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From Alaska to Argentina,

the continent we know as
America has been shaped by
many important forces, among
them: evangelization,
immigration and the quest for
freedom. And what is true of
our continent is true also of
San Antonio. The history of
this nearly 300-year-old city
indeed bears witness to the
power of each of these
elements.

Its Catholic roots run deep.
San Antonio houses the oldest
standing church building in
Texas. That church is only a
few miles from here, and its
first patroness was the
Blessed Virgin Mary under her
titles Our Lady of Candelaria
and Our Lady of Guadalupe.1
Better known as San Fernando
Cathedral, it is also one of the
oldest cathedrals in the United
States.

Beginning in the early 1700s,
San Antonio was an important
center for the evangelization of
the New World. Franciscan
missionaries founded five
missions here, which “form
the largest cluster of Spanish
missions in the United States.”2

These missionaries included
men like Venerable Father
Antonio Margil de Jesús. Born
in Spain, he preached the
Gospel message tirelessly
throughout Central America,
Mexico and Texas during the
late 17th and early 18th
centuries. And here in San
Antonio he founded Mission
San José, the most successful
mission in Texas.3

The work of these brave
missionaries transformed
America into a Catholic
continent and San Antonio into
a Catholic city. They brought
the gift of faith to those who
didn’t have it and reaffirmed it
for those that did.

The city’s best-known mission,
San Antonio de Valero, is
perhaps the most famous of all
the American missions — not
for its evangelization, but for
its role in securing Texas’
independence. Today, that
mission is better known as the
Alamo.

For the defenders of the

San Fernando Cathedral. (© Getty Images, 2013)
Alamo freedom was a God-given gift worth defending no matter the cost.

But who were these Texans who were willing to risk their lives for freedom?

Most were immigrants to this land — or the children of immigrants. Some had roots in Mexico, others in the United States. In fact, so great was the allure of Texas as a land of promise that in the early 19th century, a Connecticut Yankee named Moses sought to immigrate to Texas along with hundreds of American families. Moses’ last name was Austin, and though he died before his dream could be fulfilled, his son, Stephen Austin, for whom the capitol of Texas is named, led 300 settler families to Texas.4

And thus it came to be that American Texans fought alongside Mexican Texans.

Most of us remember the names of famous men who fought and died at the Alamo — men like Davy Crockett, William Travis and Jim Bowie.

But alongside these famous men died those with names like Andrés Nava and Juan Antonio Badillo. They came to the Alamo along with many others under the command of Colonel Juan Seguín.5 You may remember Seguín as the defender of the Alamo who survived, for shortly before the final battle, he was sent out with a message that asked Colonel Fannin to march to the rescue.6

According to an 1837 article in the Telegraph and Texas Register attributed to Seguín, after the battle for the Alamo, he returned to San Antonio. There, Seguín ordered that the ashes of his comrades be collected and placed in a coffin on which he inscribed the names of Bowie, Crockett and Travis. The remains were transported in a coffin to San Fernando Cathedral; the bells tolled, and in the church a “Texian flag,” a rifle and a sword were placed atop the coffin.7

Wherever they hailed from originally, all of these men appreciated the great gifts of this land and of freedom, and they worked to protect these gifts for themselves and their children.

Religion and immigration found themselves intertwined again in the early 20th century when, more than once, San Antonio became the refuge for many Mexicans who loved freedom. This included bishops, priests and lay people fleeing religious intolerance and even outright persecution at the hands of the Mexican government, especially in the 1920s and into the ’30s. Bishop Rafael Guizar Valencia, a brother Knight who is now a saint, was among those who fled here. So too was the primate of Mexico, Archbishop José Mora y del Río. They didn’t come here for a better life. They came here to protect the gift of life that God had given them, so that they could protect God’s gifts of faith and freedom that had been given to their flock.

These men of God did not sit idly by. They evangelized the people, and they preached and administered the sacraments. They prayed for their country and its freedom, offering Mass at San Fernando Cathedral in June 1927 for the restoration of religious liberty in their homeland.8

Not far from here in Castroville, Texas, a seminary was established for exiled Mexican seminarians, funded in part by the Knights of Columbus.9 Brother Knight Pedro de Jesús Maldonado was one of the exiled who came to Texas to attend a seminary in El Paso. After his ordination, Fr. Maldonado returned to Mexico, and despite repeated threats to his life he refused to leave his people. In 1937 he was brutally martyred on Ash Wednesday. The relic of Saint Pedro Maldonado was among those venerated today during our Opening Mass.

And as outlined in the book La Cristiada, which we recently helped publish in English, the Knights of Columbus Supreme Council worked diligently for a peaceful end to the persecution in Mexico. And here in Texas and throughout the Southwest, Knights aided many of their Catholic brothers and sisters who had fled north during this difficult period.

Evangelization, immigration and a desire for freedom shaped our continent and this great city. And if there is a common thread in each of these shaping elements, it is that our faith, our lives and our freedom are all gifts from God to be protected.

And so, in this city named for St. Anthony, a spiritual son of St. Francis, it gives me great pleasure to announce this year’s convention theme, taken from the first homily of our Holy Father Pope Francis:

“Be Protectors of God’s Gifts.”

My brother Knights, with this theme I ask you to continue with and expand upon the good works you do. For over the past year you have been good stewards of God’s gifts! Our Order is stronger today than ever before, and, my brother Knights, the best is yet to come!
During the past several months, the world has been transfixed by the personal witness to charity of Pope Francis.

He has lived his life as pope as he had lived his life previously as priest, provincial superior and archbishop — in solidarity with the poor, the sick and the forgotten.

The Knights of Columbus was blessed to have the two encyclicals on charity of Pope Benedict XVI, which encouraged us to even greater service to our neighbor. We continue to be blessed by the incredible personal witness of Pope Francis, whose leadership in charity through his teaching and personal actions are an example for every member of this Order.

In order to bring the pope’s message to even more people, the Knights of Columbus commissioned a documentary film on the life of our new pope. You will have the chance to be among the first to view it this afternoon.

Calling on us to see each human life as a gift, Pope Francis has lived out charity in a way that is unmistakable. And I have remarked more than once that it seems as though the cardinals in the conclave had Pope Benedict XVI’s encyclicals on charity very much in mind when they elected Pope Francis.

Since our Order is dedicated to charity as its first principle, every Knight should bring the example of Pope Francis into his home, his parish and his community. We can change countless lives and communities around the world. Our charitable service not only helps the temporal needs of our neighbors, but our personal witness of charity can also evangelize as we express Christ’s commandment of love.

Love of neighbor is an important way for us to actively live out our love of God, and it always has been. It has been a hallmark of great Catholic rolemodels through the ages, from St. Martin of Tours to St. Francis of Assisi to Blessed Teresa of Calcutta to the Venerable Servant of God Father Michael J. McGivney.

Charity has always been a defining characteristic of the Knights of Columbus because our love of neighbor has always motivated us to protect God’s gifts. From the beginning, we have understood that God’s gifts include the poor, the suffering, the marginalized — in other words, every human being.

God is love, and his love is also a gift that we have protected and shared abundantly over the past year. For the 13th consecutive year, our Order’s charitable contributions have grown. While charitable giving in the United States grew by 2 percent last year, charitable donations from the Knights of Columbus grew three times as much, by 6 percent. And that increase of more than $9.4 million set a record of $167,549,817 donated last year.

For the fourth year in a row, Quebec led all jurisdictions with charitable donations of $10,697,210. Ontario was number two, with $7.9 million, followed by Texas, California, Michigan, Illinois, Florida, New Jersey, New York and Mindanao.

Volunteer time donated by Knights of Columbus also climbed to a new record high, reaching 70,113,207 hours. Independent Sector values each hour donated in 2012 at $22.14. That means that the time donated by Knights to charity last year was worth $1,552,306,402.98, and the value of the more than 673 million hours donated in the past decade totals $13,348,436,513.58.

Our jurisdictions in the Philippines continued to show the way in volunteering their time. Mindanao and Luzon took first and second place among all jurisdictions, with 5,817,380 and 4,922,037 hours respectively. Texas, California, Florida, Ontario, Illinois, Quebec, Pennsylvania and Michigan round out the top 10.

When it comes to the amount of time volunteered per member, four Canadian jurisdictions were in the top 10, and Prince Edward Island was number one with 144.8 hours donated per member. Alaska was number two, with 110.3 hours per member, followed by British Columbia, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, Arizona, Washington State and Mindanao.

Overall, Knights last year donated an average of $31.33 and 38 hours of their time to charity with our Order.

Our commitment to serving others is nowhere more apparent than in our long-time KHPTNG OF CHARITY

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Richard Caron, a member of Council 10852 in Charlotte, N.C., prays with a man at the Men’s Shelter of Charlotte and washes his feet on Holy Thursday. Council members washed the men’s feet, distributed shoes and socks, and then served a meal to the shelter residents.

Global Wheelchair Mission, Knights have given the gift of mobility to more than 40,000 people around the world. Knights also gave $2.5 million to benefit the elderly, $5 million to hospitals and other health care facilities, and $7.5 million for community projects.

Over the past three years, the Order’s Healing Haiti’s Children program — in partnership with Project Medishare — has been an overwhelming success. The Knights committed to provide each child who lost the use of a limb in the 2010 Haitian earthquake with a two-year treatment program of prosthetics, orthotics and physical therapy. More than 800 children have traveled from all over Haiti to the Emilio Moure Clinic for Hope in Port-au-Prince to receive this life-changing treatment. The sustainable model, which included training and employment for local workers, will allow treatment for patients and employment for Haitian people to continue into the future.

