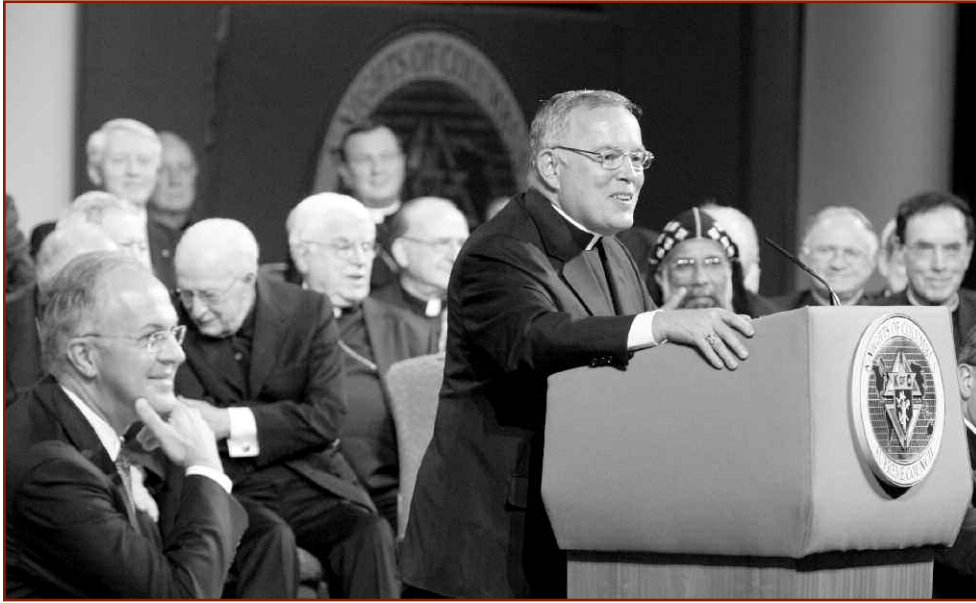




Health Care We Can All Live With

Bishops, supreme knight say that authentic health care reform must respect human life at all stages



Following Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson's annual report, Aug. 4, Archbishop Charles J. Chaput of Denver encouraged Knights to transform the national discussion about health care with "knowledge and charity."

"Clearly, a health care system designed to save lives on the one hand must not become a vehicle for taking lives through abortion and euthanasia on the other," said Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson in his annual report at the 127th Supreme Convention in Phoenix, Aug. 4. Referring to health care legislation now being considered in the U.S. Congress, he declared, "Health care reform must be abortion-free."

The supreme knight's remarks echoed concerns expressed by bishops about the comprehensive health care reform bills recently proposed in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.

On behalf of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Cardinal Justin F. Rigali of

Philadelphia, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities, wrote letters to the House of Representatives July 29 and Aug. 11.

"Much-needed reform must not become a vehicle for promoting an 'abortion rights' agenda or reversing longstanding policies against federal funding and mandated coverage of abortion," he wrote.

SEEKING AN AMENDMENT

When the 111th Congress first convened last January, millions voiced their opposition to the potential introduction of the Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA), which threatened to invalidate virtually all existing abortion regulations and enshrine abortion as a "fundamental

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We Stand With Peter

127th Supreme Convention underscores Order's solidarity with bishops and priests

IN HIS ANNUAL REPORT delivered Aug. 4 at the 127th Supreme Convention in Phoenix, Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson emphasized the Order's solidarity with the Holy Father and the clergy, as well as its commitment to the defense of life, marriage and the family.

Delivered before more than 1,000 delegates and their families, who attended as guests, in addition to a live TV and radio audience, the supreme knight's report also outlined the wide-ranging charitable reach of the Knights of Columbus and the strength of its financial operations.

Earlier that morning, Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted of Phoenix celebrated the convention's opening Mass, which marked the 150th anniversary of the death of St. John Vianney, patron of priests. Two relics of the saint, who is also known as the Curé of Ars, were present at the Mass, which was concelebrated by seven cardinals, approximately 60 bishops and more than 60 priests.

Bishop Olmsted said the liturgy provided an occasion to give thanks to God for the priesthood and for the gift of the holy Eucharist, noting that the vision of Venerable Michael McGivney, the Order's founder, has been responsible for untold good.

A RECORD-BREAKING YEAR

In keeping with the theme of the convention — "We Stand with Peter in Solidarity with Our Bishops and Priests" — the supreme knight began

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right." (See the January 2009 issue of *Columbia*, archived online at www.kofc.org/columbia.) While the introduction of FOCA was successfully thwarted through a nationwide effort that included a USCCB-sponsored postcard campaign, many have warned that the health care reform bills, in their current form, would accomplish many of FOCA's objectives by other means.

