



# Knights of Columbus Council 9542

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Washington, DC 20064

*In Service to One, In Service to All*

Yesterday I unfortunately had to experience the part of brotherhood that no one is ever truly prepared to handle or knows exactly how to handle perfectly. In the middle of class on Wednesday I got the text message that my best friend's mom had lost her battle with breast cancer and had passed away earlier that morning. Immediately, I was already planning when was the earliest I could possibly get home to be with my friend, who I consider a brother. Him and I have shared many fun times through high school and college and have been there for one another through tougher times like break ups and failures. However, this weekend has ended a new dimension to our "brotherhood". A true fraternal relationship goes beyond the fun adventures and shenanigans we know we'll later regret but do anyway. The real brothers in our lives are the ones who are willing to drop everything in order to be there in any capacity needed. Whether it's through times of mourning, times of despair, or times of crisis--a brother is always there.

And so since this will be my final lecture for the fraternal year, I figured this would be a fitting message to conclude with as many of our Brother Knights in the Council will be moving forward with their lives from CUA, starting new chapters, or leaving campus to study abroad: *go out and be a brother to someone in need.*

The Knights of Columbus have a sort of two-pronged approach in the way that we serve our fellow man. The first is the most visible, which are our large projects, such as helping persecuted Christians in the Middle East, Syrian refugee aid, and charitable ventures on campus and in local parishes. For many people, this is simply what the Knights of Columbus do. However, the second facet of our work as Knights is the more personal service we do for the people in our lives. This kind of service includes being a listening ear when our friends need to talk, offering to go to mass with those who have fallen out of the Faith, or helping to carry the crosses that are sometimes too heavy for our loved ones to bear alone. These acts often go unnoticed and unpraised because they are not done for any other reason than the satisfaction of making sure the people we love know they are not alone and that we have made a positive impact on their lives.

My friend who I spent the weekend with as he grieved and processed the loss of his mother is not a Knight of Columbus. He's not a Catholic either. In fact, he doesn't even believe in God or a life after death. Yet, none of this changes the way in which I consider him a brother. Likewise, our pillar of fraternity should not just end with those we call Brother Knight. Granted, we all share in a fraternal bond that those outside of our Order may not understand, and as a result we will inherently be a different kind of brother to each other. However, beyond these chamber doors there are people in our lives--men and women--who need assistance in faith, love, and charity, so go out and be a brother to them.

For those graduating CUA next month and leaving our campus community, you will encounter people who don't have the love of Christ in their hearts--go out and be a brother to

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them. As you leave the bubble of CUA and encounter people who are going through hardship after hardship and can't seem to catch a break--go out and be a brother to them. For those who still have a few years left at CUA, you'll continue to encounter people who come from family situations that maybe aren't as easy or ideal as your own--go out and be a brother to them. Next year, as we welcome a new class of freshmen students, the transition will be hard on some and they will feel alone as they find their place in our campus community--go out and be a brother to them, and especially make a brother out of them in this council. The common theme here is that no matter what stage we are at in our lives, there are always going to be people around us who can benefit from our help.

I am a firm believer in the saying, "one person may not be able to change the world, but you can change the world for one person." Collectively, as The Knights of Columbus we are making huge strides to change the world for the better. Even just our council alone has a tremendous impact on our campus and the Brookland/D.C. surrounding area. However, by far the most intimate and meaningful impacts that Knights are making are those which are done on an individual basis. You can literally save someone's life by simply reminding them they are loved. You can change their lives forever by reminding them that Jesus loves them and has paved the way for salvation.

And so I'll leave you all with one final point. If you keep up with the news and read every headline, you may be inclined to think that the world is a very dark place these days. You may think that it's full of evil and impending doom. And you may not be too far off. But remember what Jesus tells us, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." The much needed light in this world is not hard to find. In fact, look around this room— future teachers, clergy, engineers, businessmen, social workers, problem solvers, and creative thinkers. You, brothers, are the light that this world so desperately needs.

It has truly been an honor and a privilege to write these lectures throughout this fraternal year. I am very blessed to call each and every one of you my brothers. Best of luck and all of God's blessings to our brothers who are graduating this year and to those who may not be returning to our council next year. Now, go out and be a brother to someone in need. *Vivat Jesus!*

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