Global Wheelchair Mission, Knights have given the gift of mobility to more than 5,000 wheelchairs in 10 countries around the world. Knights in Texas, California and Arkansas donated more than 750 wheelchairs in Mexico. Knights in Puerto Rico and Iowa provided 280 wheelchairs with the Global Wheelchair Mission.

During the past year, we have distributed more than 5,000 wheelchairs to people in Chile and the Philippines, and working together with Texas Knights for distributions in Vietnam as well.

In addition, Knights in seven states also provided more than 1,300 wheelchairs to veterans.

Over the past decade, through this partnership with the Global Wheelchair Mission, Knights have donated more than 5,000 wheelchairs in the Holy Land. Knights in Orange Park, Fla., raised funds for 110 wheelchairs for the Florida Medical Mission to Guatemala. The Florida State Council also sponsored the donation of 110 wheelchairs for the Archdiocese of Nassau, Bahamas. And California Knights were especially active, donating hundreds of wheelchairs to people in Chile and the Philippines, and working together with Texas Knights for distributions in Vietnam as well.

But that’s just the beginning. Last year, Knights of Columbus councils donated an additional $13.7 million to other projects benefiting people with intellectual disabilities.

Councils also donated more than $4.1 million to benefit those with physical disabilities. One of our most important projects in this area involves our decade-long partnership with the Global Wheelchair Mission.

In Lloydminster, Canada, a city that straddles the border between Alberta and Saskatchewan, Knights working with Habitat for Humanity sought to help lower-income residents. They installed insulation in a six-townhouse development, helping not only to build homes, but also to strengthen their community.

Not every charitable activity the Knights of Columbus does can be planned in advance. When disasters strike, we Knights answer the call for help.

In the wake of the tragic shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School, Council...
185 in Newtown, Conn., established a program that asked people to pray a minimum of three Hail Marys for the victims and their families; the first responders and teachers; and the community of Newtown. More than 105,000 people signed up to offer these prayers, saying a total of more than 3.25 million Hail Marys.

Approximately 250 brother Knights from Newtown and the surrounding areas served as ushers at many of the funerals and saw to many other details during this sad period.

The council also simultaneously conducted its annual Christmas toy program and contributed more than $70,000 worth of toys in memory of Caroline Previdi, one of the children killed, who had been saving money for the council’s toy drive to help children in need.

The work our brother Knights did in Newtown was vital, and it combined the two key elements of the work our Order does: prayer and action.

In several natural disasters, too, Knights found themselves at the forefront of relief efforts. Following Hurricane Sandy we raised more than $500,000 for the victims through Knights of Columbus Charities. In addition, Knights contributed enormous amounts of time to collecting and transporting supplies to help those affected in New York and New Jersey.

State councils made immediate use of the funds, and once again the Knights of Columbus was one of the earliest sources of aid to disaster victims. Because the storm hit as the weather was turning much colder, New Jersey made immediate donations of 700 children’s coats from the Coats for Kids program.

The Florida State Council sent 28 cases of their Coats for Kids to New York, where they were distributed as part of their relief efforts. New York also distributed 750 gift cards worth $100 each to families who had lost access to their homes and needed to get clothes and food for their children. Councils elsewhere in New York City, Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse and Albany raised and donated additional funds, and collected and moved needed supplies to hard-hit areas of Staten Island and Long Island. District deputies in Kings County pulled together a team that took barbeque grills and food supplies to Brooklyn and Queens, where they cooked meals for victims and first responders. Council 126 in Brooklyn became a major collection and distribution center for Sandy victims.

As soon as they had their power restored, the brother Knights of Council 3481 in Oceanside hosted a pre-Thanksgiving dinner for their neighbors and first responders. Council 2204 in Farmingdale is about four miles inland from the Atlantic shore of Long Island, and it became a home for four dozen local families as well as FEMA employees who had no place to go. The council made sure they had three hot meals a day and the sort of comfort that only neighbors can provide to one another.

Upstate New York’s Council 275 filled a truck with donated blankets, coats, sweaters, work gloves, batteries, flashlights and cleaning supplies and drove them to Council 1675 in Staten Island. After everything was unloaded, Grand Knight Frank Ostrander presented them a check for $360 to help with other needs. Actions like these were replicated hundreds of times in the weeks following the storm, and they truly tell a story of the determination of the Knights of Columbus to help those in need.

The Supreme Council sent two truckloads of supplies, one to New York and another to New Jersey. Supreme Warden George Hanna and I
visited the devastated shoreline and helped unload supplies at Council 5917 on Staten Island. Supreme Treasurer Logan Ludwig did the same at Council 6852 in Middletown, N.J., and so many brother Knights did similar work as well.

Even councils outside the Northeastern United States got involved. Council 5561 in Warrenton, Va., packed 20 tons of supplies in three trucks and drove them to Staten Island. One hundred and five council members were joined by 80 community volunteers in that project. And scores of other councils made similar efforts.

Sandy was not the only natural disaster of the past year, of course.

When a huge, mile-wide tornado ripped through the Oklahoma City area in May, Oklahoma Knights quickly set up a disaster response effort at St. Andrew Church, home of Council 9901. More than 100 volunteers came out to help. Knights quickly organized visits to parish families at their homes to size up the damage and their needs. Knights were also among the volunteers staffing four multi-agency relief centers in Moore, Okla., and they also partnered with Catholic Charities in opening a distribution center in Norman to provide food and other supplies to storm victims. Knights and others nationwide made individual contributions of more than $202,000 to the Knights of Columbus Charities Disaster Relief Fund following the Oklahoma tornado.

The Oklahoma disaster also afforded us an opportunity to identify and coordinate the activities of Knight volunteers through our Disaster Response Program, which is designed to enhance our ability to respond to both natural and manmade disasters.

In West, Texas, an industrial explosion on April 17 caused massive destruction near a fertilizer plant. Fifteen people were killed and hundreds more were injured. Knights at every level responded immediately. Council 2305 has 500 members in a town of less than 3,000 people, and the Knights of West, Texas, became key players in the relief efforts. Shortly after the blast, the Supreme Council sent $10,000 to Council 2305 for their use in helping victims. Beginning shortly after the explosion, and ever since, our brother Knights there in West have been working closely with other local groups and government authorities in providing disaster relief.

The Texas State Council also earmarked money for West, and many of our college Knights from throughout Texas came to West to help the community get back on its feet. Nationally, Knights of Columbus Charities collected nearly $250,000 to help the Texas victims with their most urgent needs.

Of that money, a total of $70,000 was used to purchase “House in a Box” for the families whose homes were damaged or destroyed, supplying them with furniture, cooking utensils and other essentials. Fifty thousand dollars was sent to the badly damaged West Independent School District to help in their recovery, and in a town that is 70 percent Catholic, an additional $50,000 went to St. Mary’s School to meet the unforeseen needs of the school and students as a result of the disaster.

Over the past year, Knights of Columbus Charities has also provided tens of thousands of dollars in aid to assist those affected by other disasters, including: the flooding in North Dakota and Western Canada, the tornadoes in Indiana and Hurricane Isaac in Louisiana.

In the Philippines, after Typhoon Pablo devastated parts of Mindanao last December, the Knights of Council 11032 in Taglatawan assisted in relief efforts by
collecting and distributing clothing, food and
bedding to those in need.

And members of Council 5973 in Tayabas City,
Luzon, delivered food, medicine and other
supplies by boat to flood victims in Barangay
Lambac, a village where 250 families were
affected by the rising water.

Overall, councils donated more than $3.3
million to help victims of disasters last year, and
Knights donated more than 18.4 million hours
of their time to these and many other
community service efforts.

And as our Disaster Response Program
continues to develop, our work in future relief
efforts will be even greater.

Year in and year out, one weather pattern we
can count on is the chill of winter. For children
who don’t have the clothing to stay warm,
winter can be debilitating. Our Coats for Kids
program protects young children from the cold
by giving brand new coats to those who need
them. Last year, 917 Knights of Columbus
councils purchased and distributed 42,556
coats — an increase of more than 10,000 coats
from the previous year. And since 2009, we
have distributed more than 115,000 coats to
kids throughout the United States and Canada.

The day after Thanksgiving, I participated in a
Coats for Kids distribution in Bridgeport, Conn.,
organized by the Connecticut State Council.
While many people were out shopping, the
Knights in Connecticut were giving away coats
to children in need. And this year, the state
council will be expanding its annual Black
Friday coat distribution to several more
locations.

Among the many other councils that hosted
this program was Council 3680 in Indianapolis.
There, former Indianapolis Colts quarterback
Jim Sorgi joined Supreme Secretary Charles
Maurer as 200 coats were distributed to
children in need from four area Catholic
schools. The experience moved Sorgi to sign a
Form 100 right there, underscoring the
importance of having current and potential
members volunteer with us. Every council
whose area experiences a cold winter should
be involved in giving the gift of warmth through
our Coats for Kids program.

Providing food for the hungry is something the
Knights of Columbus has done many times in
our history. During the 1930s, when the
Depression gripped the United States, Knights
throughout the country helped feed the hungry,
including Mexican immigrants who had come
north during the period of religious persecution
and other hardships in their home country.
And during and after World War II, the Knights
of Columbus — through our playgrounds in
Rome — had a key role in distributing food to
the hungry people and children of that city.

During this time of financial hardship for so
many people, another program that makes
a real difference is our Food for Families
initiative. Based on the excellent work that
many councils have done with food drives, this
program helps put food on the table for people
who would otherwise go hungry. And in 2012,
we began the Knights of Columbus Food for
Families Reimbursement Program. Under this
program, for every $500 or 500 pounds of food
a council or assembly contributes to a food
bank or parish food pantry, it is eligible for a
refund of $100 from the Supreme Council — up
to $500 per fraternal year. Every council can
conduct a food drive at their parish, at local
supermarkets or at a council home.

