY 2022 + VOLUME 102 + NUMBER 4



An Easter basket full of food and other items represents the 10,000 Easter care packages assembled by Knights of Columbus in Poland and sent to Ukraine during Holy Week with support from Knights Orderwide. Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly presented the basket to Pope Francis for a special blessing at the Vatican, on April 11, before continuing to Poland and Ukraine, where he personally loaded and delivered some of the care packages (see page 6).

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ON THE COVER

Our Lady of Perpetual Help, to whom many Ukrainian Catholics have a strong devotion, is depicted in this 20th-century icon. The original 15th-century Byzantine icon is entrusted to the Redemptorist order in Rome.



Membership in the Knights of Columbus is open to men 18 years of age or older who are practical (that is, practicing) Catholics in union with the Holy See. This means that an applicant or member accepts the teaching authority of the Catholic Church on matters of faith and morals, aspires to live in accord with the precepts of the Catholic Church, and is in good standing in the Catholic Church.

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Images of Unity

ASK CATHOLICS about the Knights of Columbus, and images of charity and fraternity will probably spring to their minds, not to mention images of patriotism and the Fourth Degree. The principle of unity, on the other hand, is a bit more intangible. Nonetheless, unity remains essential to our identity and mission as Knights. In fact, the Order's motto from its earliest days — stamped on Supreme Council letterhead in 1882 and repeated by Blessed Michael McGivney in his correspondence — was "Unity and Charity." Unity was mentioned even before charity, which is now celebrated as the Order's first principle.

Recall the lesson on unity from the Second Degree, now part of the combined exemplification of charity, unity and fraternity. A single fiber is easily broken, but "when individual fibers are bound together, they become a strong cable." The analogy is helpful, but we miss the point if we reduce the importance of unity to the idea of "strength in numbers." Rather, the lesson begins: "Gentlemen, to be a Knight of Columbus means that you possess unity in purpose and unity in action, which come from our shared Catholic faith and the grace of the Holy Spirit."

The late Archbishop Luis María Martínez of Mexico City, who served as state chaplain during and following a period of religious persecution in Mexico, summarized what he saw as a threefold unity of the Order: unity of faith, unity of organization and unity of action (see page 17). All three are crucial, but it begins with unity of faith, which itself is grounded in the unity of the Church and, ultimately, the unity of the one God, the Holy Trinity.

Speaking of unity in such terms may sound somewhat abstract or elusive, but when I consider the Order's spiritual and charitable response to the war in Ukraine, images of unity abound (see page 6). I also recall a photo taken a decade ago, in May 2012; it showed Major Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk, head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, and Archbishop Mieczysław Mokrzycki, Roman Catholic archbishop of Lviv, standing together and holding the symbolic "cable" following the first-ever exemplifications in Ukraine.

Ten years later, unity can clearly be seen in the some 1,900 Ukrainian Knights, representing both the Greek and Latin Catholic traditions, courageously serving their country and those in need. It is likewise seen in Polish Knights embracing Ukrainian refugees as their brothers and sisters; in continued support of the Order's Ukraine Solidarity Fund, which has raised more than \$11 million for direct relief; and especially in Knights around the world praying together for peace.

Blessed Michael McGivney was right: Unity goes hand in hand with Christian charity — which "binds everything together in perfect harmony" (Col 3:14). Whereas sin is the cause of division, unity fosters and is made possible by virtue, particularly the virtue of charity. It is for this reason that Jesus prayed, above all, for the unity of his flock, and St. Paul exhorts us to "bear with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace" (Eph 4:2-3). ✚

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Blessed Michael McGivney
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Faith Resource: *Mary, The Mother of God*

The booklet *Mary, The Mother of God* (#324) discusses the Church's teaching about Mary's pivotal role in salvation history as Mother of Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God. Part of the Building the Domestic Church Series published by the Order's Catholic Information Service, it explains how Mary's Immaculate Conception, perpetual virginity and Assumption flow from her unique mission as Mother of God. To download this and other Catholic resources, visit kofc.org/cis.

Hope Amid Darkness

I witnessed faith, gratitude and generosity among the suffering of those displaced by the war in Ukraine

By Supreme Knight Patrick E. Kelly

TO GAIN YOUR LIFE, you must lose it. The path to life is through death — and victory is achieved through a crucifixion.

A mystery is, by definition, beyond full comprehension, but while visiting Poland and Ukraine during Holy Week, I believe I saw deeper into these mysteries of our faith.

The suffering of Ukrainians has been well documented, but to see it firsthand was paradoxically both heart-wrenching and inspiring. In the space of this column, I cannot possibly fully express what my visit meant to me, but I would like to share just a few of its most significant moments.

On our first day, we traveled from Poland into western Ukraine. There we visited with displaced families who had taken refuge in a 14th-century monastery in Rava-Ruska, in the Archdiocese of Lviv. With financial assistance from the Knights of Columbus, the archdiocese converted the monastery's once burned-out interior into a welcoming home for those who had fled Russian bombing.

It was here that I met an older Ukrainian woman who had arrived with a single bag of belongings. Her daughter is in the Ukrainian army, so she fled with her granddaughter. She had no idea when, or if, she would see her home or the rest of her family again. You might reasonably expect someone in such a situation to be overwhelmed and desperate. Instead, this woman was overflowing with gratitude. She thanked me and the Knights, but ultimately her gratitude was directed to God. She said that, at every step of her arduous journey, she has met kind and generous people.

We could all learn from this faithful woman's witness, which called to mind a passage from St. Paul's letter to the Philippians: "Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses

all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus" (4:6-7).

Returning from Ukraine to Poland, I also witnessed a young woman walking across the border and pulling a single suitcase. I have no idea from how far she had come, nor for how long she had been pulling her suitcase, but I imagined the sadness and anxiety for the future she must be feeling.

Though none of us really knows what tomorrow holds, we are called to unceasingly proclaim the faith we have in Christ. The victory ultimately is Christ's already, and we belong to him — his victory is also ours.

On the second day of my visit, I traveled to Radom, Poland, which is home to one of our strongest councils. The Knights there were among the first to respond to the crisis, immediately collecting humanitarian aid to send to Ukraine. They also helped create a network to shelter refugees in homes, volunteered at our Mercy Centers on the border and have recently opened their own parish-based Mercy Center to address the long-term needs of refugees.

Why were these and other Knights able to respond so rapidly and with such great generosity? I believe that it is because they are motivated by their love of Jesus Christ, and it is Jesus who inspires them to put their faith into action. These Knights give a great example of the reality that both faith and action are essential to knighthood.

From a worldly perspective, spending Holy Week witnessing the situation in Ukraine and Poland could have simply left me with profound sadness. But I left with both hope and gratitude — hope that the courage and faith of these Ukrainian refugees will sustain them through this crisis, and gratitude that the Lord continues to provide for them, including through so many brother Knights who have been there for them in their time of need.

Vivat Jesus!



'Though none of us really knows what tomorrow holds, we are called to unceasingly proclaim the faith we have in Christ. The victory ultimately is Christ's already, and we belong to him — his victory is also ours.'

Revitalizing Parishes the McGivney Way

Charity, unity and fraternity are keys to the renewal of parish life today

By Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William E. Lori

SOMETIMES, I IMAGINE that there is a safe containing a secret formula for parish renewal — if only it could be found! A struggling parish looks across town and sees a burgeoning parish with a thriving school. Pastors and parishioners wonder, “How do they do it?”

The question is crucial. In many places, Mass attendance has declined for decades, as has sacramental practice — the number of baptisms, confessions, confirmations and marriages. But such statistics do not tell the whole story. Some of us remember not only a time when parishioners packed churches for Sunday Mass, but also a time when parishes functioned as centers of community life.

A lot has changed. Neighborhoods are not as cohesive as before, while options for socializing today seem to be unlimited. People no longer remain Catholic just because their parents were Catholic. Upheavals and scandals in the Church, combined with a dearth of priestly vocations, all contribute to the declining vitality of parish life. And as parishes face challenges, the very idea of evangelization can seem more and more elusive.

Many concerned pastors and lay leaders are looking for effective paths of parish renewal. Is it a question of tapping into a suitable parish renewal program? Offering certain amenities or establishing a youth group? Ensuring that parishioners receive a friendly greeting before Mass? Such things are important, but programs and tactics are not enough to transform a struggling parish into a vibrant one.

Our founder, Blessed Michael McGivney, knew something about renewing parish life. When he arrived at St. Mary’s in New Haven, Conn., the pastor was chronically ill, the parish was burdened with debt and pastoral challenges abounded. Yet, even as a newly ordained assistant pastor, Father McGivney transformed St. Mary’s into a thriving parish.

He saw to it there were plenty of parish activities, such as picnics and plays, to

complement the parish’s sacramental and devotional life — but he did not introduce them as tactical ploys. Rather, he brought to St. Mary’s Parish the same vision of life in Christ that led him to found the Knights of Columbus, a vision expressed in our core principles of charity, unity and fraternity.

I would submit that these same principles are key to building, in God’s grace, vibrant parish communities. They are not abstract ideas but summaries of the Gospel — keys that unlock a living relationship with Jesus Christ in company with others. Indeed, they have the potential to make parishes pulse with life and joy.

