



Order observes 'Year of the Volunteer' and 'Year for Priests'

Knights are charged with the responsibility of building a 'better culture'

The 2009-10 fraternal year will be one of changing hearts, changing minds and changing the culture, said Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson, addressing new and returning state deputies at their annual meeting in New Haven, Conn., June 11-14.

In his keynote address, Anderson highlighted the Order's achievements over the past year and set the Knights' direction for the year to come.

He particularly praised members for setting an all-time record of volunteer hours and charitable donations when announcing the results of the Order's annual Survey of Fraternal Activity (see sidebar).

"It's a fantastic record of accomplishment," Anderson said, adding that, "even in those hard times of 2008, brother Knights stepped up and contributed an average of nearly \$85 per capita."



Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson addresses state deputies at their organizational meeting in New Haven, Conn., June 12.

'We have the opportunity to make an even greater contribution.'

Discussing the Knights' "Year of the Volunteer" initiative, Anderson noted the Order's widespread presence, as well as its history of responding to crises, such as the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and Hurricane Katrina.

"We are the preeminent organization that can lead this," he said. "We have the network, we have the resources that have made a tremendous contribution, and we have the opportunity to make an even greater contribution at a time when our communities need it."

'GREAT FRATERNAL BENEFIT'

The supreme knight also praised the Order for its continued strength as an

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Knights of Columbus sets new records for financial contributions and volunteer service in 2008

THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS announced June 12 that it set new records for charitable donations and volunteer service hours in 2008.

The results of the Order's annual Survey of Fraternal Activity for the year ending Dec. 31, 2008, indicate that total charitable contributions reached \$150,036,865 — exceeding the previous year's total by more than \$5.1 million, despite the worst economic downturn in decades. This figure includes more than \$32.2 million donated by the Supreme Council and more than \$117 million in contributions from state and local

councils, assemblies and Squires circles.

The survey also indicated that the quantity of volunteer service hours to charitable causes by Knights grew to 68,783,653 — an increase of 87,885 hours compared to the 2007 total. There were more than 413,000 Knights of Columbus blood donations during the year and, among the most common service programs, Habitat for Humanity received 156,295 K of C volunteer hours.

On Feb. 27, the Order hosted a summit on volunteerism in which it launched an initiative called the "Year of the Volunteer." The sum-

mit aimed to increase participation and collaboration in volunteer efforts from individuals and organizations.

"If greed — one of the worst aspects of human nature — helped push us into this crisis, then one of the best aspects of our nature — generosity — will be necessary to help pull us out of it," said Anderson in a speech that preceded the summit.

Cumulative figures show that during the past decade, the Knights of Columbus has donated more than \$1.325 billion to charity and provided nearly 626 million hours of volunteer service in support of charitable initiatives. ♦

insurance company. Calling Knights of Columbus Insurance a "great fraternal benefit," he said that out of hundreds of insurance companies in the United States, the Knights is among only four to receive both certification from the Insurance Marketplace Standards Association and top ratings from Standard & Poor's and A.M. Best. In Canada, he added, the Knights of Columbus stands alone in this accomplishment.

Anderson also discussed an addition to the company's products: the New Member Annuity Plan, which is available to new members, ages 18-83, and their wives for as little as \$100 each.

Finally, he encouraged delegates to work closely with field and general agents, who he said are committed to the Order and are an integral asset to membership growth.

'THE STRONG RIGHT ARM OF PARISH PRIESTS'

In addition to 2009 being the Knights' "Year of the Volunteer," Pope Benedict XVI has also inaugurated the "Year for Priest," which began June 19.

When the Order is called the "strong right arm of the Church," many think



Supreme Chaplain Bishop William E. Lori (left) of Bridgeport, Conn., leads the Supreme Officers and Board members in the prayer for the canonization of Venerable Michael McGivney at the founder's sarcophagus in St. Mary's Church, New Haven, Conn.

of the Vatican or bishops conferences. This impression, however, might lead one to forget that "the Catholic Church lives in its parishes," Anderson said.

"The Church grows or diminishes based on the vitality of parish life," he said. "And so if we are to be the strong right arm of the Church, we must also be the strong right arm of our parish priests."

The Knights should be present in every parish, the supreme knight added, as well as supporting seminarians within their jurisdictions.