One creative implementation of this program
was the Tractor Cruise for Charity in Missouri.
Co-sponsored by Council 1121 in Washington,
Council 1576 in Union, Council 4867 in Saint
Clair and Council 8073 in Villa Ridge, the
83-tractor convoy collected half a ton of
food and approximately $19,000 for local
food banks.

And near here in Helotes, Texas, Council
8306 has pioneered the 40 Cans for Lent
drive on the Saturday after Thanksgiving.
Councils in several other jurisdictions
are using this model as part of their
own Food for Families program.

Some councils collect food, and others
cook and serve it. I saw such good work
firsthand last Thanksgiving at Council
4044 in Chicopee, Mass. For the 22nd
consecutive year, Knights there
organized a community Thanksgiving
dinner. The members of the council
recruited additional volunteers as well,
and together they fed more than 3,500
people. Most were fed at the council
home, where they received a full
Thanksgiving dinner in a restaurant-like
atmosphere. Then, hundreds of meals
were delivered to the homebound.

Everyone was welcome and so many
came. There were old and young,
individuals and families, the poor and
the lonely — anyone who needed a
place to go on Thanksgiving. The event
was one of hundreds of charitable
activities that Knights of Columbus
throughout the United States
participated in to help families and
others in need enjoy the Thanksgiving
celebration.

A 30-second Knights of Columbus
television message also aired during
Thanksgiving weekend, inviting the
public to support the Knights in feeding
those in need.
While some councils focused on food, others focused on water. When a well in New Mexico went dry on a Friday in early June, residents were told it was going to take at least a week and a half to drill a new well. So the Knights of Rio Rancho — 125 miles away — spent the weekend conducting a drive to collect hundreds of cases of bottled water, which they then loaded onto a rented truck and transported to the people of Magdalena.

These programs that bring food, water and health care to those in need are a direct response to Christ’s call in the Gospel to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty and clothe the naked. That is what the Knights of Columbus do — we are men who see a need and then act to make a difference.

Ever since we sponsored what many consider to be the first national blood drive in the United States in 1938, we have been providing this service in councils throughout the world. During the last fraternal year, we helped provide a vital lifeline to those undergoing medical treatment in countless communities around the world is directly related to the growth and vitality of our membership.

Whether at home or abroad, charity is our Order’s first principle and its lifeblood. Through our charitable work we bring the love of God to our neighbors, to our communities and to those most in need. We speak through our actions to the truth that every life has dignity and meaning.

As Pope Francis told the bishops gathered in Brazil for World Youth Day just a few days ago: “Our pastoral work does not depend on a wealth of resources, but on the creativity of love.”

Through charity, we strengthen our own faith through our love of neighbor and evangelize those around us through this witness. We show ourselves to be protectors of God’s gifts and we invite others to join us in protecting God’s many gifts.

The Knights of Columbus, through its partnership with the Apostles of Jesus, is providing care and shelter for children in sub-Saharan Africa orphaned because of AIDS.
In the United States, Utah grew its membership by 5.2 percent this year, the District of Columbia by 4.6 percent, and Georgia by 3.3 percent. New Mexico grew by 3 percent, Idaho by 2.6 percent, Hawaii by 2.4 percent, Virginia by 2.1 percent and Colorado by 2 percent. The large jurisdictions of California and Texas both turned in gains of nearly two percent each, for a membership increase of some 3,000 new members in those two states alone.

Our growth is a testament to the importance and relevance of our mission in today’s world. It is also a testament to the hard work of brother Knights, whose charitable example, combined with the recruitment of new members, has been so effective.

But there is much more to be done.

There are more than 300 million Catholics in the countries where we have a formal presence. We have tremendous untapped potential for growth.

We have done much, but we are called to do even more. Our parishes, our neighbors and our communities need us more than ever. And they aren’t the only ones. The men who sit next to us in the pews each Sunday would benefit enormously from the opportunity to live out their faith through charity with us.

We recently began a simple and effective new membership program. One new member, per council, per month. That is 12 new members per council per year. And if you need any reassurance that the right 12 men can make a huge difference, just think of how the Gospel message was spread by the Twelve Apostles.

If each council recruited one member each month, that would be nearly 180,000 new members, and our Order would grow by almost 10 percent in a single year.

Christ didn’t seek perfect men for his apostles, and we do not seek perfect men for the Knights of Columbus. We seek good men who are looking to be better men, and then we give them the opportunity to become great men.

At every stage of a man’s life, the Knights of Columbus has something important to offer. When a man moves into a parish, the council should reach out and ask him to join. When a man gets married, baptizes his child, enrolls a child in elementary school, has his last child leave home, or retires, the Knights of Columbus has something to offer him. Perhaps it is serving his community or parish, or protecting his family’s financial future, or the fellowship that comes from meeting and working with like-minded men for the good of those in need. Whatever the reason, bring these men into our councils.

We were founded by a parish priest — Father Michael McGivney. He knew the good that a group of active Catholic men could do for the parish, the community, their families and each other. And no recruitment effort is ever complete without the involvement of the council’s chaplain and the pastor. Include them in your planning, ask for their advice and help in promoting the Order and identifying men to join our ranks, and give them the opportunity to provide the spiritual support your brother Knights need to live out their faith.

Whatever draws a new member to our ranks, our job remains the same: Make that man a Knight, and make that Knight a better man, a better Catholic, a better husband, a better father, a better citizen and someone who gives of himself in his parish and community.

Our outreach in charity and evangelization will increase exponentially with membership growth. We owe it to our Church, to our neighbors in need, to Catholic men who are not yet Knights and to ourselves as members to grow our Order so that we can accomplish even more through our love of God and neighbor.
YOUTH

When we speak about God’s gifts, the next generation stands out as particularly important.

Our charitable work and our work with youth should inspire a new generation of young men to follow in our footsteps — in the service of God and neighbor.

Our programs for young people result in good will and lifelong positive attitudes toward charity, our faith and the Knights of Columbus.

Young men and women who participate in one of our sports programs or essay contests, or who win a Knights-sponsored scholarship, carry a favorable impression of the Order — and the good works that we do — into adulthood.

The 115,000 children who received new coats over the past five years through our Coats for Kids program will always remember that the Knights of Columbus cared and helped when they were in need. The coat may last a winter or two, but the memory of that charitable act will last a lifetime.

Over the past year, more than 109,000 young people between the ages of 10 and 14 participated at 2,225 Knights of Columbus Free Throw competitions, and our newer Soccer Challenge program drew more than 7,200 participants at 1,000 events.

Last year, local councils sponsored 29,880 Scouts in 1,210 Scout units in the United States and an additional 1,079 Scouts in 121 Scout units in Canada.

Columbian Squires concluded the fraternal year with 25,848 members in 1,696 active Squires circles.

For those heading on to institutions of higher learning, our College Council Program offers new friends and brother Knights who share their faith, values and commitment to charity.

Over the past year we added 11 new college councils, including four in the United States, one in Canada and six in the Philippines. We now have 25,858 college Knights who are members of councils at 287 colleges and universities.

During the 2012-2013 academic year, the Supreme Council funded 575 scholarships worth more than $1.35 million for students at institutions of higher education. And 112 scholarships went to seminarians through the Father Michael J. McGivney and Bishop Thomas V. Daily Vocations Scholarship programs. Forty-two awardees are members of the Order. Each scholarship provides $2,500 for tuition, room and board at major schools of theology. Since the two scholarship programs began in 1992 and 1999 respectively, they have distributed more than $6.1 million in scholarship aid to a total of 1,058 seminarians, 729 of whom have been ordained to the priesthood.

But the largest amount of Knights of Columbus support for vocations comes from the local councils, assemblies and Squires circles participating in our Refund Support Vocations or RSVP Program. Last year alone, 2,929 local units provided direct financial support totaling $5,941,883 to 5,791 seminarians through the RSVP program. For every $500 donated to a seminarian or postulant, the Supreme Council provides a refund of $100.

Since 1981, the RSVP program has provided more than $56 million in aid to more than 91,000 men and women pursuing their vocations to the priesthood or religious life.

Among our other scholarship programs, eight scholarships totaling more than $184,000 were provided through the Matthews and Swift Educational Trust. Likewise, 172 scholarships worth more than $250,000 were provided...
Another of God’s gifts is the country in which we live.

And in each of our jurisdictions, our Fourth Degree Knights can be seen serving as honor guards at parades, patriotic ceremonies and important liturgical events. Their presence demonstrates in a very public way our Order’s love of both God and country.

Patriotism is a core principle of our Order, and that is why, over the past year, we have encouraged more Knights to become Sir Knights by eliminating the waiting period between the Third and Fourth Degree. Now, Third Degree Knights can immediately proceed to the Patriotic Degree, and I am happy to report that during the past year, 15,709 Knights did so, bringing Fourth Degree membership to an all-time high of 335,132. We have also added 75 new Fourth Degree assemblies, bringing the total number to 3,109.

Increasingly, the visibility of Fourth Degree Knights is not limited to appearances in ceremonial regalia. Sir Knights have become a highly visible presence in veterans hospitals around the United States and account for the lion’s share of the thousands of Knights who are part of the Veterans Affairs Voluntary Services program or VAVS.

Often this work is done quietly, but sometimes the great work done by our Fourth Degree Knights on behalf of our veterans is publicly recognized. Such is the case with this year’s VAVS Volunteer

through the Fourth Degree Pro Deo and Pro Patria scholarship programs.

And local councils and assemblies together provided $7 million in the form of scholarships and other forms of educational assistance, and another $1.8 million for youth athletic programs. All told, local councils and assemblies contributed more than $18.5 million to youth programs last year.