When a parish community expresses the love it shares in the Eucharist by extending itself in various forms of hands-on charity, it is likely to grow. Just as we are drawn to the love and mercy that flow from Jesus’ heart, even the unchurched are drawn to parishes that actively care for the poor and vulnerable.

Moreover, a parish united around the person of Christ, a parish that is joyfully one in professing and striving to live the Church’s faith, is a most attractive alternative to the polarized culture that surrounds us. Parishes that know how to dialogue, forgive and work together are also more likely to welcome new members and make them feel at home. Jesus prayed that all of his disciples would be united — “that the world may believe” (Jn 17:21).

Pope Francis has challenged our parishes to be “islands of mercy in a sea of indifference.” Fraternity is contrary to indifference. It is a strong sense of responsibility for and solidarity with one’s neighbor. This is expressed by reaching out to one another in times of hardship, illness and death, visiting elderly parishioners, helping bear one another’s burdens.

There is no panacea for declining parishes, but I believe Blessed Michael McGivney, the quintessential parish priest, was truly on to something! ✚



‘Father McGivney brought to St. Mary’s Parish the same vision of life in Christ that led him to found the Knights of Columbus, a vision expressed in our core principles.’

Supreme Chaplain's Challenge

A monthly reflection and practical challenge from Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William E. Lori

“My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish.” (Gospel for May 8, Jn 10:27-28)

Jesus is the Good Shepherd, and the Church is his flock. But are you a good sheep? Do you hear his voice as he calls, teaches and leads you? If we want to follow the Shepherd and not become lost, we must know him well and listen intently. We come to know him most intimately through prayer, the Eucharist, Scripture and good spiritual reading. My brother Knights, let us continually listen to Christ's voice so we can follow him ever more closely wherever he leads us.



Challenge: This month, I challenge you to pray the rosary every day and meditate intently on its mysteries to know Jesus better, and become ever more attuned to his voice. Second, during this month of Mary, I challenge you to join your council in holding the Faith in Action Rosary program.

Catholic Man of the Month

St. François de Laval (1623-1708)

THE DEATH OF his older brother forced a decision for 22-year-old François de Laval: continue to study for the priesthood or leave seminary to assume the title belonging to his noble family. Despite his mother's pleas, François persevered in his vocation — an early glimpse of the fidelity to God's will that would be reflected in his many years of ministry as the first bishop in Canada.

Born in Montigny-sur-Avre, France, in 1623, François showed piety and intelligence from a young age and was encouraged to pursue the priesthood. He studied in Paris and, after relinquishing the family title to his younger brother, was ordained in 1647.

In 1654, Father de Laval was chosen to serve as apostolic vicar in Tonkin (present-day Vietnam). When the plan fell through, he spent several years in semi-seclusion, praying and ministering to the poor. His retreat ended when he was appointed apostolic vicar to New France in 1657.

The rest of his long missionary life was spent building the Church in the New World. Named the first bishop



of Québec in 1674, Bishop de Laval traversed his vast diocese by canoe and snowshoe. He founded schools, including a seminary, and organized a system for ministering to his far-flung faithful. He was also adept at navigating the politics of Church and state, and waged a long battle against liquor sales by exploitative traders to Indigenous peoples.

Bishop de Laval lived austere and was known for his devotion to the Eucharist and the Blessed Virgin Mary. Despite many setbacks, he always trusted in God's providence: “Everything that the hand of God does serves us admirably,” he wrote, “even though we do not see the effects of it soon.” He died at age 85 in Québec in 1708 and was canonized by Pope Francis in 2014. ✚

Liturgical Calendar

May 2	St. Athanasius, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
May 3	Sts. Philip and James, Apostles
May 10	St. Damien de Veuster, Priest (USA)
May 13	Our Lady of Fatima
May 14	St. Matthias, Apostle
May 21	St. Christopher Magallanes, Priest, and Companions, Martyrs
May 26/29	The Ascension of the Lord
May 26	St. Philip Neri, Priest
May 31	The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Holy Father's Monthly Prayer Intention



We pray for all young people, called to live life to the fullest; may they see in Mary's life the way to listen, the depth of discernment, the courage that faith generates, and the dedication to service.



‘Go On!’

Pope Francis commends the Order’s refugee relief efforts as Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly joins Knights in Poland and Ukraine for Holy Week

Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly traveled to Poland and Ukraine during Holy Week to meet with Knights and witness and encourage their ongoing humanitarian efforts in response to the war in Ukraine.

During his visit, the supreme knight was able to convey the support and gratitude of Pope Francis as well as his own. The Holy Father received Supreme Knight Kelly in a private audience at the Vatican on Monday, April 11, before the supreme knight and his family continued to Poland. During the audience, the pope blessed an Easter basket with food representing the 10,000 K of C care packages that Knights in Poland were preparing to send to Ukraine. The boxes, which contained food such as meat, flour, pasta and chocolates, in addition to an Easter candle and a letter from the supreme knight, were made possible by financial support from councils Orderwide.

Seeing photos of Polish Knights assembling the boxes, Pope Francis enthusiastically said, “Bravo! Bravo!” He later added, “Go on! Go on!” — making a gesture with his hands to express a heart bursting with love for others.

Supreme Knight Kelly joined Polish Knights the next day at a warehouse in Łańcut, helping to load some of the Easter care packages into a “Charity Convoy” — a group of 18-wheelers bound for Lviv, Ukraine.

After stopping at the Order’s Mercy Center on the border in Hrebennie, Poland, he continued to the town of Rava-Ruska, in western Ukraine. With Archbishop Mieczysław Mokrzycki of Lviv and Ukraine State Deputy Youriy Maletskiy, the supreme knight personally delivered some of the care packages to displaced families who, thanks to financial support from the Order, have taken refuge at a 14th-century monastery in the Archdiocese of Lviv.

At the monastery, Supreme Knight Kelly also met with Ukrainian Knights, who had come from throughout their war-torn country, and shared with them the pope’s commendation of their service.

“He was deeply moved and wanted me to extend his thanks to you,” the supreme knight said. “What you are doing here really exemplifies the kind of courage that Father McGivney had when he founded the Knights in order to serve his parishioners who needed help.”

Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly and Ukraine State Deputy Youriy Maletskiy deliver Easter care packages April 12 to families taking refuge at a 14th-century monastery in Rava-Ruska, in western Ukraine. Knights in Poland assembled 10,000 such packages, containing food and other items to help displaced Ukrainians celebrate Easter.

Photo by Andrew Gorb

The supreme knight then officially installed State Deputy Maletskiy, who is overseeing the Order's humanitarian efforts in Ukraine. At a time when the principle of patriotism is especially meaningful for Ukrainians, Maletskiy also received authority to induct Knights into the Fourth Degree.

The following day, the supreme knight visited Our Lady of Częstochowa Parish in Radom, Poland, where Knights and other volunteers had assembled 5,000 of the Easter care packages. After learning more about the myriad efforts of local Knights, including prayer initiatives and a parish-based Mercy Center to welcome refugees into the community, the supreme knight helped to load some of the boxes, which were bound for Kyiv.

On Holy Thursday, he and his family visited a Caritas-run retreat center outside Częstochowa, which is now serving as an orphanage for about 100 Ukrainian refugee children, with support from the Knights' Ukraine Solidarity Fund.

The supreme knight concluded his visit at St. Wojciech Parish in Częstochowa, home to another parish-based Mercy Center, where he was received by Ukrainian refugees before meeting with members of the Poland State Council.

"It's hard to express how much I have learned the past few days about the spirit and the faith of the Polish Knights," he said. "You demonstrate both faith and action — and the powerful thing is that you put them together as men of faith in action."

To learn more about the Order's efforts and support the Ukraine Solidarity Fund, visit kofc.org/ukraine. ✚



Left: Pope Francis receives an Easter basket presented to him by Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly and his family at the Vatican on April 11. The basket, which the pope blessed, represented the thousands of Easter care packages prepared by Polish Knights.

• *From top: Dominican Father Jonathan Kalisch, accompanied by the supreme knight, blesses a truck participating in a "K of C Charity Convoy" from Łańcut, Poland, to Lviv, Ukraine, on April 12. • Archbishop Mieczysław Mokrzycki of Lviv leads a decade of the Divine Mercy chaplet in Ukrainian during the supreme knight's visit to the Knights of Columbus Mercy Center in Hrebennie, Poland, near the Ukraine border. • Supreme Knight Kelly helps Knights in Radom, Poland, load a truck bound for Kyiv with Easter care packages on April 13.*



From top: Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly visits Ukrainian children at a retreat center now serving as an orphanage outside of Częstochowa, Poland, on April 14. The center is run by Caritas with support from the Order's Ukraine Solidarity Fund. • State Advocate Mykola Mostovyak (left) and other Ukrainian Knights greet the supreme knight during his April 12 visit to Rava-Ruska, Ukraine. • Supreme Knight Kelly presents State Deputy Maletskiy with a Fourth Degree sword — giving him authority to induct Ukrainian Knights into the patriotic degree — after ceremonially installing him in office. • A displaced woman from Odessa serves a simple Ukrainian meal at the Rava-Ruska monastery. • Poland State Deputy Krzysztof Zuba (right) addresses Supreme Knight Kelly during a meeting with state officers and other leaders, including State Chaplain Archbishop Wacław Depo of Częstochowa, on April 14.





