

Knights Chancellor's Reflections August 2023

Tonight, I would like to reflect upon the thoughts contained in our Supreme Knight's Message in the June Columbia Magazine.

Patrick Kelly opens with: A GREAT BLESSING of my role as Supreme Knight is the opportunity to periodically update the Holy Father about the activities of the Knights of Columbus. During my meeting with Pope Francis in April, I spoke about some of our remarkable charitable work, and I also discussed the increased focus that we've been placing on evangelization and the formation of men as husbands and fathers. I explained that this is an extension of the active sense of "co-responsibility" between clergy and laity that Blessed Michael McGivney built into the Knights of Columbus — some 80 years before the Second Vatican Council underscored "the responsibility of the laity in the Church". The Holy Father responded with great conviction, saying that our example of co-responsibility is extremely important.

Our SK continues: When Blessed Michael McGivney founded the Order, he didn't envision his Knights simply as helpful men in the community, but rather as men who embraced a real responsibility to advance the mission of the Church. Today, it increasingly means creating opportunities for men to deepen their faith, such as through our new Cor initiative. This initiative is further outlined in the Cor Article on pages 8-12. We also see reference to a Michigan Council in Brighton that has gone all in on the Cor Initiative *[the acronym Cor being drawn from the Latin motto of St. John Henry Newman meaning "Heart speaks to Heart".]*

He continues: Christianity is no longer the formative basis of our society that it once was, which is evident in the large number of people who have left the faith or have no faith at all. If the Church is to thrive, each and every baptized Catholic — bishops and priests, religious, catechists, moms and dads — must engage actively in our shared

responsibility to evangelize. This includes the realization that each of us is personally called to holiness, and then making the decision that I am going to do something about that.

Our SK completes his thoughts with: It's always a moment of grace to be with the successor of St. Peter, expressing the Order's solidarity with him and with all our bishops and priests. And it's a real privilege to share with the Holy Father so much good news about the tremendous efforts of our 2 million brother Knights. He urged me and Archbishop Lori to talk more about it — and so we will! When Blessed Michael McGivney founded the Order 141 years ago, he didn't envision his Knights simply as helpful men in the community, but rather as men who embraced a real responsibility — alongside their priests — to advance the mission of the Church. This is one reason Father McGivney entrusted the Order's leadership to laymen. As lay leaders, Knights can go places and reach other men in a way that our priests often can't. And the witness that we give in those places can draw men into deeper relationship with the sacramental life of the Church. For decades, the Knights of Columbus has been called "the strong right arm of the Church." To continue to live up to this title, Knights must answer the call to co-responsibility according to the needs of our time. Vivat Jesus

Now I started writing this reflection early last week only to see another article in the August Columbia; obviously, our SK's message also touched many others as well. Why, because just like the narrow gate or the difficult road, evangelization is not easy. Speaking directly to acquaintances, friends, and family about our Faith is not easy. However, when we feel challenged, we must remember the prediction of Christ that "Following Him" may place us in opposition to (or even separate us from) friends and even family. Jesus further explains that our evangelization efforts are not for our reward; but, for the benefit of those that are evangelized so that they will not be separated from GOD.