From helping children in need to helping seminarians become the priests of tomorrow, our Order cares deeply about the next generation. The charity we direct to young people can pay a lifetime of dividends. Not only in the programs we run, but in the example of what we do, young people can see the power of Christian charity.

Increasingly, the visibility of Fourth Degree Knights is not limited to appearances in ceremonial regalia. Sir Knights have become a highly visible presence in veterans hospitals around the United States and account for the lion’s share of the thousands of Knights who are part of the Veterans Affairs Voluntary Services program or VAVS.

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The Fourth Degree has also been in the forefront of the Order's drive to support vocations for military chaplains. It is a need that is especially great. Catholic military chaplains serve some 1.8 million members of the armed services and their families at 220 military installations in 29 countries, as well as on the decks of aircraft carriers, in tents in the desert, at VA hospitals and on the front lines in combat zones.

And while the need is great, Catholics have barely a third of the chaplains needed. The Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA, estimates that it needs 800 chaplains, but it currently has only 239.

And so, consistent with our long history of supporting priestly vocations and the faith of our troops, we have been supporting the AMS Co-Sponsored Seminarian Program. Under the program, the Military Archdiocese joins with each participating diocese to fund 50 percent of the cost of a seminarian’s five-year education; in return, the candidate agrees that following ordination and three years of service at a local parish, he will serve as a military chaplain for at least three to five years.

We have pledged $1 million over five years in support of this program. The fundraising is being led by the Fourth Degree, and thus far, assemblies have raised $530,936 for this vital project.

There is a real affinity between the Fourth Degree and members of the Armed Services, and this is also evident in the enthusiasm of active-duty Knights who have joined the Patriotic Degree while deployed overseas.

Late last year, approximately 100 active-duty personnel — joined by DOD civilian employees and contractors, and retirees based in Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom — took the Fourth Degree at a special exemplification held at Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany.

AMS Auxiliary Bishop Richard Spencer celebrated the Mass following the exemplification. This is the first assembly formed in Europe, and it is part of our new Military Overseas Europe Special District. It is named for Father Timothy Vakoc, a military chaplain who died of injuries suffered during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Other assemblies have been formed at Camp Zama, Japan, and at the Yongsan Garrison in Korea.

In May, I was pleased to join veterans, active-duty troops and Archbishop Timothy Broglio in Lourdes for a pilgrimage of wounded and disabled veterans that coincided with the 55th annual International Military Pilgrimage.

The Knights of Columbus co-sponsored the pilgrimage of these American soldiers and veterans together with the Archdiocese for Military Services, USA, and the North American Lourdes Volunteers as part of the AMS program for the Year of Faith.

Together with troops from more than 30 countries, these brave American men and women prayed and grew in their faith at one of the world’s most important Catholic shrines. It was a profound witness to the power that faith has to create unity even in the midst of the celebration of national identity.

No discussion of the heroic sacrifices of those who served would be complete if we did not pause to remember those who have paid the ultimate price for our freedom. Ever since 9/11, we have paused during our convention to honor those brother Knights who have given their lives in the Armed Forces over the past year.

This year, with NATO involvement in Afghanistan winding down, allied casualties have diminished. Although only one brother Knight has...
Father McGivney had seen too many families suffer through the untimely death of a breadwinner and was determined to provide a way for Knights to protect their families. Today’s Knights of Columbus insurance program is his legacy and a testament to his vision of brother Knights helping one another to secure their families’ futures.

For the 38th consecutive year, the Knights of Columbus earned A.M. Best’s highest rating of A++, ranking reserved only for companies that have “a superior ability to meet their ongoing insurance obligations.” A.M. Best cited that our insurance program has “consistently positive statutory earnings, excellent persistency and a solid level of risk-adjusted capitalization.” Of more than 1,100 life insurance companies rated by A.M. Best in North America, we stand among the only eight that earned their top rating. No insurer in North America is more highly rated than the Knights of Columbus.

We also continue to rank among America’s largest companies, climbing 56 spots on that list in the last six years to rank 909 on this year’s Fortune 1000 list. Our assets grew 7.6 percent last year and now total more than $20 billion. Our surplus ratio grew to 11.8 percent last year and provides us with what A.M. Best describes as “an exceptional level of risk-adjusted capitalization,” which “affords the Order considerable financial strength.”

Our insurance in force has reached $90.6 billion, nearly double the amount just 10 years ago. In the last year alone, our insurance in force has grown by $4.86 billion. We issued nearly 78,000 life certificates last year, far more than any other fraternal benefit society and nearly 30,000 more than our closest competitor. We now have more than 1,733,000 certificates in force, and our five-year sales growth of 23.6 percent is nearly four times...
For its 131-year history, the Knights of Columbus has provided assistance to people in need and the Church throughout the world.

Afghanistan: Providing winter clothing via military roundtable.
Bahamas: Offering mobility to needy parishioners.
Brazil: Sponsoring English-language World Youth Day site.
Canada: Charitable activity nationwide.
Chile: Distributing wheelchairs to those in need.
Cuba: Supporting a new seminary.
Dominican Republic: Distributing wheelchairs to those in need.
France: Co-sponsoring Lourdes pilgrimage for wounded soldiers.
Germany: Holding blood drive.
Great Britain: Co-sponsoring a conference on disability.
Guatemala: Drilling wells for clean water.
Haiti: Providing prosthetics and treatment for child earthquake victims.
Ireland: Assisting the International Eucharistic Congress.
Israel/The Holy Land: Distributing wheelchairs to those in need and supporting Christian schools.
Italy: Running playgrounds for youth and sponsoring the conference on “Ecclesia in America” at the Vatican.
Japan: Supporting a home for nuns. Relief for tsunami victims.
Korea: Collecting socks for migrant workers.
Mexico: Charitable activity nationwide.
Pakistan: Sending aid to flood victims.
Philippines: Charitable activity nationwide.
Poland: Charitable activity nationwide.
Puerto Rico: Sponsoring a “Cycling for the Faith” event.
United States: Charitable activity nationwide.
Vietnam: Providing wheelchairs to those in need.
Virgin Islands: Fundraising for Bishop’s Annual Appeal.
Zambia: Providing sewing machines for poor women.
greater than the rate of growth of the industry as a whole, which stands at 6 percent.

Our exceptional growth is a testament to our highly professional force of 1,504 agents, all of whom are brother Knights who serve only Knights and their families. They share your faith and loyalty to our Order, and as friends, brother Knights and fellow parishioners, they bring a professional and personal view to helping you meet your families’ financial goals. Help them by encouraging your brother Knight to protect his family in a way that he can be proud of — by availing himself of our insurance programs.

Let us encourage more men to join our Order because they want to protect their families with an organization that has the highest professional standards and shares their Catholic values. Welcome such new members, and remember that Father McGivney founded our Order to protect Catholic families and that a man’s desire to protect his family with us honors us and honors our founder.

When brother Knights purchase our life insurance, they keep our life insurance. Our lapse rate of 3.5 percent is among the lowest in the industry and approximately half of the industry average of 6.1 percent.

Put another way, 96.5 percent of our insurance members keep their policies, and that represents a superior level of confidence and satisfaction that other companies can only dream about.

Our other financial products have grown as well. Revenue from our new disability income product has tripled over the past year, and our long-term care offering has continued its steady growth.

In these days of economic uncertainty, our insurance program continued to outpace the industry. Insurance premiums reached an all-time high of nearly $1.2 billion in 2012. Our 5 percent growth in insurance premiums grew at a rate 25 percent faster than the industry’s rate of only 4 percent. In addition, our annuity deposits increased 4.2 percent to a record $618 million while the industry experienced an 8 percent decline.

Ultimately, the measure of our success is the benefits paid to our members. Last year, we paid more than $286 million in death benefits, and over the course of our history, death benefits to the families of deceased Knights have totaled more than $3.7 billion. Equally important, last year we paid more than $274 million in dividends to our policy holders, and since the inception of our program, we have paid out more than $12 billion in living benefits to our insurance members.

Good stewardship is important especially in these turbulent times. That is why we maintain a level of capitalization that ensures our ability to be there for our brother Knights and their families, especially during the most difficult financial times. Our $1.8 billion surplus is the foundation of our capitalization which Standard and Poor’s describes as “extremely strong, with a redundancy at the AAA level.” And we received praise rare from a rating agency for our “conservative investment strategy,” “extremely strong capitalization,” and “significant amounts of fraternal and charitable contributions.”

Our ability to provide these benefits depends in significant measure on the skills of our investment department, which has done an extraordinary job of growing earnings in a very difficult, low interest rate environment. In a year when the return on 10-year treasury bonds typically remained below 2 percent, our new purchase rate was 4.26 percent.

During 2012, we invested more than $10 million each day, and our new investment program continued to outpace the industry as a whole, which stands at 6 percent.

Our sustainable investment strategy has two key components. First, an investment must not conflict with our Catholic principles. And second, it must make good financial sense. Our success is proof that one need not compromise Catholic principles to be successful.

We believe that the institutions in which we invest, and those enterprises that we help to succeed with investment dollars, reflect on us as the investor. That is why we screen our investments, and that is why our Church Loan program is so important to us. That program provides mortgage loans to Catholic churches and schools, enabling them to finance critical projects at very competitive rates. It is yet another way in which we support our Church while investing our assets in ways that provide financial security to our members.

In the end, our financial success is built upon these fundamental principles: treating our members like family, having only brother Knights serving as insurance agents, selling and investing ethically, and staying true to Father McGivney’s vision of protecting the future of Catholic families.