Hospitality in a Time of War

Knights of Columbus families in Poland open their hearts and homes to Ukrainian refugees

By Adrian Walczuk

When Blessed Michael McGivney founded the Knights of Columbus, a primary purpose of the new fraternal order was to aid families in need, especially those who had lost their breadwinner. The plight of these 19th-century American families is reflected today in the experience of refugees from Ukraine, most of whom are women and children. While many of their husbands and fathers stayed to defend their homeland, they have found themselves in foreign countries on their own, with few belongings and unsure of their future.

Millions fled Ukraine in the first weeks of the war — most of them to Poland, where Knights have mobilized to welcome families at the border, at parishes and in their homes. As soon as the Russian invasion began, the Poland State Council responded to the call of the Polish Bishops' Conference to host refugees, assembling a database of medium- to long-term housing options, including Knights of Columbus families willing and ready to open their homes. Three of these Knights' stories are shared here.

‘THEIR SECOND HOME’

Włodzimierz and Edyta Stec responded to a call to take in refugees on the day the war in Ukraine broke out.

“On Feb. 24, State Deputy Krzysztof Zuba notified all K of C leaders that the state council was collecting the names and contact information of individuals and families who could accept refugees from Ukraine,” recalled Włodzimierz, who is grand knight of Our Lady of La Salette Council 15142 in Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, in central Poland. “Without a second thought, Edytka and I decided that we would welcome a minimum of four people.”

On March 5, just after 10 p.m., Włodzimierz received a call that 11 people were waiting at the border for help — four women and seven children. He and some friends immediately drove in three cars to pick them up and bring them to a safe place.

The Stecs took in a family from Kremenchuk, in central Ukraine — Alina and her three sons, 2-year-old Zahar, 6-year-old Makar and 9-year-old Maksym — with whom

they communicate in Russian.

Alina did not want to leave her homeland and husband behind, but her middle son's fear during the bombing raids persuaded her to flee to Poland. She was afraid that if the situation escalated, the trauma would become unbearable.

"We are very happy here — safe, comfortable and warm," Alina said. "This is like a second home. Our second family."

In addition to hosting refugees, Włodzimierz Stec and his friends renovated a house for another Ukrainian family. It has a large backyard and was outfitted with furniture, kitchen appliances, a washing machine and other necessary equipment.

Welcoming a trio of rambunctious Ukrainian children into their home has brought big changes to the normally tranquil life of Włodzimierz and Edyta, whose 28-year-old son is married and living in Warsaw. But the Stecs practice patience, knowing that the most important thing is to help those in need.

"I must admit that sometimes I have moments of weakness, doubts," Edyta said, acknowledging that her once quiet home life has been turned upside down.

"One day Włodek said that we have to give up own comfort, such as returning home after work to rest in peace and quiet," Edyta added with a laugh. "That's how my husband is. I think that's why he's a Knight of Columbus. He's in the right place, and I support him in all of this."

Włodzimierz's comfort zone has also been challenged.

"I have a funny situation because sometimes the boys call me *diadia*," he explained. "*Diadia* is Russian for uncle, but I thought it meant grandpa. I told them, 'But I don't want to be called grandpa,'" Włodzimierz said with a smile, adding that spending time with Alina's sons has, indeed, helped prepare them to be grandparents.

"This is meant to be their home, their second home — at least until it's all over," said Włodzimierz. "That's what Edytka and I want, and we are working to make it that way."

BRINGING FAMILIES TOGETHER

When Adam Weigel-Milleret arrived at his office in Igołomia, Poland, on Feb. 24, he learned about the Russian invasion from one of his employees, Oleh, a native of Kharkiv in eastern Ukraine.

"Oleh was so distraught that he couldn't concentrate on normal daily activities," recalled Adam, a member of St. Brother Albert Chmielowski Council 15128 in Kraków. "I simply told him that if he had family there, he should bring them here."

For the next several days, Oleh was constantly on the phone, anxiously helping family members navigate the more than 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) from Kharkiv to the Polish border.

Witnessing Oleh's frantic efforts to help his family was one thing that motivated Adam and his wife, Marta, to act.

"Next to our company's headquarters there is a large, unused house," explained Adam, who runs an international transportation and mechanics company east of Kraków. "And we managed to shelter several Ukrainian families there."



Above: Włodzimierz and Edyta Stec are pictured with Alina (right) and her three boys in their home in Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, Poland. • Opposite page: Eleonora (right), a refugee from Odessa, Ukraine, helps the Kołodziej family set the table for breakfast. Dominik and Marta Kołodziej are hosting Eleonora, her mother and her grandmother in Kraków.

First, the couple took in Oleh's daughter, her cousin and her two children, ages 5 and 12, who arrived from Kharkiv after traveling nonstop for three days through their war-torn country. They soon started helping on a larger scale and are currently hosting 39 refugees, including 21 children.

"Adam's family welcomed us very, very warmly. My grandmother had arrived here before, and it was she who asked Adam if he could give us a room," said Angelina, who fled from southeastern Ukraine with her young son, Artur, sister Margarita and cousin Sofia. "On the spot they gave us bedding, towels, diapers and porridge for Artur — everything he needed. They

gave us everything we needed as well. I can't even express our gratitude."

Many of the refugees have arrived so exhausted they can barely get out of the car and walk, especially the children. The trauma of their experience is still very raw. One night, a Ukrainian mother staying in the house heard the sound of a toilet flushing and thought there was a bombing.

"She panicked, picked up her baby and ran out because she didn't know what was happening," Adam explained. "I think this incident best illustrates what people are going through in Ukraine."

Adam hopes that the house is not only a shelter, but also a space where

mothers and children — deprived of their husbands and fathers — can experience a sense of family and community. He noted that several rooms are currently occupied by a large extended family consisting of sisters, cousins, grandmothers and mothers-in-law — bookended by a great-grandson and a great-grandmother.

"I can't help but think of the mission of our founder, Blessed Michael McGivney," Adam said. "He was combating the effects of industrialization on family life and working toward unity. And by a complete accident, I find myself working toward the same goal now, helping to protect families and bring them together."



Adam Weigel-Milleret (right) stands together with some of the refugees he and his wife have welcomed and housed in a large residence next to his company headquarters in Igołomia, Poland.



From left, Ukrainian refugees Tatiana, Inna and Eleonora are pictured with Marta and Dominik Kołodziej and their two children, Dominika and Nikodem, outside the Kołodziejs' home in Kraków.

'A SPACE WE CAN SHARE'

Dominik and Marta Kołodziej have always been open to guests. The decision to welcome refugees into their home in Kraków, Poland, came naturally.

"We were facing an influx of people who were fleeing the war, who had lost their homes, who lost that sense of security we have here," said Dominik, a member of Blessed Michał Sopoćko Council 17667 in Kraków.

The Kołodziejs have two young children — Nikodem, 6, and Dominika, 3 — and are expecting their third child in June, but they had no doubts.

"Already on the first day of the war, when we saw that people were fleeing the bombing and looking for shelter, we agreed that this was a space we can share," Marta recalled.

Dominik and Marta made a room in their home available, and five days later, on Ash Wednesday, they welcomed guests from Odessa, Ukraine: Inna, her 12-year-old daughter, Eleonora, and her mother, Tatiana.

Inna, whose husband died a number of years ago, fled with her daughter just a few days after the war broke out. She recalled the first day of the conflict, when the sounds of bombs woke them in the early morning and she rushed out to buy food and medicine.

"While I was in the pharmacy, a terrible explosion came from the street, and the pharmacy clerk, a young woman, became so frightened that she sat down on the floor," Inna said. "I asked her to get up and not be afraid because people needed medicine. Terrified that my home was being bombed, I then took my purchases and ran back to find my daughter waiting for me."

Inna's mother, Tatiana, initially wanted to stay at home in Odessa, but after hiding in basements for a week, she fled in a car 800 kilometers (500 miles) to Lviv, and eventually reached the Polish border.

"Both young and old were very scared. Frankly, we didn't know how we were going to live," Tatiana said. "We came to a very good family here in Kraków. Dominik and Marta greeted us with such warmth and generosity."

The two families — who communicate with each other primarily in English — live together as one, sharing a common living room, bathroom and kitchen.

"God is an important point of reference for us in this common space," said Marta. "Christ teaches us to feed the hungry, welcome newcomers, be supportive of each other."

At first, Dominik assumed that welcoming guests would feel like a sacrifice. "But it turned out to be quite the opposite," he said. "We get along great. We already feel like family members with each other."

Being welcomed by the Kołodziejs has allowed Inna and her family to process their experience and think about the future.

"We were in shock. For the first two weeks or so, we didn't understand at all what happened," Inna said. "But then, thanks to their friendly and hospitable attitude, we started thinking about how to live, how to make plans." ✚

To watch video testimonials of each family featured here and related coverage, visit youtube.com/knightofcolumbus.

ADRIAN WALCZUK writes from Kraków, Poland, where he is a member of Blessed Michał Sopoćko Council 17667.



Apostle of Guadalupe

Archbishop Luis Martínez of Mexico City preached a message of faith, hope and unity following years of persecution

A campaign of religious persecution by the Mexican government — and with it the Cristero War — began in 1926. A second era of persecution followed nearly a decade later, from 1934 to 1938. Tens of thousands were killed for their faith during these periods, proclaiming the spiritual battle cries “*Viva Cristo Rey! Viva la Virgen de Guadalupe!*” Among them were 38 priests and laymen — nine of them Knights — who have been beatified or canonized as martyrs and whose feast day is celebrated May 21.