"I urge you [to] connect the Knights of Columbus to every single future priest in all of our countries," he said, citing councils that raise money for the Refund Support Vocations Program (RSVP), that pray regularly for seminar-

Supreme Chaplain urges Knights to follow path of St. Paul

IN HIS ADDRESS to state deputies at their annual meeting June 12, Supreme Chaplain Bishop William E. Lori held up St. Paul as a model of holiness and evangelization. Reflecting on the end of the Pauline Year and the beginning of the Year for Priests, Bishop Lori encouraged those in attendance to look to the example of St. Paul as a guide.

St. Paul's mission of evangelization could not be fulfilled unless he himself sought holiness, which "is inseparably connected to evangelization and service," the supreme chaplain said. The Knights must embrace that "bond of love which strengthens in us the virtue of hope, which is essential to receiving the call to holiness."

In this light, the supreme chaplain exhorted the Knights to become model Catholics, emphasizing that "nothing is

more important than the example of faith and holiness that you set — a manly and courageous example of professing the faith against all odds." He argued that contemporary society is in desperate need of men of strong and authentic spirituality to be leaders and role models. "Attention to your own interior life is fundamental," he added.

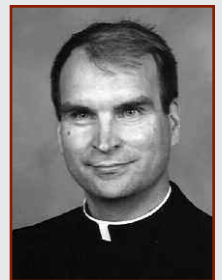
Recognizing also the Year for Priests inaugurated June 19 by Pope Benedict XVI, Bishop Lori observed that "in a very real way, it is always the Year of the Priest for the Knights of Columbus." He went on to stress the value of chaplains in supporting the work of councils by fostering spiritual growth. Bishop Lori advised each state deputy to ensure that chaplains are available to every council to provide this pastoral care.

The supreme chaplain concluded by holding up the example of Venerable Michael McGivney, the Order's founder, who "combined the zeal of St. Paul with pastoral love of the Cure' d'Ars [St. John Vianney]." ❖

Order mourns death of U.S. Army Chaplain and brother Knight of Columbus

THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS mourns the death of Father H. Timothy Vakoc, a priest of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis who

who died June 20. In May 2004, Father Vakoc's Humvee was hit by a roadside bomb while he was returning to his barracks after saying Mass for soldiers on the 12th anniversary of his ordination. Father Vakoc was the first Army chaplain to be gravely injured in the Iraq War. A 31-year member of the Order, he belonged to Father William Blum Council 3656 in New Hope, Minn., and Nicollet Assembly 526 in Minneapolis.



Father Timothy Vakoc (1960-2009)

ians and that invite seminarians to participate in council activities.

Lastly, the Year for Priests is an opportunity to increase awareness of the cause for canonization of Venerable Michael McGivney. The supreme knight stressed that Father McGivney's example is not just for Knights.

"His witness, his virtue is a contribution to the universal Church," he said, adding that Knights should encourage members and non-members alike to join the Father Michael J. McGivney Guild.

'WE HAVE TO CHANGE HEARTS'

A significant part of the supreme knight's address was dedicated to the Order's involvement in key social issues.

While polls are showing a decrease in the number of people favorable toward unrestricted abortion, "it is not enough to change minds," Anderson said. "We have to change hearts. We have to change the culture."

He added that he was encouraged at last year's Supreme Convention when delegates voted unanimously to establish the Culture of Life Fund. The Order's subsequent sponsorship of ultrasound machines at pregnancy resource centers is a tangible example of how Knights can transform the culture.



State deputies recite together the "Prayer for Priests" printed on a new K of C prayer card created for the Year for Priests, which began June 19 (see sidebar below).

In addition to defending the dignity of life, the Knights "can't step aside" from defending marriage, Anderson said, recognizing each of the state deputies who have recently found themselves at the forefront of this fight. He observed that those who propose redefining marriage to include same-sex couples do not have "the hearts and minds of the American people," which is evidenced by the fact that they "do everything they can to prevent this from going to referendum."

"We're going to build a better culture," Anderson concluded, and it will

take "courage to stand up for life and marriage."