You can be justifiably proud that once again this year, our program of insurance by brother Knights for brother Knights is an industry leader and one of the most important ways that we continue to protect God’s gift of the family.
God's gift to us of our faith is something that should guide every aspect of our lives and that every Knight should strive to protect.

Indeed, the protection of his parishioners’ Catholic faith was one of the main reasons that Father McGivney founded our Order.

And this Year of Faith has certainly been historic for the Catholic Church. The eyes of the world were on the Church when Pope Benedict XVI became the first pope in five centuries to retire from the papacy, and again when the conclave elected as his successor Pope Francis — the first pope from the New World.

On June 28, I had the privilege of a private audience with Pope Francis. It was an extraordinary opportunity to speak with him about the charitable work of the Knights of Columbus. It was also inspiring to experience first-hand the love and concern which our new Holy Father has for the poor and suffering.

The next day, Pope Francis signed his first encyclical, Lumen Fidei (The Light of Faith), which was begun by Pope Benedict.

In Lumen Fidei, Pope Francis asks each of us to consider the nature of charity, writing:

The boundless love of our Father also comes to us, in Jesus, through our brothers and sisters. Faith teaches us to see that every man and woman represents a blessing for me, that the light of God’s face shines on me through the faces of my brothers and sisters (54).

Such thinking has been the hallmark of Pope Francis’ life. In his role as Cardinal Bergoglio of Buenos Aires, and now as Pope Francis, our Holy Father has stood in solidarity with — and ministered personally to — the poor.

And we are blessed that the Knights of Columbus is so uniquely suited to support our Holy Father in his work for charity and evangelization.

Like him, we are deeply committed to charity. And, like him, we are strongly committed to living out our faith and promoting the New Evangelization. Also like him, we are steadfast in our commitment to protect God’s gifts by helping those on the margins of society.

Our founding principles of charity, unity and fraternity, established by the Venerable Servant of God Father Michael J. McGivney, are also key themes of our new pope.

Just after his election, as I heard our Holy Father address the world for the first time as pope, I was struck by how important his words were to the Knights of Columbus.

Pope Francis said this:

And now let us begin this journey, [together] as bishop and people. This journey of the Church of Rome, which is to preside over all the Churches in charity. It is a journey of fraternity, of love, of trust between us. Let us always pray for one another. Let us pray for the world, so that a great brotherhood may be created.

His words are an unmistakable call to “charity, unity and fraternity.”

And we are blessed that the Holy Father’s words once again underscore for us the timeless vision of Father McGivney.

Like Father McGivney, Pope Francis was born into an immigrant family. His election highlights the important role that America — the Catholic continent — has in the New Evangelization.

In this year of two popes, the Church has also been blessed with the announcement that two of their predecessors will soon be canonized.

Pope John XXIII led the Church into the Second Vatican Council and knew the Knights...
of Columbus well, visiting one of our playgrounds in Rome in 1959 and meeting with our supreme directors in 1961.

Pope John Paul II led the Church into the third millennium and had a special connection to the Knights of Columbus through a long list of projects throughout his papacy. It was our Order that co-sponsored his Mass with the Diocese of Brooklyn at Aqueduct Racetrack in 1995.

While we give thanks that these two popes will soon be canonized, we also pray for the beatification of our founder.

And I am happy to report that there is good news concerning Father McGivney’s Cause. A possible miracle attributed to his intercession is now under investigation in Rome. I encourage all Knights and their families to continue to pray for the canonization of Father McGivney and to report any favors received through his intercession to the Father McGivney Guild, whose membership now numbers 150,000 — a testament to the great devotion to our founder.

And if you are ever in New Haven, make the time to visit his tomb at St. Mary’s Church, and the Knights of Columbus Museum with its display of his relics and an exhibit on his life. Further to the south the Knights of Columbus operates another location that will also be of great interest to all Catholics.

As you know, the Knights of Columbus has established the Blessed John Paul II Shrine in Washington, D.C. This magnificent facility is undergoing a transformation that will enable it to effectively transmit the legacy and spirituality of John Paul the Great.

The shrine will be home to relics of John Paul II and a major exhibit on the life and thought of this courageous pope, whose life and teaching manifested God’s unshakeable love for the human person. The exhibits will occupy some 16,000 square feet of space and are being created with the help of expert designers. It will become a destination that will strengthen the faith of those who visit, and it will give them a deeper understanding of this saintly pope.

Our shrine will undoubtedly become a pilgrimage destination for the faithful from all over the world. It has already given the Knights of Columbus a central role in preserving and promoting the legacy of one of history’s greatest popes, and I encourage all of you to visit this shrine and to help organize pilgrimages to it from your jurisdictions.

For the first time in many years, a new series of booklets is being developed by the Knights of Columbus Catholic Information Service. The new 19-part series will cover the basic themes of the New Evangelization and show that the New Evangelization is not a “new” Christian message, but rather a new presentation of the joy of the Gospel in all its transforming power. The first five installments are now available in print and online.

With members throughout North and Central America, we have given a high priority to promoting Pope John Paul II’s vision of a united hemisphere.

One of John Paul’s most important initiatives in the Western Hemisphere was the convening of the Synod for America in 1997. The synod brought together 41 cardinals, 98 bishops and 76 priests from throughout North and South America. Just over a year later, the pope traveled to the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City to present Ecclesia in America, his apostolic exhortation based on the synod.

Last December, on the 15th anniversary of that event, the Knights of Columbus had the opportunity to co-sponsor with the Pontifical Commission for Latin America a conference on Ecclesia in America at the Vatican.

Members of the hierarchy — together with priests, religious and lay people from North, Central and South America — gathered together on the feast of St. Juan Diego, Dec. 9, and met for three days, concluding on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. It was a great tribute to Blessed John Paul’s vision of the Americas as a single entity, and it focused on the need for authentic Catholic evangelization and cooperation among the countries of this most Catholic hemisphere.

It was a wonderful opportunity to present the challenges and opportunities facing the New Evangelization in America, just a few months before the
Anderson and his wife, Dorian. His wife, Anne, and Supreme Knight Carl Anderson received the Order’s highest honor, the Gaudium et Spes Award. He is shown with the relic of St. Juan Diego’s tilma after the unveiling in Mexico City last Friday.

In addition to the tilma relic, and as such, it is truly the home of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the United States.

And just a few days ago, in Brazil, the Knights of Columbus sponsored the English-language site at World Youth Day. Young people from throughout the English-speaking world came to the site at Vivo Rio, which was administered by the U.S. and Canadian bishops’ conferences, as an important part of their World Youth Day experience.

Locally, nationally and internationally, our Knights of Columbus councils and assemblies have provided extraordinary levels of support to their local churches during the past year.

True to our commitment to pastors since the time of Father McGivney, Knights have stepped up to help with parish projects large and small. At Council 3338 in Ciudad Guzmán, Mexico Central, brother Knights constructed a walkway, plaza and covered pavilion in front of the Church of San Martín. Where rocks and dirt had been before, they created something beautiful. In addition to manpower, Knights donated 15,000 pesos (approximately $1,100) toward the project.

These brother Knights were far from alone. Overall, Church donations from local and state councils totaled $49.5 million, of which $20 million went to church facilities, $7.4 million to Catholic schools, and $5.9 million to direct assistance for seminarians. Another $1.9 million went to the seminaries where our future priests prepare themselves for lives of service.

Pope John Paul II and Benedict XVI were both instrumental in the work of the Second Vatican Council, convened by Pope John XXIII in 1962. It was with the council as a backdrop that Pope Francis studied for the priesthood, and one of the major documents of the council was the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, titled Gaudium et Spes.

Some years later the Knights of Columbus established its highest honor: a special award presented to individuals who had particularly distinguished themselves in the service of the Church. The first Gaudium et Spes Award was given to Mother Teresa in 1992. Other recipients have included Jean Vanier, Cardinal John O’Connor as well as many well-known members of the hierarchy.

And last November, I had the pleasure of presenting this award to another well-deserving recipient — Past Supreme Knight Virgil Dechant. His dedication to the Church has lasted a lifetime, and his nearly three decades at the helm of our Order were a period of exceptional growth and accomplishment. Even in retirement, he has continued to serve the Church and this Order well.

As you know, there is a real need for television news programming for Catholics, because finding media coverage from an authentically Catholic perspective can be very difficult. So I am pleased to announce that the Knights of Columbus will be sponsoring EWTN’s newest show: EWTN News Nightly, with Colleen Carroll Campbell. The show will begin next month and I urge you to watch it. I have met the news team for this show, and they are impressive both in their Catholic identity and in their previous work with some of the biggest television networks in the world. For news from a Catholic perspective, there will be no better show for brother Knights and all Catholics to watch.

Last year, we also continued our support for Salt and Light television, helping to bring quality Catholic programming to Canada.

The past fraternal year has also given us the opportunity to cooperate with the American bishops in their campaign to preserve and protect religious liberty — through their many efforts, including Fortnight for Freedom — in the United States.

Leading this effort as chairman of the U.S. Bishop’s Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty is our supreme chaplain, Archbishop William Lori. He and his brother bishops have done excellent work in speaking out in defense of our First Amendment Right to religious liberty, which is a gift from God.

The stakes are high. Freedom of religion is often referred to as our “first freedom,” since it is the first right mentioned in the Bill of Rights. If religious freedom cannot be successfully defended in America, then no other freedom is safe. And the Knights of Columbus will always work alongside our bishops to protect this God-given right, enumerated in our country’s Constitution.

Election of the first pope from the American continent.

We were privileged to have Pope Benedict address our conference, and I think his words apply to each of us here as well:

A renewed missionary spirit and zealous generosity in your commitment will be an irreplaceable contribution to what the universal Church expects and needs from the Church in America.