A young bishop named Luis María Martínez, ordained an auxiliary for the Archdiocese of Michoacán in 1923 at age 42,

was a pastor and witness to the martyrs, and he came to view their suffering as a paradoxical blessing. Their participation in the suffering of Christ, Martínez believed, would ultimately bear spiritual fruit for Mexico as a whole. Martínez was appointed archbishop of Mexico City in 1937 and became the Mexico state chaplain of the Knights of Columbus the same year. He served in both positions for nearly two decades.

“Archbishop Martínez was famous for his kindness, prudence, intelligence, cordiality and great sense of humor — which greatly helped the word of God to enter the heart of so many people,” writes Msgr. Eduardo Chávez, postulator

for the cause of St. Juan Diego, in the foreword to a new English-language edition of a collection of the archbishop's homilies and talks. "Martínez was not only instrumental in achieving a stability for the Catholic Church in civil society, but also greatly strengthened the souls of Catholics in Mexico, so that they might never lose faith in the love of God."

Archbishop Martínez's last public homily was given in September 1955, during a pontifical Mass celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Knights' presence in Mexico (see page 15). He died Feb. 9, 1956, and his cause for canonization was opened in 1981. ✚



"Archbishop Martínez was famous for his kindness, prudence, intelligence, cordiality and great sense of humor — which greatly helped the word of God to enter the heart of so many people."

Photo courtesy of Magnificat

Water, Blood and Fire

EDITOR'S NOTE: Below is an excerpt from a homily given by then-Bishop Luis María Martínez on the feast of Pentecost, May 24, 1931, during a pilgrimage to the Basilica of Tepeyac, the site where Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to St. Juan Diego in 1531. The excerpt, printed with permission, is drawn from a compilation of Archbishop Martínez's homilies, reflections and talks, newly published in English under the title Am I Not Your Mother?: Reflections on Our Lady of Guadalupe (Magnificat, 2022). For more information, visit magnificat.com.

"There are three that testify: the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and the three are of one accord." (1 Jn 5:7-8)

FOUR CENTURIES AGO, Most Holy Mary of Guadalupe brought us the Holy Spirit, the One whose proper name is Gift and who is the principle of all the gifts of God; and Mexico, having received this divine Spirit, was able to fulfill the providential mission that it received from God. ...

We did not hear the noise of a rushing wind but the sweetest lullaby of Mary's heavenly voice. No tongues of fire appeared, but the miraculous roses sprang up. Their fragrance filled our soil and their petals painted the divine image that our eyes contemplate. It could be said that in her joined hands Mary brought us the divine Dove, and the Sun that surrounds her is the Sun of Love whose rays enliven our souls. Our Lady of Guadalupe brought us many gifts ... but the gift *par excellence* that she gave us when she visited us is the Holy Spirit, who spread to all flesh on the continent.

It was natural that, when the Holy Spirit came, he would pour out upon the new continent the three divine floods that flowed from the Upper Room.

First, that of water. It is not a vain attempt to look for analogies, or a rhetorical trick. I tell you the truth in Jesus Christ. There was something exceptional and miraculous in the evangelization of the native peoples. Their attachment to their old traditions, the charm that the wild beauty of their idolatrous worship exerted on them, the link of the new faith with the conquest made at the edge of a sword — all these things placed incredible obstacles to the colossal enterprise of Christianization initiated by the heroic missionaries. To tell the truth, the missionaries' first efforts were sterile, but as soon as the Virgin Mary appeared on this glorious hill, the regenerating waters of baptism spread marvelously throughout our country. It was a veritable flood, and out of it arose a new humanity...

The national soul was forged with a deep-rooted faith.... Oh, how many would have wished that that sweet life had been prolonged forever, or at least that the transition from infancy to youth had been made without turmoil, without catastrophes, without bloodshed! Mary Most Holy, who has a special love for us, had in store for us something better

than what we could have imagined. She had in store for us the cross, the sacrifice — the glorious testimony of blood. ...

Mary had the glorious cross in store for us, and that is why the generous Mexican blood has soaked our soil in abundance. I am not referring only to the blood that has not yet dried, to that which we ourselves have seen spilled, but to all that has been shed in the century of our independent life. The history of that century is one of blood, and, thank God, at the bottom of all our vicissitudes and all our struggles has always been our Catholic faith, our unshakable faith. Mexico has been a people martyred for its faith, and the same predilection of the Virgin Mary has exalted our martyrdom because, given the enmities that God placed between the woman and the serpent, it is natural that the serpent becomes wiler in the land where the celestial heels of Mary rested. Mexico has given Jesus the testimony of blood after having given the testimony of faith. ...

The marvelous flood of water four centuries ago and the heroic flood of blood of the last century announce and prepare an intimate, most sweet, and abundant flood of love. I am not a prophet, nor do I pretend to announce the future. I tell you only what my heart dreams, what my soul senses,

what seems to be logically deduced from what we contemplate and know.

Everything indicates to us that our providential mission is not finished. When a people has been so loved by the Mother of God, as we have been; when a people has been nailed to the cross, as we have been nailed, it has a high and glorious destiny — it has a providential vocation to ascend to the divine summit of love. In the supernatural link of the operations of the Holy Spirit, the divine flood of love must logically follow the floods of water and blood.

That is why I hope for a new epoch for my homeland — perhaps very near, perhaps already begun — in which, purified by water and blood, it will sing the new song of a new love — Mexican hearts, made for love, enriched by water and blood. With exquisite tenderness, the finest delicacy, and passionate ardor, they will offer to Jesus the testimony of deep love. And this love's perfume will spread through our soil as the scent of Tepeyac's roses spread four centuries ago....

By the testimony of our faith we were the people of Mary, and by the testimony of our blood, the people of the cross. By the testimony of love, we will be the people of the Holy Spirit, of the divine Unknown. ✚



Supreme Warden Jorge Carlos Estrada Avilés, state deputy of Mexico South (fourth Knight from left), stands with other Mexican Knights and their wives outside the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe following Mass on March 13. The primate archbishop of Mexico, Cardinal Carlos Aguiar Retes, celebrated the Mass for the Knights of Columbus on the occasion of the Order's 140th anniversary, as well as for peace in Ukraine, Mexico and the whole world.

'May All Be One'

EDITOR'S NOTE: Near the end of his life, Archbishop Luis María Martínez received special permission from his physician to deliver what would be his last public homily Sept. 18, 1955, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Order in Mexico. The following words were addressed to the Knights of Columbus, with Supreme Knight Luke Hart in attendance, in the Cathedral of the Assumption in Mexico City.

HALF A CENTURY is something very important in the life of an institution, and when such an organization has borne true fruit in that half century, it is worthy of praise. I would like to give just praise to the institution and at the same time urge it to continue with that fruitful labor so that it may grow before God and country. And to do so, I invite all of you to ask for God's help through the Holy Virgin, so that I may speak with dignity in these most solemn moments.

Hail Mary ...

The Gospel of St. John tells us that in a conversation between Jesus Christ and the eternal Father, he said: "May all be one, just as I am in you" (cf. Jn 17:21), and thus we were made to understand the value of unity.

I believe it is here that one finds the basic worth of the Order of the Knights of Columbus in Mexico: in the unity demonstrated over a half century, in a unity that — like the Holy Trinity — is threefold: unity of faith, unity of organization, unity of action.

There is unity of faith because all members must be deeply Catholic. They must be very faithful to the Church in the way they think, which is as one, and they should be similar to the Church in the desire to be one thing, as Christ is in the Father.

Being always united in faith, the institution has achieved its first distinction: achieving 50 years of active faith that moves mountains and achieves wonders, the kind of faith that constantly transforms the world.

"I believe it is here that one finds the basic worth of the Order of the Knights of Columbus ... in a unity that — like the Holy Trinity — is threefold: unity of faith, unity of organization, unity of action."



Archbishop Luis María Martínez, Mexico state chaplain, delivers his last public homily Sept. 18, 1955, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Order's founding in Mexico.

But there is also unity of organization. In order to be strong, solid and effective, it needs to be one. Practicing unity, all of you will be just one thing: There will be people of all categories, from all ranks of science, of all qualities and virtues, but all have Catholicism as a base, and thus they achieve unity of organization.

This second quality is necessary so that all of you may form a true body that acts together, because it is only in this way that unity of faith may bear fruit and that you may realize to a certain degree the longing of Christ and his Church.

The third form of unity is unity of action — everyone working together with the same general plan — the same in state capitals as in small mountain villages, so that in order to reach the soul of the country, all of you work for the good and progress of Mexico.

Keep forever etched into your minds these three forms of unity that are so basic to our society: unity of faith, unity of organization and unity of action. I urge all of you at this most solemn moment to preserve forever these three unities, which make all of you worthy of your ideals, and I assure you that you will grow in honor. Grow your faith, embrace unity, coordinate your efforts.

