



Arizona State Council Knights of Columbus



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Tucson Knights of Columbus Completes Operation Ultrasound

Roy Champeau Council #8077 Gives \$19,000 to Purchase an Ultrasound



State Deputy Tom Kalisz (left) receives a check for \$19,000 from Grand Knight Dave Chohon of the Roy Champeau Council #8077 in Tucson.

PHOENIX - Over the weekend of June 28-30, 2019, the Arizona State Council of the Knights of Columbus held their annual organizational meeting. During the Saturday night banquet, State Deputy Tom Kalisz, leader for the Knights in Arizona, was presented with a check from one of the Tucson Councils. Grand Knight Dave Chohon of the Roy Champeau Council #8077 presented State Deputy Kalisz with a check for \$19,000 to go toward the purchase of an ultrasound machine for a crisis pregnancy center in Arizona.

Kalisz said to those attending the dinner, "Not only did the members of this council, based at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parish in Tucson, conduct a highly successful fund raiser, they did it with the help of every parish organization, the complete support of their pastor, and the assistance of Diocese of Tucson's Bishop Weisenburger."

The funds were raised in conjunction with a special dinner held on May 12, 2019, Mother's Day. According to Grand Knight Chohon, the council specifically chose Mother's Day to hold the dinner because mothers are life givers and a day dedicated to motherhood is quite appropriate for a fund raiser to save a baby's life.

Dinner tickets were sold at \$30 per person. Approximately 240 people attended, including State Deputy Kalisz. Ticket sales alone raised over \$7,000. The council didn't stop there. They conducted a silent auction for various items of different minimum values. The grand prize was a dinner with Bishop Weisenburger. The starting bid was \$100 and the winning bid was \$1,000 for this prize. Many other donors either bid or donated to the cause at the same \$1,000 level. Chohon said that, "Even after the event the donations kept coming." The organizers invited several mothers to speak about their near-death experience prevented by an ultrasound. According to Grand Knight Chohon, "...these women told those in attendance that their mothers had already set a date for the abortion of their babies, but when they saw viewed their infant in their womb and heard their heart beat, they said no way to the abortion."

"Brothers, people do respect life and want to help, and this is a great example of what can be done when a council and an entire parish come together for the perfect cause," said State Deputy Kalisz. "The money raised will ultimately be matched by the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus on a dollar-for-dollar basis so that an ultrasound can be purchased." Kalisz finished by saying, "I want to see more councils do the same, because 'this is what we do – this is who we are,'" quoting the State Council's motto for the year.



According to Grand Knight Chohon, the council started planning this event in January 2019. He reported the initial support for the project was good but backing for it grew as the event gained traction. Within a couple of months, they had the full support and cooperation of every parish organization and ministry. When they asked for the Pastor's help, he gave his unequivocal approval. The initial goal was to raise \$8,000 through this event. They originally planned to hold several fundraisers to reach their overall goal of \$18,000.

In February, the council presented the project to the Tucson Chapter, a coordinating group comprised of all the councils in the Tucson area. Next, they presented the concept to Bishop Weisenburger, also in February. Support from many other Tucson councils poured in through the purchase of advertising in a program book. Sale of advertising raise another \$1,400. According to Chohon, this was literally a fund raiser within a fund raiser wrapped inside a fund raiser.

Word of the dinner was spread through the Church bulletin and by word of mouth. Knights took it to their employers. The Diocesan newspaper announced the upcoming dinner. Four different chefs donated their time. Shamrock Foods donated food at a reduced cost. At the end of the event the total amount raised was over \$22,000 and after the bills were paid \$19,000 remained.

When asked why this project and what was special about preventing abortion, Chohon told his story. When his daughter was 15 years old, she got pregnant. She did not tell her parents for fear they would "freak out." She decided that an abortion was the best choice for her and made an appointment. The mother of their daughter's girlfriend, who was going to take her to the abortion clinic, alerted the Chohon's about the impending abortion of their grandchild. Through an outpouring of prayer, love, of tears, grace, compassion, and forgiveness, they reconciled with their daughter and as a family decided that, together, they would raise the unborn child. The Chohon's grandson turned 21 in January.

The Knights of Columbus is the World's largest Catholic family fraternal service organization. It was founded by Father Michael J. McGivney, an Irish Priest, in 1882. Working under its founding principles of charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism, the Knights boast nearly 2 Million members worldwide. Last year K of C members donated \$185.6 million in donations and 75.6 million hours of service provided worldwide. Arizona ranks in the top ten, in charitable works among the Knights of Columbus.

For additional information, contact John S. Garcia, State Public Relations Director at telephone (602) 525-4424. Visit the Arizona State Council website, www.kofc-az.org, for more information. A photograph of the check presentation is available upon request.