In addition to our conference in Rome, our Guadalupe Celebration in Los Angeles last August brought the message of Our Lady of Guadalupe to tens of thousands of people. The City News Service estimated that 75,000 people filled the L.A. Memorial Coliseum for this prayerful afternoon in the presence of the relic of St. Juan Diego’s miraculous tilma, or cloak. Given to the Archdiocese of Los Angeles in the 1940s, it is the only known relic of the tilma in the United States.

Last fall, I returned to Los Angeles for the dedication of the newly renovated Guadalupe Chapel at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, the construction of which was co-sponsored by our Order. The chapel will be the permanent home for the tilma relic, and as such, it is truly the home of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the United States.

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When Father McGivney founded our Order in the basement of St. Mary’s Church, he and the men he gathered chose to identify as Knights of Columbus for a simple reason.

Columbus was the one Catholic hailed in the 19th century as an American hero for his discovery of the New World. Father McGivney and those first brother Knights chose that name to make clear that one could be a faithful Catholic and a good citizen.

Now, as then, we are called to be both good citizens and faithful Catholics. And we should not hesitate to point out that our faith makes us better citizens and that our society is a better place for the love and concern we have for our neighbors.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services so-called preventive services mandate, better known as the HHS mandate, is, unfortunately, only one of many legal and regulatory challenges that threaten the free exercise of religion in the United States and elsewhere around the world.

The First Amendment guarantees our free exercise of religion. Those who would banish religion from the public square have been relentless in attempting to persuade the courts to stand the First Amendment on its head and give it a meaning completely contrary to its original intent. We must lead by the example of the good that we do, and we must not be silent in speaking up for our rights. For in a democracy, silence is not good citizenship — it is the antithesis of it.

We must show the world that it is love that motivates us to help and protect the poor, the widow, the orphan, the intellectually disabled, the cold and the hungry. And it is that same love that motivates us to work to help and protect families, marriage and the unborn. Even those who may disagree with us should be honest enough to admit the consistency of our position, and even if they disagree with our positions, let them never impugn our motives. For our motivation is our Lord’s call to love of neighbor.

At our last annual meeting, I described our efforts to defend a monument that included a statue of Christ erected on Big Mountain in Whitefish, Mont., on land leased from the U.S. Forest Service. The Knights of Columbus and veterans of the Tenth Mountain Division erected the statue 60 years ago to honor the fallen soldiers of World War II. An anti-religious group from Wisconsin filed suit against the U.S. Forest Service, trying to force it to remove the statue. The Order intervened in the case, asking the federal court to vindicate the constitutional right of the Knights of Columbus to honor soldiers who had died for their country.

In late June, Federal District Judge Dana Christensen dismissed the lawsuit, holding that renewal of the permit for the monument, in his words, “does not constitute a
We continue to work to undo the HHS contraceptive mandate, which attempts to force us to violate our fundamental religious beliefs regarding abortion-inducing drugs, sterilization and contraception. I am confident that as has occurred already in many court cases, this ill-conceived mandate will ultimately be found unconstitutional. Our First Amendment right to religious freedom, which applies not only to Church institutions but to every believing individual in this country, protects us from having to violate our deeply held religious beliefs.

And even as we continue to defend our religious liberty from the HHS mandate, our pro-life initiatives reached a new milestone in July.

Our work to defend God’s gift of religious freedom is inseparable from our work as protectors of another of his many gifts — the gift of life.

Knights of Columbus members and their families were among the hundreds of thousands of attendees at the 2013 March for Life.

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I am pleased to report to you that through the Order’s Ultrasound Initiative the Knights of Columbus has now donated ultrasound machines to pregnancy resource centers in Canada, Jamaica and in all 50 of the United States. In less than five years, our ultrasound program — in which the Supreme Council and state and local councils share the cost of providing machines to pregnancy centers — has donated more than 380 machines worth $20 million, and this technology is saving lives every day.

Knights in Texas and Missouri are leading the way, with 31 and 29 ultrasound machines respectively, followed by Michigan with 25, California with 25 and Florida with 22.

The latest ultrasound technology provides a remarkably clear and vivid picture of the baby in the womb, and when a woman is able to see her child growing within her, the evidence suggests that she is much more likely to carry her child to term.

The Knights of Columbus has stepped in to meet this critical need, and in doing so we are helping to turn the tide in favor of life.

Each year since 2008, the Knights of Columbus-Mariist

Poll has sampled public opinion regarding abortion, going beyond the typical “are you pro-life or pro-choice” question that most polls use. If you ask people whether they would place limits on abortion, an overwhelming majority would do so. This year, our polling found that 83 percent of Americans favor significant restrictions on abortion, up four points from the previous year. Only 11 percent would allow abortion at any time, and only 6 percent would allow it during the first six months of pregnancy. The rest would favor restrictions far broader than those that exist in this country today.

In other words, laws like the one recently passed in Texas that protect an unborn baby after 20 weeks aren’t just a step in the right direction, they also resonate with more than 8 in 10 Americans. And this shouldn’t just be the law in Texas.

Until the day that Roe v. Wade is overturned and the right to life of everyone is respected, every state in the country should follow Texas’ lead by taking whatever steps they can to protect the unborn.

American public opinion is moving in favor of human life. And of course, we continue to call on our lawmakers to protect the life of all, born and unborn.

Once again, this year Knights of Columbus were extremely active in the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C., in January, and in similar events throughout the United States; in the Canadian March for Life in Ottawa in May, which I attended with Deputy
This is why our witness is so important.
This is why a charity that evangelizes is so important.

In each act of charity, we affirm the dignity of every human person, God’s love for each person and that there is a place for every person — that no one should be cast adrift, that we are all united.

In each act of charity we can speak these truths to the world in a way that words alone never can.

We cannot speak of the culture of life without also speaking of the family. As an Order founded from the beginning to protect the family, we will always continue to protect Catholic families and witness to an authentic, Catholic vision of the family.

Pope Francis’s new encyclical makes clear why our work to support marriage and family is so important. He writes this:

The first setting in which faith enlightens the human city is the family. I think first and foremost of the stable union of man and woman in marriage. This union is born of their love, as a sign and presence of God’s own love, and of the acknowledgment and acceptance of the goodness of sexual differentiation, whereby spouses can become one flesh (cf. Gen 2:24) and are enabled to give birth to a new life, a manifestation of the Creator’s goodness, wisdom and loving plan (52).

So, my brother Knights, our support for the family and for a culture of life is inescapable. Knights of Columbus have worked hard on behalf of both. The circumstances that threaten life or the family may change. Our work in support of them may have a different emphasis in one country or another. But the guiding principle remains the same: be protectors of God’s gifts — of life, of human dignity, of marriage and of the family.

The culture of life and civilization of love will not be built overnight. But we will continue to work day and night to build them through our example, our words and our prayers.

In Lumen Fidei, Pope Francis reminded us that the Lord is not only the Lord of individuals, but that he is the Lord of nations and of history. He quoted from the Letter to the Hebrews, which tells us that “God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them” (Heb 11:16).

Then Pope Francis asks a very dramatic question. He writes:

Could it be the case, instead, that we are the ones who are ashamed to call God our God? That we are the ones who fail to confess him as such in our public life? (55).

I do not know what answer others may make. But I feel confident today that I may answer this question on behalf of the Knights of Columbus.

We will never be ashamed to admit that all that we have that is good comes as gifts from the Lord. We will never be ashamed to call God our God or be ashamed of our determination to be one nation under God.

We will always remember the words of Pope Francis: “Faith illuminates life and society.” Faith makes us better citizens, better citizens make better nations, and better nations make a better world.

So let us go forward together as brother Knights, faithful Catholics and good citizens, renewed in our commitment and steadfast in our determination to be protectors of God’s gifts.

Vivat Jesus!

Supreme Knight Dennis Savoie; in Marches for Life throughout the Philippines in March; as well as in marches in three cities in Mexico and five in Poland. Many young people attend these marches, and it is a sign of hope that like us, the next generation will continue to work to protect the life of everyone — even the smallest and most helpless among us.

The Order was founded by Father McGivney to help those on the margins of society and to protect their dignity, livelihood and faith. That determination to be protectors of God’s gifts — of life, of human dignity, of marriage and of the family.

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This is why a charity that evangelizes is so important.

In each act of charity, we affirm the dignity of every human person, God’s love for each person and that there is a place for every person — that no one should be cast adrift, that we are all united.

In each act of charity we can speak these truths to the world in a way that words alone never can.

We cannot speak of the culture of life without also speaking of the family. As an Order founded from the beginning to protect the family, we will always continue to protect Catholic families and witness to an authentic, Catholic vision of the family.

Pope Francis’s new encyclical makes clear why our work to support marriage and family is so important. He writes this:

The first setting in which faith enlightens the human city is the family. I think first and foremost of the stable union of man and woman in marriage. This union is born of their love, as a sign and presence of God’s own love, and of the acknowledgment and acceptance of the goodness of sexual differentiation, whereby spouses can become one flesh (cf. Gen 2:24) and are enabled to give birth to a new life, a manifestation of the Creator’s goodness, wisdom and loving plan (52).

So, my brother Knights, our support for the family and for a culture of life is inescapable. Knights of Columbus have worked hard on behalf of both. The circumstances that threaten life or the family may change. Our work in support of them may have a different emphasis in one country or another. But the guiding principle remains the same: be protectors of God’s gifts — of life, of human dignity, of marriage and of the family.

The culture of life and civilization of love will not be built overnight. But we will continue to work day and night to build them through our example, our words and our prayers.