THE RELEVANCE OF UNITY

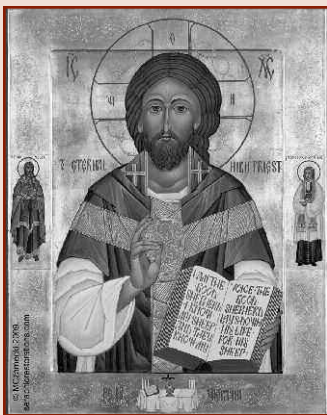
Lastly, the supreme knight spoke about the 1st International Marian Congress and Guadalupe Festival, which will follow the 127th Supreme Convention in Phoenix in August. He strongly encouraged delegates, council members and their families to attend.

As patroness of the Americas, as well as of the pro-life movement, Our Lady of Guadalupe is clearly relevant to the Knights of Columbus — not only in the Order's efforts to evangelize but also as Knights live out the lesson of the second degree: unity.

It will take 'courage to stand up for life and marriage,' and to build a culture of life.

"It is time that we begin as Catholics to see that our unity...is greater than the political or economic divisions that separate us," Anderson said. The Knights of Columbus, through its international presence, "has testified to that unity for more than a century." ❖

New K of C prayer card distributed for 'Year for Priests'



IN KEEPING WITH the Order's longstanding "In Solidarity With Our Priests" campaign, Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson has called upon all Knights to actively participate in the Year for Priests initiated by Pope Benedict XVI. The centerpiece of the Order's program for this yearlong celebration (June 19, 2009 – June 19, 2010) is a new holy card featuring a prayer for priests. The front of the card features an icon, by Marek Czarnecki, showing

Christ in Mass vestments with a gold pelican over his heart, the ancient symbol of self-sacrifice. At the bottom of the icon is an altar prepared for Mass. At the sides are Melchizedek, whose sacrifice of bread and wine prefigured the Eucharist, and St. John Vianney, patron of parish priests. Samples have been mailed to every council in the United States and Canada. Additional quantities of holy cards (#4864) can be ordered using a Requisition Form (#1). ❖

High school classmates serve as state deputies



During the 2009-2010 Fraternal Year, three graduates of Mount Saint Joseph High School in Baltimore were elected to serve as state deputies (left to right): Paul Upman (Class of '58) in Ohio, Richard Siejack (Class of '59) in Maryland, and Florian Wawrzyniak (Class of '58) in Vermont. The Xaverian Brothers of Mount Saint Joseph have long been known for the quality of the education they have been providing to young men since the school was established in 1876. Now, perhaps they should become known as the incubator of Knights of Columbus State Deputies!



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Walter's Story

BY THOMAS P. SMITH JR.
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
(AGENCIES AND MARKETING)

During 2008, one of our general agents from New York, Rich Malek, lost his father, Walter. Many of us at the Supreme Council headquarters in New Haven, Conn., knew Walter from a visit he made to one of our manager meetings in Florida. "Pop," as Walter was affectionately known by his son, was a great guy, and Rich misses him deeply. It was a story-book father-son relationship. While Walter was alive, Rich and he spoke every day — and from spring through fall, the main topic was the New York Mets.

Walter was also his son's first client when Rich became a field agent. When Rich joined the Knights of Columbus sales force, he sold his father a life insurance policy that covered his needs and continued to grow in value until his death.

A retirement annuity found its way into Walter's portfolio as well. Interestingly, Walter bought the annuity at age 58 as an Individual Retirement Account (IRA). He religiously paid the maximum amount into his annuity each year (\$1,500 at the time) for seven years, until he reached the mandatory retirement age of 65.

What then? Walter's agent/son recommended that he annuitize the product and let the Knights of Columbus pay him a monthly sum — guaranteed — for the rest of his life. In case something were to happen to his father soon after retirement, Rich made the option that we call a "ten year certain", which means that the monthly

income would go to Walter's beneficiary for at least ten years after his death.

Well, thanks be to God, Pop lived to the age of 92. So, let's do the math.

Walter paid \$10,500 into his annuity during the seven years before he retired. The option he and Rich selected called for the Order to send him \$148 per month for the rest of his life. He got those checks twelve months a year for 26 years. Thus, the return on his \$10,500 investment was \$46,176. Check your investments and see which ones are going to do that for you. Better yet, call your father and do what Rich did. Suggest he consider a Knights of Columbus annuity.

My thanks goes out to Rich for allowing me to share this happy story of a man who made the right decisions and who raised a good son. The Knights of Columbus was there for him, every month, for 26 years.

We would like to do the same for you. ❖

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