For example, Cardinal Rigali observed that the proposed "America's Affordable Health Choices Act of 2009" (H.R. 3200) would give the government power to make abortion "a mandated benefit." It would also bypass the Hyde Amendment, which has restricted federal funding of abortion via the annual Health and Human Services (HHS) appropriations bill since 1976.

According to the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC), the proposed health care reform legislation, without amendments explicitly excluding abortion coverage, could result in "the greatest expansion of abortion since *Roe v. Wade*."

There are also concerns about certain provisions in the bill that advocate health care rationing and limiting end-of-life care, bringing with them the threat of euthanasia for the elderly and infirm.

In his annual report, the supreme knight said, "The solution is clear: Simply add a provision...that clearly excludes abortion and euthanasia from the bill. That is what we urge Congress to do."

Yet, by the time representatives began their August recess, numerous pro-life amendments had already been rejected by Congressional committees.

'A RESPECTED AND ARTICULATE VOICE'

In a letter of papal greetings to the Supreme Convention, read by Cardinal William J. Levada, Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone said that the pope "trusts that, as a respected and articulate voice of the Catholic faithful, the Knights of Columbus will continue to defend that teaching through reasoned argument and responsible participation in civic and political life."

To this end, delegates to the convention adopted a resolution on "Defending the Right to Life," which reaffirmed the Order's commitment "to unconditional support for the right to life and full protection in law for every human being from conception to natural death."

"As a respected and articulate voice of the Catholic faithful, the Knights of Columbus will continue to defend [the Church's] teaching."

The resolution declared opposition to "any health care reform legislation that does not explicitly exclude abortion coverage for any health insurance plan, public or private." It also called upon "legislators everywhere to adopt legislation protecting the religious conscience rights of doctors, nurses and other medical professionals, guaranteeing their right to refuse to participate in abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide or any other practice that is destructive of innocent human life

or that conflicts with their sincerely held religious beliefs."

In remarks following the supreme knight's report, Aug. 4, Archbishop Charles J. Chaput of Denver encouraged Knights to show leadership and to make their voices heard "with knowledge and charity."

He added, "Help transform our country so that we're just, we care for the poor and we stand strongly on the side of the elderly and the unborn."

For more information about the implications of the proposed health care reform legislation, visit www.usccb.org and www.nlrc.org. ❖

Take Action

Contact your elected representatives and urge them to support the Stupak and Hatch amendments, and to oppose any health care reform legislation that does not include these amendments. Congressmen and senators can be reached by fax, e-mail or phone. Call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121 or call the members' local offices. Full contact information can be found at www.senate.gov and www.house.gov.



THE SUPREME OFFICERS and Supreme Directors are pictured at the 127th Supreme Convention in Phoenix. Three new members of the Order's Board of Directors were elected to replace retiring Supreme Directors Ronald L. Gay, Javier G. Nájera Cabrales and William James White. Texas State Deputy Javier S. Martinez, Reginald E. Beckett, past state deputy of New Jersey, and Daniel J. Baker, immediate past state deputy of Georgia, were elected for three-year terms effective Sept. 1, 2009. Re-elected for three-year terms expiring Aug. 31, 2012, were Dennis A. Savoie, John W. O'Reilly Jr., Edward J. Mullen, Thomas P. Smith Jr. and Robert F. Cayea. Delegates also reaffirmed the decision of the Board of Directors to fill the unexpired term of Paul R. Devin with Supreme Advocate John A. Marrella until Aug. 31, 2011.

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his report by emphasizing the Order's support for the priesthood and vocations.

He also outlined the renewed focus within the Order on spiritual enrichment and the formation of its members.

Pope Benedict XVI's recent social encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate* (*Charity in Truth*), can serve as a blueprint for the Knights of Columbus, Anderson said. Citing the Order's principles of charity, unity and fraternity, he said that these words were "used so often in this new encyclical that one would almost conclude that it was written for us."

The supreme knight also reported on some of the initiatives the Order has begun to help those in need during the severe economic downturn, such as the K of C Coats for Kids program in the winter, and the "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" summit in February that kicked off the Year of the Volunteer.