In Lumen Fidei, Pope Francis reminded us that the Lord is not only the Lord of individuals, but that he is the Lord of nations and of history. He quoted from the Letter to the Hebrews, which tells us that “God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them” (Heb 11:16).

Then Pope Francis asks a very dramatic question. He writes:

Could it be the case, instead, that we are the ones who are ashamed to call God our God? That we are the ones who fail to confess him as such in our public life? (55).

I do not know what answer others may make. But I feel confident today that I may answer this question on behalf of the Knights of Columbus.

We will never be ashamed to admit that all that we have that is good comes as gifts from the Lord. We will never be ashamed to call God our God or be ashamed of our determination to be one nation under God.

We will always remember the words of Pope Francis: “Faith illuminates life and society.” Faith makes us better citizens, better citizens make better nations, and better nations make a better world.

So let us go forward together as brother Knights, faithful Catholics and good citizens, renewed in our commitment and steadfast in our determination to be protectors of God’s gifts.

Vivat Jesus!
### Church

#### Vatican
- Apostolic Nunciature, Washington, D.C. $25,194
- Pontifical Academy for Social Sciences — conference "The Global Quest for Tranquility of Order" 25,000
- Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization — Symposium "Eclesia in America" 300,536
- Pontifical Council for Social Communications — Uplink project televising papal Midnight Mass and Easter Triduum liturgies 210,161
- Vatican website enhancements 215,000
- Papa Benedikt XVI — Vicarius Christi Fund 1,600,000
- Vatican Basilica Historical and Artistic Museum — Restoration of Tomb Pope Innocent VIII 53,000
- Vatican Secretariat of State, Communications Office 100,000
**TOTAL** $2,528,891

#### National Bishops Conferences
- Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops — Bishop de Laval Fund $45,016
- Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines — Pro-life initiative 228,306
- Mexican Bishops Conference — Papal visit to Mexico 209,445
- U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops — Diocesan Development Program for Natural Family Planning 200,000
**TOTAL** $682,767

#### Dioceses + Parishes + Clergy
- 50th International Eucharistic Congress, Dublin, Ireland $149,984
- Archdiocese of Bologna, Italy — Repairs to churches damaged by earthquake 126,380
- Archdiocese of Hartford, Conn. — Renovation of cathedral 250,000
- Archdiocese of Havana, Cuba — Papal visit 200,000
- Archdiocese of Leon, Mexico — Papal visit 71,980
- Archdiocese of Santiago, Cuba — Papal visit 125,000
- Association Diocesan Fréjus-Toulon, La Garde-Freinet, France — International Conference of the Sacred Liturgy 50,412
- Clergy support 448,876
- St. Coleman’s Society for Catholic Liturgy, Co., Cork, Ireland 18,734
- St. Mary’s Church, New Haven — Stipend for daily Mass for deceased members, spouses and Columbian Squires 7,240
- General support and renovations 224,439
- The Spiritual Family “The Work”, New York, N.Y. — Establishment of residence in NYC 75,000
**TOTAL** $1,748,045

#### Other Religious
- Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus $31,000
- Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious, Washington, D.C. 85,000
- Institute for Priestly Formation, Fargo, N.D. 75,000
- Institute on Religious Life, Chicago 25,000
- National Association of Diocesan Directors, Columbus, Ohio 30,000
**TOTAL** $45,500

### Programs
#### Marian Devotion
- Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C. — Broadcast of weekly mass to shut-ins $75,000
- Luke E. Hart Fund earnings 60,000
- Ushers ministry 33,169
- Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, Los Angeles, Calif. — Chapel for the time of St. Juan Diego 75,000
- Wounded Warriors pilgrimage to Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, France 50,000
**TOTAL** $293,169

#### Family Life
- Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops — Catholic Organization for Life and Family $275,000
- Family Institute of Connecticut 25,000
- Institute of the Family, Quebec 16,000
- Knights of Columbus Family Life Bureau — Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family, Washington, D.C. 1,600,481
- Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family, Rome — Project Latin America 100,000
- World Meeting of Families, Philadelphia 500,000
**TOTAL** $2,516,481

#### Pro-Life
- Be Not Afraid, St Mark Catholic Church, Huntersville, N.C. — Parents experiencing a prenatal diagnosis and carrying to term $50,000
- Birthright USA, Atlanta 40,000
- Cardinal Glennon Children’s Medical Hospital, St. Louis 50,000
- Citizens for Parental Rights, Tallahassee, Fla. 100,000
- Citizens for Religious Freedom, Tallahassee, Fla. 100,000
- Committee Against Assisted Suicide, Boston, Mass. 450,000
- Ethics and Public Policy Center, Washington, D.C. — Sponsor Tertio Millennio Seminar on the Free Society 65,000
- Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy, Washington, D.C. 50,000
- Human Life Foundation, New York, N.Y. 25,000
- Jérôme Lejeune Foundation USA, Stafford, Va. — Advancement of human rights for persons with disabilities 200,000
- Knights of Columbus Ultrasound Machine Reimbursement Program 1,893,315
- Life Athletes, South Bend, Ind. 100,000
- March for Life, Canada 27,000
- March for Life Education and Defense Fund, Washington, D.C. — Support for annual march 290,000
**TOTAL** $2,516,481

**Total Church Grants** $5,251,203

**Total Vatican** $291,500
Montanans for Parental Rights — Referendum for parental notification 75,000
National Catholic Bioethics Center, Philadelphia — Bishops’ workshop on medical-moral issues 350,000
National Life Center, Woodbury, N.J. 75,000
St. Gerard’s Center for Life, Hartford, Conn. 6,000
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops — Pro-Life Education 600,000
Vivre dans la Dignite, Beaconsfield, Quebec — Anti-euthanasia coalition 125,000
Walk for Life, San Francisco 25,000
TOTAL $4,696,315

V O C A T I O N S
Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA, Washington, D.C. — Chaplains vocations program $ 400,000
Bishop Thomas V. Daily Scholarship Fund — Scholarships granted 62,500
Canadian Pontifical College, Rome — Father Michael J. McGivney Fund 29,915
Cathedral Seminary House of Formation, Douglaston, N.Y. 15,000
Communion & Liberation’s retreat for priests 40,000
Diocese of Radom, Poland — Clergy scholarship 10,156
Knights of Columbus Vocations Scholarships 207,500
The Passionist Fathers — Seminary dormitory for Diocese of Jinja, Uganda 40,000
Philippine Scholarships — Father McGivney Fund for Advanced Studies for Priests from the Philippines
Study at the Pontifical Philippines College, Rome — Scholarships granted 60,000
Pontifical Mexican College, Rome — Our Lady of Guadalupe Fund 45,500
Pontifical North American College, Rome — Scholarships and general support (Count Enrico P. Galazzi Fund) 170,000
Promotional support of vocations 173,569
Refund Support Vocations Program (RSVP) — Refunds to Knights of Columbus units for grants to individual seminarians 672,480
St. Hesvin Seminary, Quebec, Canada 27,967
Seminary of the Immaculate Conception, Huntington, N.Y. 35,000
TOTAL $2,000,587

E V A N G E L I Z A T I O N
Archdiocese of Atlanta, Ga. — Eucharistic Congress $ 10,000
Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA, Washington, D.C. — “Armed With the Faith” prayer books 109,275
Catholic Distance University, Hamilton, Va. 50,000
Catholic Information Service — Administrative support 289,402
Catholic Information Service — Supported by per capita levy (Catholic Advertising Fund) 404,337
Catholic Leadership Institute, Wayne, Penn. 50,000
Diocese of Bridgeport — Lenten confession campaign 60,000
Dioceses of Richmond, Va. — Thomas More Society
Forum on Religion in the Public Square 8,000
Eparchia of Newton, West Roxbury, Mass. — Encounter 2012 7,500
Gospel of Life Conference, San Angelo, Texas 8,062
Guadalupe Radio Network, El Monte, Calif. 5,250
International Center for Study and Research at the Studium Generale Marcianum, Venice (ODASIS) 292,781
Knights of Columbus Gaudium et Spes Award — Virgil C. Dechant 100,000
KW Entertainment, Mexico City, Mexico — Catholic nightly news show 25,000
Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem — Proceeds of Pacem in Terris Fund 120,000
Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family, Rome — New Evangelization Conference “Ecclesia in America” 95,611
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops — Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberties 500,000
New Evangelization Conference 100,000
Villa Maria Guadalupe Retreat Center, Stamford, Conn. 1,121,186
TOTAL $3,357,394

TOTAL PROGRAMS GRANTS $12,863,946
TOTAL CHURCH AND PROGRAMS GRANTS $18,115,149

C O M M U N I T Y, E D U C A T I O N A L & C U L T U R A L
C O M M U N I T Y  P R O J E C T S
American Wheelchair Mission, Henderson, Nev. $ 250,000
Apostles of Jesus — Assistance and shelter for African AIDS orphans 350,000
Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, Washington, D.C. 326,000
BRCDT Catholic Sport, London, England — Paralympics conference 10,000
Caritas Philippines — Typhoon relief 30,000
Christopher Fund — Matching funds from Supreme Council 50,123
Connecticut Food Bank 20,000
Diocese of Sendai, Japan — Earthquake relief 20,000
Disaster Relief — Fires, floods, hurricanes, tornados in seven states 504,502
Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce 10,000
International Catholic Migration Council, Washington, D.C. 25,000
Knights of Columbus Food for Families Program 40,484
Market New Haven 25,000
Morality in Media, New York, N.Y. 100,000
National Catholic Office for the Deaf 15,000
National Catholic Partnership on Disability 100,000
New Haven Regional Leadership Council 10,000
Other amounts including community-based organizations 426,510
Special Olympics North America 40,484
St. Luke Institute, Silver Spring, Md. 25,000
United Way — Corporate gift 105,000
Veterans Administration Voluntary Service Partners, New Bern, N.C. 4,000
TOTAL $2,699,119

