



**Knights of
Columbus®**
Connecticut
State Council

**133RD ANNUAL MEETING
BRISTOL, CT – APRIL 24-26, 2026**

April 1, 2026

Report of State Programs for Fraternal Year 2025-26

Worthy Delegates & Dear Brother Knights,

Every day, our councils and members throughout the state rise to meet the needs of our Catholic communities, families, and the broader society through our core Faith in Action programs, infused with renewed creativity and passion. We are building on the solid foundation of decades of council growth in both membership and initiatives, discovering innovative ways to respond to the evolving needs of our parishes.

This year, we celebrate the profound impact of our vocation efforts, fueled by our prayers and financial support. We have witnessed a remarkable increase in council participation in the RSVP program, resulting in the support of twenty-nine seminarians across our dioceses.

Moreover, our commitment to celebrating life from conception to natural death remains steadfast. In October, we spread the powerful message of Our Lady of Guadalupe as the Silver Rose journeyed tirelessly through our state, uniting brother Knights from Canada, Mexico, and the United States in a collective prayer for life. Our state stands as a beacon of hope within the Order, having contributed over \$30,000 to local pregnancy resource centers this fraternal year through our ASAP initiative. The 5th Annual CT March for Life in Hartford was a resounding success, with the State Council proudly sponsoring twenty-three buses across twenty-five locations in all three dioceses, bringing together approximately 1,000 riders for this inspiring event.

Attached is a comprehensive report from our state directors and chairpersons detailing the individual programs and events. I urge our delegates and council leaders to familiarize themselves with these state initiatives and to connect with the state team for guidance and support.

Serving as the program director this year has been a true privilege. Still being relatively new to our state, I have gained invaluable insights from our hard-working directors and council leaders about what makes our programs and activities thrive here in Connecticut. I am deeply thankful for the chance to collaborate with this remarkable state council team. I also wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the program directors for their unwavering dedication and guidance, as well as to State Deputy Kevin Glazier and our state officers for their exceptional leadership and support of the Connecticut Faith in Action program.

Fraternally and Respectfully Submitted,

Darryl J. Barrios
State Program Director
2025-2026

FAITH PROGRAMS (Nick Mastroianni, Director)

McGivney Relic Pilgrimage (PSD Gary McKeone, Chairman)

The Relic Pilgrimage is an underutilized program in the State of Connecticut. This year we only had 4 scheduled events in local Councils and 3 that were set up by the State Council. Through the events scheduled locally and by the State, approximately 2200 people had the opportunity to be in the presence of and venerate Blessed McGivney's Relic. This year, State Deputy Kevin Glazier shared the Relic with the New Jersey State Council, and three events were held in New Jersey. In New Jersey another 500 people were able to venerate the Relic.

A special thank you to our State Master Chris Randall for his assistance with Relic events and his willingness to transport the Relic to other unscheduled events so people would be able to see the Relic. Once again, this program is underutilized and more Councils should take advantage of the opportunity that we have here in CT that others do not have the privilege of throughout the rest of the Order. To reserve the Blessed McGivney Relic for your event, email PSD Gary McKeone at gsmckeone@comcast.net

Pilgrim Icon Program (Steve Leslie, Chairman)

The Pilgrim Icon program continued this year with a new Icon from Supreme depicting the Sacred Heart of Jesus. A copy of the icon is provided to the District Deputy for use by the councils in his District for a period of two months. Councils schedule activities with their respective Parishes during that time, including such activities as Prayer Services, display at Holy Hours, display at Mass and display during adoration. Four copies of the icon are available each two-month period, after which the Icon moves to the next District Deputy in the schedule.

Prayer service materials were replenished as needed to keep the icon program on schedule. By the end of 2025, the Sacred Heart Icon had been made available to councils in twenty-four (24) Districts. After all Districts have received the Icon, the schedule will be reset to allow every District to receive it again. The program is scheduled to run through the end of 2027. Councils interested in receiving the Icon for a specific program should contact their District Deputy to schedule prayer services or other activities involving the icon for the coming months.

Refund Support for Vocations Program (RSVP) (Anthony Armentano, Chairman)

This year there have been fourteen Councils and two Assemblies that have filed RSVP Reports year to date. These councils and assemblies have donated \$16,000 to support a total of twenty-nine Seminarians. This is a slight increase from the previous year. We are expecting additional donations for the balance of the fraternal year. We are honored to complement the activities of the Supreme Council by participating in this program.

Supporting vocations is a tremendous opportunity to carry out our organization's mission and ministry. We are committed to serving our Priests and it is an integral way to also support them as they discern their vocation and prepare for their ordination. Each diocese in Connecticut has seen an increase in discernment activity which will provide us with even more opportunities to participate in this key program over the next few years.