May it please God that this desire for Christ be realized. Ask for it, on this, the day of your golden anniversary, from the Queen of Mexico, who is your protector and who would deign to intercede so that all of you may be granted the necessary graces for the fulfillment of this threefold unity. With this celestial protection, all of you will continue to do good on earth and in heaven you will find the reward for your labors. ✚

WOOD WORK

Knights of Columbus councils cut firewood to provide warmth for families in need and raise funds for charity

By Elisha Valladares-Cormier



St. Augustine wrote in his *Confessions* that “one loving heart sets another on fire.” The Knights of Columbus councils featured here, among many others, are motivated by charity to literally keep fires burning. In some cases, woodchopping councils cut and deliver firewood directly to people who rely on it for heating their homes. Others process and sell firewood to raise funds for parish ministries, food banks, scholarships and other charitable causes. In either case, thousands of volunteer hours contributed by these Knights have greatly impacted their communities.

1 Pete Tysdal (not pictured), a member of Teller County Council 625 in Woodland Park, Colo., began collecting dead trees and cutting them up for people in need in 1997. His work has expanded into a program called “Pete’s Place,” and the donations it receives from Teller County landowners fill the yard of the local fire district. Dozens of volunteers, mostly Knights from Council 625, gather, cut and split the wood and then deliver it to people’s homes. Many recipients rely on wood-burning stoves due to the expense of gas or electric heat, and the free fuel provides much-needed

relief. “When we make deliveries,” said Tysdal, “a family sometimes tells us that they will be warm that night. And that takes your heart into a new place.”

2 Members of Fenton (Mich.) Assembly 2031 were searching for a new way to raise money when they began cutting wood at a brother Knight’s farm more than two decades ago. Now, they operate two sites from which they sell about \$48,000 in firewood a year to a nearby resort and a loyal customer base. As many as 30 Knights attend the semiweekly sessions to cut, split and bundle wood — an occasion

for fraternity and charity alike. “We’ve become lifelong friends who share humor, opinions and advice — and a pledge of helping others,” said project chairman Richard Raleigh. With its firewood funds, the assembly is able to support the ministries of three parishes and make donations to numerous charitable and patriotic organizations.

3 Opportunity knocked for Mary Queen of Peace Council 9657 in Crosslake, Minn., when a nearby campground ran out of wood in the late 1990s. Its staff members asked the pastor of Immaculate Heart Parish in Crosslake to sell them some firewood, and the pastor assigned the task to a group of parishioners, most of them Knights. The fundraiser eventually became a council project that now makes up to \$25,000 a year for charitable causes, including local food banks, pro-life groups and seminarian education. These days, 15 to 20 Knights gather once a week from April to November to process and deliver firewood. The work, said Grand Knight Paul McConville, is uniquely satisfying. “On the one hand, there’s this holy fraternity we have working together on the ‘wood hill,’” he explained, “but we also are doing something for people in need.”

4 Members of St. Anne de Beupre Council 3157 in Grants Pass, Ore., have been selling wood and donating the proceeds for the past 10 years, but their work took on greater importance during the COVID-19 pandemic. The \$5,700 the council earned from firewood last year made up for other fundraisers that had to be canceled due to pandemic restrictions. Wood donations come from St. Anne parishioners and the nearby St. Rita Retreat Center, and Knights do everything from dropping trees and cutting them into rounds to delivering cords to customers. The money they raise supports local veterans, pro-life causes, youth activities and other nonprofits. With increased income from firewood sales, Past Grand Knight Dave Shankland said, “We can say ‘yes’ more to charities and those in need.”





5 In Colbert, Wash., a rural community in the eastern part of the state, most residents heat their homes exclusively with wood. When the Knights of St. Joseph Council 8872 in Colbert heard that firewood was a frequent request at a local resource center, they decided to form a free firewood program. “We saw a need and banded together to fill it,” explained Deputy Grand Knight Chris Boza. As it happened, many council members had trees on their property that had been killed by beetles, meaning they were destined to be burned in a slash pile. Now there was a higher purpose to serve. Since 2012, the program has assisted 20 to 40 families each winter.

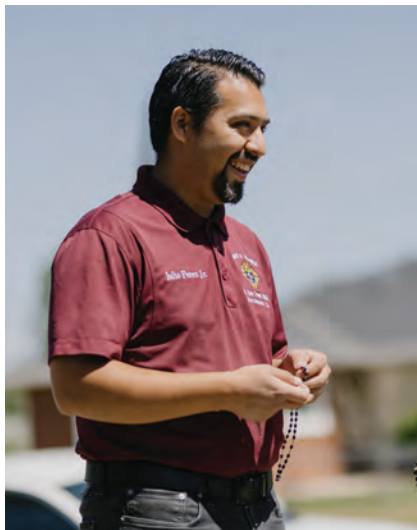
6 For more than 15 years, members of Blessed Sacrament Council 13452 in Midland, Mich., have collected and distributed firewood to help struggling households stay warm. The donations last throughout the season, saving the recipients an estimated \$200 a month in heating bills. Council members receive referrals from local parishes

and mental health organizations but have special consideration for cancer patients. The ministry, which serves 10 to 15 families each year, makes an immediate impact. One recipient told Past Grand Knight David Rupp that she had been trying to decide whether to spend her last \$40 on food or fuel

before the Knights called to drop off some wood. “Our program gives these families the opportunity to spend their money on other necessities,” Rupp said. ✚

ELISHA VALLADARES-CORMIER is associate editor of *Columbia*.





Stepping Up

Young Knights of Columbus leaders reflect on their experience growing in faith, responsibility and a spirit of service

Maybe it's the sepia-toned portraits of the era, the formal attire, or the fashionably generous facial hair. Whatever the reason, looking at 19th-century photographs of the founding Knights of Columbus, it's easy to forget that the first Knights were not the venerable grandees of St. Mary's Parish, but — as a contemporary described them — the “energetic, pushing, go-ahead young men” of New Haven. Inspired by 29-year-old Father Michael J. McGivney, the charter members were mostly in their 20s and 30s.

Blessed Michael McGivney would no doubt recognize the same youthful, energetic sense of mission in the grand knights and district deputies profiled on the following pages. All under 35, these men assumed leadership roles in their councils at relatively young ages, motivated by love of Christ to serve their parish communities through the Order's charitable and spiritual initiatives.

Encouraging and mentoring young Knights of Columbus leaders like them is one of the Order's greatest challenges and most important goals, Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly told state deputies Feb. 16, 2021, in his first address to them after being elected Feb. 5.

“I am here because previous generations went to great lengths to inspire a new generation of Knights, myself included,” said the supreme knight, who joined the Order in college and whose grandfather and father were Knights. “What they began, we must continue. The future of our Order, our Church and our culture depends on evangelizing and inspiring more men to lead lives of charity, unity and fraternity.”

These “go-ahead young men,” representing a new generation of Knights of Columbus leaders, recognize the enduring impact of Father McGivney's vision and the Order's principles in the 21st century.



“To be a Knight of Columbus is to be a man of service — and being able to offer men opportunities to serve their community has been the biggest blessing in my own spiritual life.”

Nicholas Quadrini, a student at the University of Toronto, became grand knight of St. Mark Parish Council 10874 in Stouffville, Ontario, when he was only 18. Now 21, Quadrini led Council 10874 to Triple Star status in the 2020-2021 fraternal year.

Why I Joined: My family has always been involved in the Church. I grew up in the Columbian Squires program, and when I turned 18, I wanted to join the Knights right away to further my spiritual life and serve my community. I saw how powerful and important it was to care for the most vulnerable — people who are sick or suffering, and children in the womb.

Becoming a Leader: My council was looking for some new leaders. I didn't really want the job, but when I was asked, I prayed about it, and I felt the Lord calling me to do a little bit more in my life. Being a younger Knight in a parish council is different from being a college Knight because you're dealing with men of different age groups. I was so inspired by how my brothers welcomed me as one of their own.

In Service to All: Men join the Knights because they want to do something, they want to give of themselves. To be a Knight of Columbus is to be a man of service — and being able to offer men opportunities to serve their community has been the biggest blessing in my own spiritual life. Another thing I've loved is being able to reach out to the peripheries, to people who may have never encountered our Catholic faith. I love it when people get to know our faith because of the visible work that we do.

Challenges & Opportunities: Time is always a challenge. A grand knight has a lot of administrative tasks, and you also have the task of building up your brotherhood, which takes effort. Another challenge is helping Knights grow in their faith, in their spiritual lives. Knights need to pray, to spend time with our Lord — that is our lifeblood.

After this very long pandemic, I think people, and especially men, are looking for more. Men are asking themselves what they believe, and they're looking to get involved, to find fulfillment. Truly the Knights are a vehicle to give men

opportunities to find more meaning in their lives, to bring them faith. If you feel that the world is not giving you what you're looking for, the Knights are here to offer you something different — brotherhood, faith, opportunities to serve and grow.

Julio Perez, a married 29-year-old structural design technician, serves as grand knight of St. Rose Council 16475 in Sacramento, Calif. Under his leadership, Council 16475 was the top council in California for membership growth during the first quarter of 2022.

Why I Joined: I grew up in Los Angeles and then moved to Sacramento, where my parents, who are from Mexico, rediscovered their Catholic faith. This had a big impact on me. I started seeing the difference in my parents, the love they were showing, and that's when everything started clicking. After my father joined Council 16475, one of the guys at St. Rose Parish invited me to join. It felt like a calling.

Becoming a Leader: I had been a Knight for only nine months before being elected grand knight. Some of the brothers were saying, “Julio, you should do it,” but I resisted. I even asked God, “Why me?” But in that process, I thought about ways I could help the council and prayed more, and it became clear: “OK, I’ll do it.” I began during the pandemic, so it was difficult. They closed the church, and we were all struggling spiritually. But one thing I kept hearing in my head was “perseverance.” So we moved forward. Members became more active, and new members started joining.

