

Growing up in Tennessee, one cannot escape the famous Southern Hospitality. The most respected members of the community are those who open their homes in a warm and inviting way to others, cooking them food and entertaining them. Whenever a person travels through the south, they expect to experience this hospitality, this kindness and welcome feeling that gives the region its character.

Hospitality much like this is a phenomenon that has been in existence since at least since Ancient Greece, where hospitality was understood to be a divine right. Abiding by the laws of hospitality, and taking care of guests, is one way by which nobility was determined.

Throughout history, knighthood has been regarded as a title of great honor and nobility. So as Knights of Columbus, we are expected to act with great nobility, and show our hospitality; our warm and kind welcome to others. This is especially applicable in the coming weeks as we welcome new members to our council and to our order, especially this Saturday when we have our degree ceremonies.

All of us in this room are very active in this council, and it has been a large part of our experience at CUA. With these new members joining us, we want to extend our hospitality and make them feel welcome. We want to show them all the great things about our council that have made us stay active. We want to entertain them, get to know them, and, of course, give them food. Not just because it is noble to do so, but because it is their right to have us treat them with hospitality and to make them feel welcome. By joining our order, they become our brother Knights, and it is our duty to welcome them with open arms and to show them all the great things about the Knights of Columbus. - Ryan Sanford

We must not only show our hospitality to new Knights and all those we encounter but we must also seek those who have wandered far away and are lost. In the Gospel this Sunday we will hear Jesus tell us of the Parable of the Lost Sheep. Jesus reflects His love for us when he asks "What man among you having a hundred sheep and losing one of them would not leave the ninety nine in the desert and go after the lost one until he finds it?" This is the love that we are called to; to venture out and seek the ones that have wandered away from the flock of Christ.

Of course it is easier to extend our hospitality to those joining us, who we meet here. But we need to especially follow the example of Jesus. In other words our hospitality must be drawn on His hospitality. Jesus, who "welcomes sinners and eats with them", reflects the kind of hospitality we need to show. And it is only when we are deeply rooted in Christ that those we meet can encounter Christ. Because all of this begins with us, we need to ask ourselves if we are prepared and willing to journey out for the Lord. Will we carry out the New Evangelization, which invites us to deepen and renew our faith and then go forth to proclaim it? When we do find those that are lost and help them on their pathway to Christ, there will be great rejoicing from heaven and earth.

It is Catholic gentlemen who receive others with the care, kindness, and love that Jesus showed to those he met. And it is Catholic gentlemen who dare to accept the Lord's call to seek and bring back the lost sheep. - Joe Cuda