Councils are reminded that multiple councils can sponsor Seminarians and religious postulants/novices. For every \$500 a council donates to a seminarian or religious postulant/novice, Supreme will refund \$100 to council and the State will refund \$75.

Blessed Michael McGivney Vocations Golf Open (PSD Robert Goossens, Chairman)

In 2025 the Vocations Golf Open was held on June 9 at Lyman Orchards Golf Club. This event benefits the Connecticut State Council's McGivney Vocations Fund. \$19,8000 was raised during the 2025 tournament.

The 2026 Golf Open will be held on June 8, 2026, at Lyman Orchards. PSD Bob Goossens will chair the program. All Councils are encouraged to sponsor a flag or tee in honor of their council chaplains, and to form a team to compete for the McGivney Golf Trophy. The team is currently accepting registrations and sponsors. Please go to birdease.com/Vocations to register.

State Holy Hours

The Connecticut State Council inspires its members to cultivate profound personal connections with Christ. To support this journey, the state organizes a variety of holy hours throughout the fraternal year. This year, members had the opportunity to engage in Eucharistic adoration and honor the relic of Blessed Michael McGivney during both the organizational and midyear meetings. Furthermore, in collaboration with Eldorado Council 10 in Branford, the state proudly co-sponsored the Via Lucis event. This meaningful gathering, held at St. Mary Church in Branford, featured the Via Lucis, or Stations of Light, along with the exposition and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and the veneration of a relic of Blessed Michael McGivney.

FAMILY PROGRAMS (Drew Dillingham, Director)

Keep Christ in Christmas Poster Contest (District Master Chris Randall, Chairman)

Keep Christ in Christmas is a program that many councils participate in via Tree Lighting ceremonies, Christmas Caroling, setting up Creches and helping their parishes prepare for the Birth of Christ. A popular program to participate in the Keep Christ in Christmas theme is the Keep Christ in Christmas Poster Contest. Councils are utilizing the Keep Christ in Christmas Poster Contest to interact with our youth.

The Keep Christ in Christmas Poster Contest is designed to be an evangelistic tool to remind our children that there is something much more important than Santa Claus and receiving gifts on Christmas. Christmas has been so commercialized; this program helps redirect the participants and their families toward the celebration of the birth of Christ. Children from Kindergarten to 8th Grade are eligible to create a poster with the "Keep Christ in Christmas" theme. The program starts at the council level with entries judged at that level and submitted to the District Deputy for judging against other posters from his District. The District Deputy judges the posters from his district and forwards one winning poster from each eligible age group (K, 1-2, 3-4,5-6 and 7-8) to the CT State Council chairman to be judged against other district submissions. The State level judging took place on February 5 following a Council 3600 Council Meeting with the judge panel consisting of several knights. Council 3600 did not have represented posters in the contest. The sponsoring Councils of winning posters were

provided with a copy of their winners' submission, a Certificate in a KofC leatherette folder and a \$25 gift card to be presented to their winner at a time and location of their choosing. The State Council winner's submissions were submitted to Supreme for International judging. The grades 5-6 winner is a repeat CT State winner from last year's grades 3-4 competition.

This year the State Council received submissions from many councils, still leaving much room for growth. These participating councils reached out to principals, DRE's and teachers and posted bulletin announcements to get the information out to their participants. There are councils that may have submitted entries but their submissions did not make it past the district level judging. Winning posters will be displayed at the CT State Council Convention. Following are the winning submissions:

Kindergarten:

Natasha Danilov

Submitted by Council 6 Cromwell

Grades 1-2

David Joseph

Submitted by Council 14216 West Hartford

Grades 3-4

Judith Christopher

Submitted by Council 5779 South Windsor

Grades 5-6

Adelle Rodrigues

Submitted by Council 5779 South Windsor

Grades 7-8

Carolina Foster

Submitted by Council 3675 Kensington

State Bowling Tournament (State Deputy Kevin Glazier, Chairman)

The annual State Bowling tournament took place on Sunday, March 22 from 12:00pm – 3:00pm at Apple Valley Bowl in Plantsville. This year we had the participation of 92 bowlers, and \$2,000 was raised to support the ASAP Initiative. The event included prizes for the top 3 teams and top individual men and women bowlers for game and series, as well as a 50/50 raffle and teacup raffle.

Food for Families

To date for this fraternal year, nineteen (19) councils have reported Food for Families donations, totaling \$31,836 and 78,384 pounds of food.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS (Scott LaPorte, Director)

Catholic Citizenship Essay Contest

This contest inspires today's youth to deepen their connection with their community and their faith. Its mission is to engage young Catholics in grades 8 to 12 in meaningful civic discourse while instilling vital religious and life-affirming values. Participants are invited to compose an essay of 500-750 words on a designated topic that changes every other year. Submissions will be evaluated based on grammar, style, and the clarity with which they express the theme, highlighting creativity, imagination, and a thorough exploration of the subject.