In Service to All: As a Knight, keeping the faith is central, both personally and in the community. I also love the fact that our goal is to help anyone who’s in need and to help our parish priest as much as we can. For me, it’s the joy of taking action. Our council is growing and getting stronger. Our men are excited with the activities that we’re doing, and the community is saying, “Wow, the Knights, they’re helping us and the parish.”



Challenges & Opportunities: One of the challenges I’ve seen is the language barrier that sometimes causes separation between Spanish speakers and English speakers. But we’re one Church, so as a Knight I’m trying to bring them together more. Another challenge is the stereotype that younger people are not able to accomplish things. But I’ve been told that just being a young leader

has motivated others. Also, guys my age see me, and they get productive, which makes *me* more productive. So it goes back and forth. Another thing I would like to mention is that we pray the rosary before our meetings. It’s great that we get together, but we also need to get spiritually filled together. When our faith is growing, our numbers will grow too.



Victor Fee Greco, 24, was elected grand knight of Our Lady of Fatima Council 6391 in Inverness, Fla., in 2017 and led it to Star Council status two years in a row. Now a student at Ave Maria School of Law, Greco has served since 2019 as district deputy of Florida District #33, which earned a Star District Award for 2020-2021.

Why I Joined: After a confirmation retreat at St. Leo Abbey strengthened my relationship with Christ, I decided to become a peer minister at the abbey and at my parish. Then, when I was 16 years old, I started a Columbian Squires circle. As Squires, we grew in our faith together, performed our civic duty and learned how to be leaders. Naturally, when I turned 18, I made my First Degree.

Becoming a Leader: I was nominated and elected grand knight at 19, making me the youngest grand knight in the Florida jurisdiction. The beginning was on-the-job training, but by the end of my first year, I had developed lasting friendships and introduced new projects that continue today. After I served as grand knight for two years, the state deputy offered me the opportunity to be district deputy, and that was one I could not refuse.

In Service to All: I am grateful for being afforded this opportunity and take pride in performing my duties. As district deputy, I feel I cannot ask the members to do what I would not do myself. So I always enjoy when I can help the councils at events, whether it's speaking at a membership drive, hanging Christmas lights or sharing a St. Patrick's Day dinner. I have also helped get councils to attend retreats together and to collaborate on important projects such as our county's annual pro-life rally.

Challenges & Opportunities: While there are some who feel that younger members aren't qualified to be leaders or have our voices heard, I've been blessed to have many brother Knights throughout Florida welcome and mentor me. And they have helped where they could to recruit and retain younger members, who are the future of the Order. I was recently involved in reactivating the council at Ave Maria School of Law, and being with these Knights gives me hope that more young men will join our Order to grow in faith and help others, carrying it on for future generations. My advice for younger Knights is to stay dedicated to your faith, stay strong in putting your faith into action, and follow the path God has for you.



Archie Wright became district deputy of Texas District #27 in the Fort Worth Diocese in 2018. Before that, the 33-year-old engineer held a variety of leadership roles in the Order, including grand knight of St. John Paul II Council 16393 in Denton.

Why I Joined: I grew up Catholic and I've always been involved in the Church. When I first got to college at the University of North Texas, I met a couple of guys at the Catholic Newman Center who were Knights. I started hanging out with them, and they eventually encouraged me to attend one of their information sessions. From there, I got really interested in the community service work the Knights were doing — it was something I wanted to be more involved in.

Becoming a Leader: In high school, I saw myself as a follower, but when I got to college, I wanted to try to become more of a leader. We started a roundtable at the university, and they were looking for a coordinator. The senior Knights were busy with

“My hope is that the Knights continue to be leaders in our families, our communities and in the Church, and that we continue attracting younger Knights so that this organization can thrive into the future.”

schoolwork, so I decided to take on that role. That's where my leadership in the Knights started. When the roundtable transitioned to a council, I became the charter grand knight.

In Service to All: I try to be with my brother Knights as much as possible, participating in their activities, helping them out as best I can. If they need an extra guy at a softball game, I'll help them out there; if they need an extra guy at a pancake breakfast, I'll help them out there. I try to learn everything I can from the older Knights, whether it's how to build a shed or how to communicate effectively with other people. And I try to teach the younger Knights everything I've learned so far.

Challenges & Opportunities: One of the biggest challenges I face is getting everybody involved. Sometimes, you'll have the same people participating in each event, and eventually they can be overwhelmed with that. But the councils in my district are very zealous when it comes to getting projects done, and every year they challenge

themselves to do better than the year before — raising more money to donate to charity, increasing the number of activities they do. They inspire me. My hope is that the Knights continue to be leaders in our families, our communities and in the Church, and that we continue attracting younger Knights so that this organization can thrive into the future.

David Bludis, a 28-year-old system engineer and graduate student, is grand knight of St. Michael the Archangel Council 15084 in Silver Spring, Md. Bludis also served as deputy grand knight in 2020-2021, when the council earned Triple Star status.

Why I Joined: My journey in the Columbian family started in 2006, when I joined Columbian Squires Circle 5102 at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Mechanicsburg, Pa., as one of its charter members. I was a squire for about six years, until I turned 18. That's when

I joined my home council, St. Joseph Council 12788, and I was with them until I moved to Silver Spring. The Order's principles of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism really go to the core of who I am, and I try to live them out every day.

Becoming a Leader: Our council here was in need of new leadership, some new young blood to climb the ranks. In my second year, I became chancellor and the next year became deputy grand knight. And since July 2021, I have been the grand knight. My dad and my uncle have both been grand knights of their councils, so it's kind of a family affair. They are figures that I have looked up to my entire life, and it means a lot that I am following in their footsteps.

In Service to All: It brings me great joy to serve my parish and my community as grand knight, to have the opportunity to fulfill the Lord's work every day. The last two years we have adapted very well and remained active, despite the pandemic. For example, in 2020, one of our brothers started a ministry to deliver meals and groceries to families in need in our community. We worked with other churches around the area to help and continued that for almost a year. That was something we were very proud of.

Challenges & Opportunities: The challenge of being an active Knight today is that many of us are very busy. For me, it is balancing work and school and the work I do with the Knights. A lot of our guys have families, and it is tough to find a good family-work-life balance. Even so, as we continue to emerge from this pandemic, I encourage men to get involved with their local councils and parishes as much as possible, because they are needed now more than ever. And I really encourage some of our younger guys to take on leadership roles. We need good Catholic men like us to step up and do the Lord's work. ✚





Members of St. Matthew Council 14360 in Norwalk, Conn., gather before a Holy Hour to pray for peace in Ukraine at St. Matthew Church. Connecticut State Deputy Matt McGrath (left), Father Bohdan Tymchyshyn, rector of St. Basil Seminary in Stamford, Ukrainian Catholic seminarians and several local dignitaries joined parishioners for the Holy Hour, which was coordinated by the council.

MONASTERY BAKED GOODS

St. Matthew Council 13229 in Winder, Ga., purchased \$4,000 of baked goods from the Trappist Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Conyers for a bake sale at St. Matthew Parish. In addition to supporting the monks' bakery, the sale raised more than \$1,000 for the parish's "Burn the Mortgage" fund.

COLUMBARIUM CLEANUP

Members of Father Joseph J. Murphy Council 7062 in North Augusta, S.C., landscaped the grounds of the columbarium at Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church. Several Knights planted seedlings, laid down pine straw and installed irrigation to improve the site.

BLUE MASS IN BLUE BELL

In honor of first responders, St. Helena Council 14210 in Blue Bell, Pa., hosted its 15th annual Blue Mass at St. Helena's Church.

FAITHFUL ROSARY

Since the onset of the pandemic, members of San Isidro Labrador Council 11754 in Metro Manila, Luzon North,

have led an online rosary nearly every day for victims of COVID-19. Knights and other participants pray for those who have died and the recovery of afflicted family and friends.

SUPPORTING THE CHURCH

St. Bernard Council 14269 in Brooklyn, N.Y., presented a donation of \$20,000 — raised primarily through the council's annual golf tournament — to Msgr. Joseph Grimaldi, pastor of St. Bernard Catholic Church. The council also contributed \$5,000 to St. Bernard Catholic Academy.

REMEMBERING THE DEAD

Members of St. Vincent Ferrer Council 17165 and Sacred Heart of Jesus Council 17512, both in Molave, Mindanao, held a memorial service for a Knight's relative who had recently died.

PARISH GARDEN GROOMERS

Cardinal Merry Del Val Council 4840 in Oakland, Calif., dedicated a "Saturday of Service" to removing graffiti and patching and repainting the garden wall at St. Margaret Mary Church.



Faith

GRAVE SERVICE

Bishop Alfred J. Markiewicz Council 1616 and St. Augustine Cathedral Council 15439, both in Kalamazoo, Mich., conducted their annual cleanup of the Catholic section of Riverside Cemetery. In addition to raking leaves and arranging for a toppled headstone to be repaired, the Knights located and tended the grave of a local priest.



Members of Joan of Arc Council 1992 in Port Jefferson, N.Y., raise a refurbished outdoor crucifix outside Infant Jesus Roman Catholic Church. The Knights replaced the crucifix's wood, which had been decaying, and repainted the corpus.