Anderson also focused on the Knights' ongoing efforts to promote and protect marriage through education and constitutional amendments, and to the defend the right to life. He said that recent polls reveal "a landmark shift taking place in public attitudes toward abortion" toward the

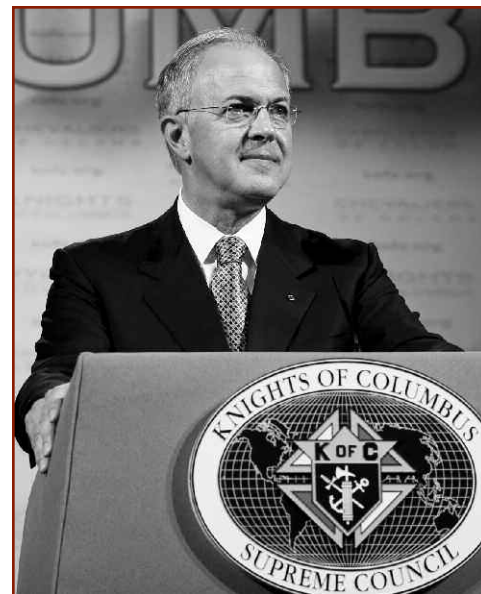
pro-life position and noted the effectiveness of the Knights' new ultrasound initiative.

The Order had a record-breaking year with regard to charity, membership and the financial security it provides to members and their families. In 2008, Knights donated more than \$150 million to charities and volunteered 68.8 million hours to their parishes and communities. At the same time, membership grew for the 38th consecutive year and life insurance in force exceeded \$72 billion.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

In his keynote address at the States Dinner, Cardinal Francis George of Chicago, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, thanked Knights for their continued commitment. "In promoting the goals of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism," he said, "and fostering dedicated Catholic faith, strong family life and active involvement in the community, your witness and service make a tremendous difference in our Church and our world — and we are grateful."

Likewise, words of greeting and gratitude from Pope Benedict XVI were conveyed through a letter from Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, the Vatican Secretary of State, who was an hon-



Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson delivers his annual report at the 127th Supreme Convention.

ored guest at the Supreme Convention in Nashville two years ago. Cardinal William J. Levada read the letter to those in attendance at the opening business session.

A special guest at this year's convention, Cardinal Levada is prefect of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith — a position previously held by Pope Benedict XVI before his election as pope in 2005.

On Aug. 5, Cardinal Levada delivered a homily to convention delegates during a concelebrated Mass. In societies that are being more secular and technological, material wealth "can blind people to our utter dependence on God, and the need to seek to do his will first and always," he noted. "The cost of discipleship" involves bearing witness to spiritual realities and unpopular truths, even if it means being targets within the culture, he added.

At the closing business session, delegates approved a number of resolutions that reaffirmed the Order's commitment to build up the Church and to promote her teachings. Topics of the resolutions included "Marian Devotion," "Building a Culture of Life," "Support for Marriage," "The Impact of Violence and Pornography" and "Patriotism," among others.

Full coverage of the Supreme Convention, including video, photos and texts, can be found at www.kofc.org/convention. ❖



THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS International Family of the Year, Leland and Mary Ann Vetter, and their children — Marie, Diana, Thomas, Steven, Benjamin, Nicholas, Andrew, Paul, Kathleen and Alexis — of Msgr. Fred J. Kimmit Council 6623 in Torrington, Wyo., stand with Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson and his wife, Dorian, and Supreme Chaplain Bishop William E. Lori of Bridgeport, Conn. The Vettors give real meaning to the phrase, "In Service to One, In Service to All." Leland and Mary Ann, and their 10 children, who range in age from 2 to 27, have compiled a record of service to the Church and their community that is truly extraordinary.



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Long-Term Care

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

There are very few people who have not heard or read about long-term care insurance. Just as there are very few people who do not have a “long-term care experience” somewhere in their family — a loved one in a nursing home facility, or a family member being cared for at home because of advancing age or a disability (or both). So, there is no need to spend very many words in this column on the catastrophic effect these events can have on a family, crossing all generations. You already know that.

What you may not know is the urgency of taking action. The ability to

buy long-term care (LTC) insurance is based on your health. Putting the decision off, or “waiting until next year,” can be problematic. As we have talked about in this space many, many times before, no one will ring a bell for you the night before your health changes. In addition to the required premium commitment increasing every year with your age, you run the increased risk of developing a health issue that can prevent you from buying — not a very good position to be in.

**We have a very competitive
long-term care product
available through our agents.**

When you make the decision to talk about LTC, come to the Knights of Columbus. In addition to providing life insurance and guaranteed retirement products to our members and their families, we also have a very competi-

tive long-term care product available through our agents. Since entering this market in 2000, nearly 30,000 LTC policies have been sold to K of C members and their wives. While some companies in this line of business have had difficulty, our product continues to perform well with no premium increases on existing policies.

Your agent will help you select the plan that’s right for you, and together you will arrive at an affordable premium that offers you the coverage you need. We can show you several different options — facility-only coverage, home care or a combination of both. Our agents are professionally trained to answer your questions — but you have to invite them in. I urge you to not delay. Think only of your own “long-term care experience.” I don’t think you want yourself or your family in that position. And don’t worry about the cost. The cost is not the problem; it is the solution to the problem. ❖

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