The topic for the 2025-2026 fraternal year was as follows:

The office of the papacy was established by Jesus Christ nearly 2,000 years ago when He chose St. Peter to lead His Church on earth. In an essay of 500-750 words, out of the 267 popes that have led the Catholic Church, who are your three favorite popes and why?

Our winners this year were as follows:

8th Grade: Hudson Prewo Council 1155 Manchester
9th Grade: Emily Borbely Council 1155 Manchester
10th Grade: N/A
11th Grade: N/A
12th Grade: Liya Lako Council 2336 Baltic

Coats for Kids Program (Jason Porrello, Chairman)

This year, sixteen locations distributed coats between Black Friday and surrounding dates. A total of 6,684 coats were distributed through these efforts. For the Fraternal year 2025-26, Connecticut Knights distributed a total of 8,832 coats.

Spelling Bee (David Rohlfing, Chairman)

The 28th Annual Knights of Columbus Connecticut State Council Catholic School Spelling Bee is in full swing, bringing together schools from all three dioceses across the state. Students from grades 4, 5, and 6 are participating, with over 1,000 eager competitors ready to showcase their spelling talents.

There are four regional spelling bees that are scheduled: Newtown, April 11, Moosup, May 18, New Haven, April 19, and Waterbury, May 17.

The winners from each of the regions will meet for the state championships at the Blessed Michael McGivney Pilgrimage Center on Saturday, June 20.

State Raffle (Phillip Mazzatti Chairman)

Our State Council Raffle is a beneficial opportunity for councils to interact with their communities, and support both state and local council programs. The more tickets each council sells, the more of a rebate each council gets back.

Total number of tickets sold for the 2025 raffle was 6,026.

Total Receipts - \$ 60,260.00

Less Expenses:

Prizes	\$ 15,000.00
Printing	\$ 635.00
Permits	\$ 75.00
Postage/supplies	\$ 111.98
<u>Total Expenses</u>	<u>\$ 15,821.98</u>

Net Profit \$ 44,438.02

50% rebate to Councils \$ 22,219.01 (\$3.69 per ticket sold)

The Chairman and State Council would like to thank the Councils for their overwhelming support of this program. A special thanks for the number one selling council for the fifteenth straight year, Council 5066 in Southbury, who sold 651 tickets this year.

Basketball Free Throw (John Eno, Chairman)

The State Free Throw Championships were held on Saturday March 28, 2026 at 10 am at St Paul High School. We had forty-eight (48) out of a possible sixty-one (61) participating in this year's event. Which is an amazing turnout compared to those who were eligible. We also had fifteen (15) Brother Knights there helping with the event. Thank you to all those who came and helped the day of the event.

Our winners were as follows:

9-year-old Boys: Landon Pulford Council 245 Ridgefield

9-year-old Girls: Elisa Luna Council 14 Willimantic

10-year-old Boys: Josiel Torres Council 14 Willimantic

10-year-old Girls: Ireland Sutton Council 3675 Kensington

11-year-old Boys: Joshua Wilson Council 6626 Tolland

11-year-old Girls: Savannah Gorman Council 245 Ridgefield

12-year-old Boys: Brendt Mazzadra Council 6626 Tolland

12-year-old Girls: Dylan Zuffelato Council 12523 Orange

13-year-old Boys: Jordan Maignan Council 1350 Shelton

13-year-old Girls: Aurelia Luna Council 14 Willimantic

14-year-old Boys: Jariel Ortiz Council 15 Southington

14-year-old Girls: Aadhya Amin Council 245 Ridgefield

Soccer Challenge (Joe Simons, Chairman)

Local councils across Connecticut hosted their annual Soccer Challenge competitions this past fall, with all local champions automatically advancing to the State Championships. The 2025 State Championships were held on October 25 in Wallingford and featured nine competitors representing councils from around the state. Six state champions were crowned.

The Soccer Challenge remains a well-designed, family-friendly program, and the children who participate consistently enjoy the experience. However, participation has declined in recent years. To strengthen and grow the program, we need more councils to consider hosting a local competition.

Running the Soccer Challenge is straightforward—especially when a council partners with its local youth soccer club. The club typically provides the field and helps publicize the event to its families, while the council supplies volunteers and manages the scoring. This partnership model has proven successful and greatly reduces the workload for councils.