Family



Members of St. Sebastian Council 8009 in Roseland, Fla., including Grand Knight Anthony Tomasi (right), gather with several players from the youth baseball team sponsored by the council. The Little League sponsorship is one way Council 8009 is engaging young families and their fathers.

FOOD PANTRY DONATION

Our Lady of Hope Council 8086 in Port Orange, Fla., presented the parish food bank with a donation of more than \$1,100 for the purchase of supplies. The council also recently completed its annual 40 Cans for 40 Days of Lent campaign and regularly holds drives to replenish the food bank.

PHOENIXVILLE COMMUNITY

Members of St. Basil Council 13800 in Phoenixville, Pa., sorted items and cleaned and restocked refrigerators at the food pantry of Phoenixville Area Community Services, a nonprofit providing healthy food to families in need.

SCHOLARSHIP SPONSORS

Very Rev. Michael McCabe Council 2364 in Jewett City, Conn., sponsors the education of a fifth grader in Haiti with a yearly contribution to Outreach to Haiti, a scholarship program of the Diocese of Norwich.

A NEW ROOF

Members of Father Patrick Walsh Council 8966 in Palmer Road, Prince Edward Island, replaced the roof on the home of Anita Doucette, a longtime parishioner and the organist at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church.

ALL THE FIXINGS

St. Ann's Council 10609 in Sonora, Texas, hosted a Thanksgiving meal for the community, serving smoked turkey

and side dishes to all attendees. The Knights also packaged and delivered dinners for the homebound.

COAT CORNER

Father Anthony McGirl Council 7907 in Issaquah, Wash., donated more than 100 children's coats to the Eastside Baby Corner, a nonprofit that provides clothing and other necessities for families in need.

PAINTING PROJECT

St. Patrick's Council 1076 in New Ulm, Minn., held a work day to repaint the house of a Knight who had been ill. Council members and their families scraped off the old paint and put on a fresh coat.

GOLFING FOR FAMILIES

St. Jude Council 6617 in Plaistow, N.H., held its 26th annual St. Jude Golf Open in support of a single mother with breast cancer and a father with stage 4 brain cancer. More than \$20,000 was raised to help the two families.



Members of St. Sebastian Council 3655 in Tarlac, Luzon North, prepare food for people in need at St. Niño de Maamot Parish in San Jose, Tarlac. In addition to feeding more than 300 children and adults, the council donated 15,000 pesos for the renovation of the church.



Deputy Grand Knight Eric Lautsch (right) and other members of Holy Spirit Council 8905 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, prep for lunch at the Friendship Inn. Knights from Council 8905 volunteer regularly at the community center, which serves more than 1,000 free meals every day.

WILDFIRE RESPONSE

St. Joan of Arc Council 12392 in Arvada, Colo., raised more than \$15,000 to help families affected by the state's December wildfires. A portion of the funds, including \$2,500 in gift cards, were sent to St. Louis Council 11851 in the hard-hit town of Louisville, to be distributed for immediate relief, and the rest was donated to the state council's disaster relief fund.

THE GIFT OF SHELTER

Members of St. Mary of the Falls Council 14416 in Olmsted Falls, Ohio, and other St. Mary of the Falls parishioners collaborated on a Cleveland Habitat for Humanity Faith Build. Knights participated in the event for the seventh year in a row, raising \$5,000 for the project and putting in four work days at the job site.

PIEROGI SALE FOR UKRAINE

Members of St. Peter's Council 11128 in Sarnia, Ontario, assisted with a pierogi sale at Queen of Peace Church

to benefit Ukrainian refugees. Thousands of pierogi, made by members of the Catholic Women's League, sold out in 10 minutes. Between sales and donations, the event raised approximately CA\$14,000.

COAT CACHE

St. Mary of Vernon Council 8022 in Indian Creek, Ill., raised more than \$10,000 for Knight of Columbus Coats of Kids, benefitting more than 400 children. The Knights worked with Catholic Charities and other local nonprofits to distribute the coats to families in need.

CLEANING UP A BATTLEFIELD

Knights and family members from Bishop John R. Keating Council 12434 and The Fathers Cilinski Assembly 3568, both in Spotsylvania, Va., volunteered at the Spotsylvania Court House Battlefield, cleaning the dozens of interpretive signs scattered throughout the American Civil War site.



Community



Members of Msgr. Martin C. Murphy Council 6847 in Columbia, S.C., plant flags at veterans' graves in Greenlawn Memorial Park. Several Columbia-area councils and assemblies helped to host an "Honoring Our Veterans" event at the cemetery.

SERVICE FROM PRISON

Mother Seton Council 15540 in Three Bridges, N.J., donated \$750 to Puppies Behind Bars, an organization that trains prison inmates to raise service dogs. The dogs go on to serve in law enforcement K-9 units or help wounded veterans or first responders.



Life

CHILLY CHARITY

More than 100 Virginia Knights and family members participated in the 2022 Polar Plunge, taking a cold dip to raise money for Special Olympics Virginia. State Deputy Mark Janda presented the organization with a donation of more than \$163,000 — contributions from 105 councils — before the main event in Virginia Beach.



Grand Knight Sam Lutostanski (center) and other members of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Council 8343 participate in the annual March on the Arch in St. Louis — the only pro-life march in the St. Louis area.



Members of Laredo (Texas) Council 2304 assist with the council's first blood drive, held in partnership with South Texas Blood and Tissue Center. More than 40 Knights and other parishioners gave blood, including Grand Knight Juan Galicia and District Deputy Jose Luis Rodriguez.

PONTE VEDRA FUND DRIVE

St. John Paul II Council 16492 in Ponte Vedra, Fla., raised \$7,300 during its annual fund drive for people with intellectual disabilities. Volunteers collected the money from congregations at several Catholic churches and passersby at supermarkets.

SUPPORT FOR AUTISM SOCIETY

St. Catherine of Siena Council 8156 in Austin, Texas, donated more than \$2,000 to the Autism Society of Texas. Council 8156 raised the funds by hosting a car show, with more than 70 individuals showcasing their classic cars.

PRO-LIFE BILLBOARD

Ludlow (Mass.) Council 3535 leased a billboard to display a pro-life message for the month of January. The billboard, which cost \$1,500, was funded by earnings from the council's investment with Knights of Columbus Asset Advisors.

STEADY BLOOD PRESSURE

Since 2008, St. John Kanty Council 14240 in Rolling Prairie, Ind., has

hosted an average of six blood drives annually with the American Red Cross. In that span, the drives have yielded more than 2,000 pints of whole blood.

RACHEL'S GIFT

St. Ann's Council 12703 in Waynesburg, Pa., sponsored the Angel Dash, a 5K supporting Rachel's Gift. Founded to care for parents who lose a child to miscarriage, stillbirth or infant death, Rachel's Gift provides family and education programs around the country.

COUNTRY LIFE FEST

St. John Council 11281 in Naples, Fla., coordinated the local Country Life Fest, featuring music, food trucks and several pro-life and pregnancy booths. More than 350 people attended, and the council raised almost \$4,000 for pro-life causes.

See more at

www.kofc.org/knightsinaction

Please submit your council activities to

knightsinaction@kofc.org



POLAND

Members of The Blessed Five from Poznań Council 17666 and St. John Paul II Council 15219, also in Poznań, pray the Stations of the Cross for peace in Ukraine. Archbishop Stanisław Gądecki, president of the Polish Bishops' Conference, led the devotional, which began in Poznań Cathedral and continued through the streets of the city.



PHILIPPINES

Members of Mary, Cause of Our Joy Council 8447 in Muntinlupa, Luzon South, prepare to deliver mattresses, blankets and other supplies to a local center serving street children and people with intellectual disabilities. The council purchased the supplies with proceeds from a weeklong donation drive.



CANADA

Members of Innisfail (Alberta) Council 7203 install new flooring at Our Lady of Peace Parish hall as part of a massive parish construction and renovation project following a damaging fire in 2018. The council donated CA\$5,000 toward the effort to rebuild the church and improve its hall, and council members assisted with the parish's many fundraisers. Knights also took on renovation projects themselves, saving Our Lady of Peace approximately CA\$20,000 in labor.



UNITED STATES

Grand Knight Tony San Nicolas of Transfiguration Council 10362 in Marietta, Ga., leads a team of Knights and family members to the peak of Kennesaw Mountain as part of a council fundraiser. Six groups of Knights and other volunteers made the 10-km (6.2-mile) trek up and down the mountain, each carrying a 40-pound cross. The event raised more than \$9,700 for the benefit of seminarians in the Archdiocese of Atlanta.



FRANCE

French Knights and family members place a wreath at the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery chapel, where the names of 1,060 U.S. servicemen missing in action after the Battle of Belleau Wood are inscribed. More than 20 members of several French councils participated in the pilgrimage to the village of Belleau and the World War I cemetery, praying for France, the United States and peace throughout the world.



MEXICO

Knights representing Anacleto Gonzáles Flores Council 4344 in Tepatlán, Mexico West, take part in a devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe after Mass at St. Francis of Assisi Parish. Knights participate regularly in the devotion, which has been made on the 12th of each month for decades.



