



Knights of Columbus Council 9542

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Washington, DC 20064

In Service to One, In Service to All

Two days ago, I was fortunate to be present for the Mass of the Dedication of the Altars of the St. John Paul II National Shrine across the street. The occasion was certainly a festive one, as various VIPs from the Church and the Order gathered with the faithful to celebrate the completion of the magnificent sanctuary. It was also an opportunity to reflect on the origins of the beloved pope that would characterize the great works of his life, now memorialized as a model and inspiration for all. Of course, the central focus of any church is on the God perpetually residing in the tabernacle as well as each member of the congregation. The joyous dedication of a church, then, marks the physical establishment of a local center of faith, the place of worship and adoration, confession and healing, catechesis and spiritual enrichment, joy and comfort. It becomes the place from which the faithful are to gather in love and be sent out to accomplish the great commission of evangelization. It becomes a place of solace and grounding, peace and tranquility, only to be interrupted by the inability of the faithful to silence cell phones or quietly put down kneelers.

As Knights, we can pride ourselves on being hailed by St. John Paul II as a “strong right arm of the Church”, but, in the words of St. Paul, “you are the body of Christ and individually members of it”¹ and “just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.”² We cannot think of ourselves as superior to any other individuals or groups just because they have no connection to our Order.³ Our role as Knights is to serve both the Church and those outside of it, to meet them wherever they are in life and minister to them, not out of any personal feelings of superiority, but simply of Christian love and Identity.

Reflecting on our own origins, we recall how Venerable Fr. Michael McGivney faithfully lived his witness as a parish priest in caring for the families of his congregation and community. While history treats our founder in the same way as St. Joseph in Holy Scripture— silently— his actions, though they deprive us of catchy t-shirt slogans, speak for themselves. Our work, then, should similarly call attention to not ourselves, but the Church of which we are all believers. The Church, then, continuously invites all to reach Christ, as wonderfully expressed by Pope St. Pius X:

Now the way to reach Christ is not hard to find: it is the Church. Rightly does Chrysostom inculcate: “The Church is thy hope, the Church is thy salvation, the Church is thy refuge.” (Hom. de capto Euthropio, n. 6.) ... You see, then, Venerable Brethren, the duty that has been imposed alike upon Us and upon you of bringing back to the discipline of the Church human society, now estranged from the wisdom of Christ; the Church will then subject it to Christ, and Christ to God. ... But if our desire to obtain this is to be fulfilled, we must use every means and exert all our energy to bring about the utter disappearance of the enormous and detestable wickedness, so characteristic of

¹ 1 Corinthians 12:27

² 1 Corinthians 12:12

³ See 1 Corinthians 12

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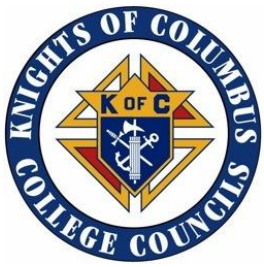


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our time— the substitution of man for God; this done, it remains to restore to their ancient place of honor the most holy laws and counsels of the gospel; to proclaim aloud the truths taught by the Church, and her teachings on the sanctity of marriage, on the education and discipline of youth, on the possession and use of property, the duties that men owe to those who rule the State; and lastly to restore equilibrium between the different classes of society according to Christian precept and custom. ... It is for you, Venerable Brethren, to second Our efforts by your holiness, knowledge and experience and above all by your zeal for the glory of God, with no other aim than that Christ may be formed in all.⁴

Finally, this week, I was also fortunate to be able to witness the exemplification of the First Degree for the first time in three years, which gave me pause while playing the part of the Worthy Soundman to reflect on my own origins and subsequent growth as a Knight of Columbus. I invite you to do the same now:

Remember the days leading up to your own initiation. Remember who you were knighted with. How can you reach out to those who are no longer active members? Recall your feelings before, during, and after you were welcomed into the Order. Reflect on the promises you made then and your efforts to keep them through and after this moment. Note that what you put into the Knights is the basis for what you receive from the Knights. How are you living the Order's four core principles of charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism? How have you and will you continue to support your family, the Church, and your brother Knights? Call to mind the passage of time and the death that awaits you. How have you and will you spend your God-gifted life? How have you and will you show Christ's love in your own life and bring it to others? What will others remember when they see your tombstone? Remember, "you are dust, and to dust you shall return."⁵

May God bless you and God love you!

Fraternally,

SK Thomas Wong

⁴ Pius X, *E supremi* [Encyclical Letter on the restoration of all things in Christ], sec. 9.

⁵ Genesis 3:19

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