Our winners were as follows:

9-Year-Old Boys: N/A

9-Year-Old Girls: N/A

10-Year-Old Boys: Callum Moss Council 7 Portland

10-Year-Old-Girls: Amalese Brooks Council 3884 Newington

11-Year-Old Boys: Liam Xiao Council 7 Portland

11-Year-Old Girls: N/A

12-Year-Old Boys: Zachary Eshou Council 3600 West Hartford

12-Year-Old Girls: Sofia Rotaru Council 7 Portland

13-Year-Old Boys: Logan Carolson Council 6626 Tolland

13-Year-Old Girls: N/A

14-Year-Old Boys: N/A

14-Year-Old Girls: N/A

Blessed Michael McGivney Banquet (Jeff Leja, Chairman)

The 50th annual banquet was held on Sunday, April 12, 2026, at the Aqua Turf Club in Plantsville. This year's Blessed Michael McGivney Award recipient was Supreme Knight Patrick E. Kelly. A donation will be made to a charity of Mr. Kelly's choice. This year's banquet was attended by 525 brother knights and guests.

LIFE PROGRAMS (Daniel Isabel, Director)

Silver Rose Program (Steve Leslie, Chairman)

The Silver Rose was received from the Rhode Island State Council at St. Pius X Church in Westerly, RI on October 4, 2025. For the next thirty-six days the Silver Rose traveled around the state of Connecticut, visiting 28 different Parishes as part of prayer services, adoration and Masses as scheduled by our Councils and District Deputies at each Parish. Connecticut's support for the journey of the Rose concluded on November 10 with the transfer of the Rose to the New York State Council at a ceremony in Newtown.

There was strong interest again this year in hosting the Rose from Councils around the state, and the schedule was facilitated by the support of many District Deputies who handled the scheduling for Councils in their respective districts. We would like to thank all the Priests, District Deputies, Grand Knights and their councils, and the State Council Officers for their outpouring of support and cooperation for the Silver Rose Program. The Silver Rose Program will return to Connecticut on October 25, 2026.

Campaign for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (CPID) (Frank Sequenzia, Chairman)

It has been an honor to be the state CPID (aka Tootsie Roll) Chairman for the past four years and I am pleased to report to you on the Tootsie Roll Program for the fraternal year 2025-2026.

From July 1st, 2025, to March 27th, 2026, there were thirty-five (35) councils that participated in the Tootsie Roll Program. There are an additional seven (7) councils that have purchased tootsie rolls and need to complete a drive prior to the end of the fraternal year. It is important to understand that the Tootsie Roll program runs during the fraternal year. That is July 1st through the following June 30th.

Tootsie rolls were distributed in the months of August, September, and October. Eighty-four (84) cases of tootsie rolls were handed out. The cost is \$23 per case and is due whether or not your council holds a drive during the fraternal year.

The total amount collected to date for the 2025-2026 Tootsie Roll Program year is \$80,073.68. Less cost of goods or \$1,164.00. 80% or \$62,159.74 was raised for council charities and 20% or \$16,349.94 was raised for Special Olympics.

Councils that plan on conducting drives in the 2026-2027 Fraternal year, can order Tootsie Rolls by submitting an order form which is included in your information packet. Deadline for orders will be July 31, 2026. Orders will be filled by the end of August 2026. I would like to encourage you to support this program as people with intellectual disabilities across Connecticut are relying on us for support.

As your CPID Chairman, on behalf of all the charities that were supported from the Tootsie Roll funds, I would like to thank all the participating Councils. I hope that every active Council in the state will take part in the 2026-2027 Tootsie Roll Program starting this July 1st.

Connecticut March for Life

The 5th Annual Connecticut March for Life in Hartford was a huge success. The State Council sponsored 23 buses across 25 locations in all three dioceses, with approximately 1,000 riders. State Deputy Kevin Glazier delivered one of the addresses at the rally and once again our members served as the marshals for the march, helping to coordinate the flow of participants along the route.

Aid and Support After Pregnancy (ASAP) Program

As of the end of March, the top ASAP participating council this fraternal year is Pinta Council 5 in Wallingford with \$5,635 donated, followed by Council 13459 in Prospect with \$4,610 donated. This fraternal year, \$31,839 has been donated to 8 pregnancy resource centers by 12 councils and 2 assemblies, earning an additional \$4,500 from the Supreme Council. Since ASAP started in 2022, CT councils have donated \$192,919.19 to Connecticut centers.

Annual Pro-Life Mass (PSD Robert Goossens, Chairman)

The Annual Pro-Life Mass, hosted by the State Council of the Knights of Columbus, was held at St. Mary's Church in New Haven on Sunday, January 18, 2025. Most Rev. Richard Reidy, Bishop of Norwich, was our principal celebrant and homilist, assisted by State Chaplain Rev. Jeffrey Romans, and Rev. Michael Dolin, Pastor in Solidum & Moderator of the Blessed Michael McGivney Parish. Collections for the "Baby Shower" were distributed to pro-life agencies and pregnancy centers in each of the three dioceses of Connecticut.