Knights Gear

Celebrate May With Rosaries

FIRST COMMUNION | CONFIRMATION | MOTHER'S DAY



My Saint My Hero CRYSTAL PEARL ROSARY

This rosary holds the Jesus Christ Conquers Crucifix. The crucifix is a summary of our faith and can be used as a teaching tool for others. It profoundly demonstrates God's love for each and every person. Through the crucifix came our salvation. It is a symbol of victory and glory, a beautiful summary of the Christian faith.

\$132.00



My Saint My Hero FIRST COMMUNION ROSARIES

"I am with you always." (Mt 28:20). Perfect gift for that special First Communicant. Handcrafted in Medjugorje, Bosnia and Herzegovina. 16" First Communion Rosary features black or white beads, six silver-tone Queen of Peace Medals or six silver-tone crosses, a silver-tone Our Lady of Medjugorje Medal, and a silver-tone Medjugorje Crucifix on cord. Medals made in Italy.

\$32.50



MARY DAY BY DAY

Each of these 365, 1-minute Marian meditations includes a brief Scripture quote, a reflection from a saint, and a concluding prayer. In his introduction, Father Charles G. Fehrenbach, C.Ss.R., offers beautiful words that he borrows from St. Alphonsus Liguori's foreword to *The Glories of Mary*: "May this book help us love Jesus and Mary and become saints. We cannot hope or pray for anything better."

\$9.95



Ghirelli LOURDES HOLY WATER BLUE BEAD ROSARY

Inspired by the Gospel passage: "I am the vine, you are the branches" (Jn 15:5). An ornate grape vine composed of highly detailed grape clusters and leaves, in the shape of a single cross. A beautiful representation of the Crowned Virgin Immaculate surrounded by rosebuds and in the center a clear reservoir containing authentic Lourdes water. Finish: Antique Silver

\$64.50



Ghirelli CONFIRMATION ROSARY BEADS

Pray on this rosary for the outpouring fire of the Holy Spirit, at Pentecost, confirmation and every day. Silver plated finish with Ghirelli brand plate. Centerpiece "Angels and Dove of the Holy Spirit" surrounded by rays and hand-enameled inserts. Crucifix with "Dove of the Holy Spirit," surrounded by rays and hand-enameled inserts. Finish: Antique Silver

\$45.75



Ghirelli OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE ROSARY

Inspired by the appearance of Our Lady of Guadalupe to St. Juan Diego, who is responsible for the miraculous conversion of Mexico to Christianity. Our Lady of Guadalupe is the Patroness and Guardian of the Americas and the patron St. of the KofC. Crucifix is original in design, with the roses of Our Lady in antique silver. Our Lady of Guadalupe rosary center with St. Juan Diego & tilma on reverse. Features the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe & Castilian rosebud on the reverse side.

\$62.75

VALUATION EXHIBIT OF THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

In compliance with the requirements of the laws of the various states, we publish below a Valuation Exhibit of the Knights of Columbus as of Dec. 31, 2021. The law requires that this publication shall be made of the results of the valuation with explanation as filed with the insurance departments.

ASSETS — Actual and Contingent

1. Admitted Assets of the General Account Fund, item 26, page 2 of Annual Statement: \$28,838,421,843

LIABILITIES — Actual and Contingent

2. Reserve for Life Certificates — including D.I. and Dis. W. (net of reins): \$16,361,006,081
3. Reserve for accident and health certificates: \$836,392,841
4. Total per Annual Statement, page 3 Items 1 and 2: \$17,197,398,922
5. Deduct liens and interest thereon, not included in Admitted Assets, and not in excess of required reserves on the corresponding individual certificates: None
6. Balance — Item 4 less Item 5 above: \$17,197,398,922
7. Liabilities of the General Account Fund, except reserve (Items 3 to 25 incl. page 3 of Annual Statement): \$8,989,809,828
8. Liabilities — Actual and Contingent — sum of Items 6 and 7 above: \$26,187,208,750
9. Ratio percent of:
Assets — Actual and Contingent (Item 1) Dec. 31, 2021 — 110.12%
to liabilities — Actual Dec. 31, 2020 — 109.12%
and Contingent (Item 8) Dec. 31, 2019 — 109.40%
Dec. 31, 2018 — 109.21%
Dec. 31, 2017 — 109.36%

EXPLANATION

The above valuation indicates that, on a basis of the A.M. (5), 1941 C.S.O., 1958 C.S.O., 1980 C.S.O., 2001 C.S.O., 2017 C.S.O., VM-20, 1937 S.A., 1971 Individual Annuity Table, Annuity 2000 Table, 2012 IAR — S 62 table and 1983 "a" Tables of Mortality with interest at 9%, 8.75%, 8%, 7%, 6%, 5%, 4.5%, 4.25%, 4%, 3.75%, 3.5%, 3.25%, 3%, 2.75%, 2.5%, 2.25%, 1.75%, the future assessments of the society, at the net rate now being collected, together with the now invested assets of the General Account Fund are sufficient to meet all certificates as they mature by their terms, with a margin of safety of \$2,651,213,093 (or 10.12%) over the above statutory standards.

STATE OF: Connecticut
COUNTY OF: New Haven

The officers of this reporting entity, being duly sworn, each depose and say that they are the described officers of the said reporting entity, and that on the reporting period stated above, all of the herein described assets were the absolute property of the said reporting entity, free and clear from any liens or claims thereon, except as herein stated, and that this statement, together with related exhibits, schedules and explanations therein contained, annexed or referred to, is a full and true statement of all the assets and liabilities and of the condition and affairs of the said reporting entity as of the reporting period stated above, and of its income and deductions therefrom for the period ended, and have been completed in accordance with the NAIC annual statement instructions and accounting practices and procedure manual except to the extent that: (1) state law may differ; or, (2) that state rules or regulations require differences in reporting not related to accounting practices and procedures, according to the best of their information, knowledge and belief, respectively. Furthermore, the scope of this attestation by the described officers also includes the related corresponding electronic filing with the NAIC, when required, that is an exact copy (except for formatting differences due to electronic filing) of the enclosed statement. The electronic filing may be requested by various regulators in lieu of or in addition to the enclosed statement. Subscribed and sworn to before me this 21st day of February 2022.

Patricia Gabriele, Notary Public
PATRICK E. KELLY, President
PATRICK T. MASON, Secretary
RONALD F. SCHWARTZ, Treasurer

SEAL

OFFICIAL MAY 1, 2022:

To owners of Knights of Columbus insurance policies and persons responsible for payment of premiums on such policies: Notice is hereby given that in accordance with the provisions of Section 84 of the Laws of the Order, payment of insurance premiums due on a monthly basis to the Knights of Columbus by check made payable to Knights of Columbus and mailed to same at PO Box 1492, NEW HAVEN, CT 06506-1492, before the expiration of the grace period set forth in the policy. In Canada: Knights of Columbus, Place d'Armes Station, P.O. Box 220, Montreal, QC H2Y 3G7.

ALL MANUSCRIPTS, PHOTOS, ARTWORK, EDITORIAL MATTER, AND ADVERTISING INQUIRIES SHOULD BE MAILED TO: COLUMBIA, PO BOX 1670, NEW HAVEN, CT 06507-9982. REJECTED MATERIAL WILL BE RETURNED IF ACCOMPANIED BY A SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE AND RETURN POSTAGE. PURCHASED MATERIAL WILL NOT BE RETURNED. **OPINIONS BY WRITERS ARE THEIR OWN AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS.**

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Knights Gear contributes a portion of all purchases directly to Knights of Columbus Charities.



Knights of Charity

Every day, Knights all over the world are given opportunities to make a difference — whether through community service, raising money or prayer. We celebrate each and every Knight for his strength, his compassion and his dedication to building a better world.

Members of Msgr. Anthony Piegay Assembly 328 in Alexandria, La., stand at attention while Father Anthony Dharmaraj, chaplain of Bishop Charles P. Greco Council 1134, leads prayer at the funeral of a Civil War soldier killed in 1864. The soldier's remains were discovered by a local farmer plowing his field in 2011; after studying the remains, archeologists asked historian Michael Wynne (third from left), a member of Council 1134, to arrange a proper burial. The Knights, in addition to providing an honor guard for the ceremony, contributed to the funeral costs.

Photo by Melinda Martinez/The Town Talk



PLEASE, DO ALL YOU CAN TO ENCOURAGE PRIESTLY AND RELIGIOUS VOCATIONS. YOUR PRAYERS AND SUPPORT MAKE A DIFFERENCE.



‘Jesus Christ alone can satisfy.’

The countless gravestones at Normandy American Cemetery in France stirred my heart. These brave soldiers who sacrificed their lives challenged me: Would I be willing to lay down my life, as these men did, for the Lord and his people?

Long before this pivotal moment, the seeds of my vocation had been planted by family role models. My grandfather served his family and parish sacrificially for many years after his WWII duty. Likewise, my father coached me in self-discipline, and my dear mother raised me to serve others.

It was at college that the Lord Jesus truly captured my heart. After graduation, I served as a missionary and met the Brotherhood of Hope. I admired the brothers and their work evangelizing students at secular universities, but I resisted the idea of celibacy and did not have the courage to explore a vocation with them until after my experience at Normandy Beach.

My years with the Brothers of Hope have strengthened my conviction that Jesus Christ alone can satisfy our deepest desires. It is a profound honor to love and serve him.

Brother Brandt Haglund

Brotherhood of Hope

Father Hugon Council 3521, Tallahassee, Fla.