E D U C A T I O N A L
Academy of Our Lady of Mercy, Milford, Conn. — New Haven Catholic High School Fund $ 8,000
Albertus Magnus College, Hamden, Conn. 8,000
Black Catholic Education Foundation — Scholarships 21,250
Communio Review, Washington, D.C. 33,756
Foundation for the Advancement of Catholic Schools, Hartford, Conn. 10,000
TOTAL $3,357,394

TOTAL PROGRAMS GRANTS $12,863,946
TOTAL CHURCH AND PROGRAMS GRANTS $18,115,149
Council

Arthur F. and Anna Battista Scholarship Fund $103,657
Frank L. Doherty Scholarship Fund — Scholarships awarded $6,000
Anthony Labels Scholarship Fund $11,250
Francis P. Matthews and John E. Swift Educational Trust Fund $181,614
John W. McDevitt Scholarship Fund — Fourth Degree Fund $157,500
Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family at The Catholic University of America — Fellowship fund $12,250
Increase in fellowship endowment fund $5,000
Member Fraternal Benefits Program $645,000
Mexico Scholarships $8,000
Percy Johnson Scholarships $27,000
Philippine Scholarships $18,000
Pro Deo and Pro Patria Scholarships $260,850
Puerto Rico Scholarships $8,000
The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. — Seven fellowships $286,690
Virgil C. and Ann L. Dechant Scholarship Fund $13,500
Total $1,744,311

Total Council Grants $1,744,311

State/Local Units Contributions $136,601,843
Total Contributions $167,549,817
Total Hours of Volunteer Service 70,113,207

Supreme Council Contributions $30,947,974

Total General Support $73,395,189
### Vocation Endowment Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Corpus</th>
<th>Current Year Donations</th>
<th>Cumulative Donations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bishop Thomas V. Daily Vocations Scholarship Fund</td>
<td>$1,500,000</td>
<td>$63,500</td>
<td>$1,062,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count Enrico P. Galeazzi Fund for North American College in Rome</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
<td>170,000</td>
<td>4,016,216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father McGivney Fund for Advanced Studies for Priests in Puerto Rico</td>
<td>125,000</td>
<td>31,860</td>
<td>2,774,444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father Michael J. McGivney Fund for Advanced Studies by Priests from the Philippines</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>567,023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father Michael J. McGivney Fund for Advanced Studies for Priests in Canada (Pontifical Canadian College in Rome)</td>
<td>600,000</td>
<td>29,915</td>
<td>863,009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father Michael J. McGivney Vocations Scholarship Fund</td>
<td>5,000,000</td>
<td>186,250</td>
<td>4,367,952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father Michael J. McGivney Vocations Scholarship Fund (Canada)</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td>21,250</td>
<td>635,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knights of Columbus Vocations Fund (Canada) Refund Support Vocations Program (RSVP)</td>
<td>625,000</td>
<td>271,400</td>
<td>596,158</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knights of Columbus Vocations Fund (RSVP)</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
<td>645,000</td>
<td>10,522,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Our Lady of Guadalupe Fund — Advanced Studies for Priests in Mexico (Pontifical Mexican College in Rome)</td>
<td>700,000</td>
<td>45,500</td>
<td>794,203</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Vocation Endowment Funds</td>
<td>$18,350,000</td>
<td>$1,247,895</td>
<td>$23,447,171</td>
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</table>

### Education Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Corpus</th>
<th>Current Year Donations</th>
<th>Cumulative Donations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albertus Magnus College Fund</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
<td>$312,059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur F. and Anna Battista Scholarship Fund</td>
<td>1,584,495</td>
<td>103,657</td>
<td>1,151,976</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bicentennial of the U.S. Hierarchy Fund</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>3,117,619</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bishop Charles P. Greco Graduate Fellowship Trust Fund</td>
<td>105,000</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>70,582</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Catholic University of America Fellowships Fund</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>286,690</td>
<td>3,033,955</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estate of Anthony La Bella Fund</td>
<td>199,687</td>
<td>11,250</td>
<td>156,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estate of Percy Johnson Scholarship Fund</td>
<td>353,200</td>
<td>27,000</td>
<td>492,750</td>
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<tr>
<td>Father McGivney Memorial Fund for New Initiatives in Catholic Education Fund</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>271,400</td>
<td>2,774,444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Degree Pro Deo and Pro Patria (Canada) Scholarship Fund</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>1,231,751</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fourth Degree Pro Deo and Pro Patria Scholarship Fund</td>
<td>2,319,452</td>
<td>200,100</td>
<td>7,425,126</td>
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<tr>
<td>Francis P. Matthews and John E. Swift Educational Trust Fund</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>161,614</td>
<td>5,708,893</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frank L. Goularte Scholarship Fund</td>
<td>268,525</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>63,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family Fellowship Fund</td>
<td>1,333,015</td>
<td>12,250</td>
<td>124,350</td>
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<tr>
<td>John W. McDavitt (Fourth Degree) Scholarship Fund</td>
<td>3,124,804</td>
<td>157,500</td>
<td>2,358,750</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Haven Area Catholic High Schools Fund</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>24,000</td>
<td>715,348</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philippines Scholarships</td>
<td>18,000</td>
<td>31,341</td>
<td>221,341</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies Fund</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>7,046</td>
<td>231,607</td>
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<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico Scholarships</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>137,000</td>
<td>850,989</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Education Funds</td>
<td>$16,210,616</td>
<td>$1,233,857</td>
<td>$29,666,296</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Miscellaneous Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Corpus</th>
<th>Current Year Donations</th>
<th>Cumulative Donations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bishop de Laval Fund</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$46,000</td>
<td>$1,607,889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blessed John Paul II Shrine Fund</td>
<td>6,900,000</td>
<td>12,666,307</td>
<td>13,852,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Initiatives in Canada Fund</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>316,000</td>
<td>316,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Fund</td>
<td>22,650,749</td>
<td>1,266,307</td>
<td>13,852,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Degree Fund for Religious Liberties</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>12,788,650</td>
<td>12,788,650</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Charity Fund</td>
<td>764,619</td>
<td>96,199</td>
<td>96,199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian Welfare Fund</td>
<td>1,199,473</td>
<td>207,472</td>
<td>3,758,555</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luke E. Hart Memorial Fund for the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>1,790,930</td>
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<tr>
<td>Military Vocations Fund</td>
<td>900,000</td>
<td>2,324,964</td>
<td>2,324,964</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pacem in Terris Fund</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>1,380,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>United in Charity Fund</td>
<td>1,578,855</td>
<td>2,690,047</td>
<td>8,450,969</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vicarius Christi Fund</td>
<td>25,000,000</td>
<td>1,600,000</td>
<td>51,215,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Miscellaneous Funds</td>
<td>$63,143,696</td>
<td>$7,096,738</td>
<td>$111,646,209</td>
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### Fund Corpus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Corpus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$97,704,312</td>
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### Current Year Donation

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Donation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$9,578,490</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Total Cumulative Donations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Donations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$164,759,676</td>
</tr>
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## Financial & Fraternal Highlights

### Summary of Operations (In Millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year ended December 31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premiums and fees</td>
<td>$1,216</td>
<td>$1,157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Investment income</td>
<td>932</td>
<td>902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL REVENUE</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,148</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,059</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death and other benefits</td>
<td>$491</td>
<td>$488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in benefit reserves</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissions and expenses</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL BENEFITS AND EXPENSES</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,753</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,633</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gains Before Dividends</strong></td>
<td><strong>$395</strong></td>
<td><strong>$426</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Refunds to Members</strong></td>
<td><strong>$275</strong></td>
<td><strong>$353</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net gain from operations</td>
<td>$120</td>
<td>$73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net realized capital gains</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NET INCOME</strong></td>
<td><strong>$128</strong></td>
<td><strong>$81</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Summary of Financial Position (In Millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year ended December 31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonds and short-term investments</td>
<td>$17,131</td>
<td>$16,082</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contract loans</td>
<td>932</td>
<td>803</td>
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<tr>
<td>Common and preferred stocks</td>
<td>738</td>
<td>553</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other assets</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL ASSETS</strong></td>
<td><strong>$19,402</strong></td>
<td><strong>$18,027</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Benefit reserves</td>
<td>$16,733</td>
<td>$15,451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member refunds payable</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other liabilities</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL LIABILITIES EXCEPT AVR</strong></td>
<td><strong>$17,361</strong></td>
<td><strong>$16,165</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asset valuation reserve (AVR)</td>
<td>$205</td>
<td>$146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surplus</td>
<td>1,636</td>
<td>1,716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL SURPLUS AND AVR</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,041</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,862</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND SURPLUS</strong></td>
<td><strong>$19,402</strong></td>
<td><strong>$18,027</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Life Insurance issued</td>
<td>$8,116</td>
<td>$7,976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance certificates in force</td>
<td>1,333</td>
<td>1,172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Insurance in force</td>
<td>$88,368</td>
<td>$83,506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistency Rate</td>
<td>96.5%</td>
<td>96.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solvency Ratio (assets to liabilities)</td>
<td>110.5%</td>
<td>110.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Year Ended Dec. 31

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charitable Contributions</td>
<td>$167,549,817</td>
<td>$158,084,514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of Service</td>
<td>70,113,207</td>
<td>70,053,149</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### As of June 30

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Councils</td>
<td>14,606</td>
<td>14,377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>1,843,587</td>
<td>1,829,121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTES


7. Telegraph and Texas Register, March 28, 1837 (San Felipe), in Hansen, The Alamo, 201.
