Membership in the Knights of Columbus is open to men 18 years of age or older who are practical (that is, practicing) Catholics in union with the Holy See. This means that an applicant or member accepts the teaching authority of the Catholic Church on matters of faith and morals, aspires to live in accord with the precepts of the Catholic Church, and is in good standing in the Catholic Church.

Volunteers unload a shipment of 100,000 copies of Armed with the Faith at the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA. Since 2003, the Knights of Columbus has printed more than a half-million copies of the booklet, which is spiral-bound and specially designed for use by soldiers in the field. A home edition (#364) is available through the Order’s Catholic Information Service for Knights, veterans and military families.

**Honor Guard for Divine Mercy**
Admiral William S. Benson Assembly in Annapolis, Md., provided an honor guard for Mass on Divine Mercy Sunday at the Fort Meade chapel.

**Honoring A Sacrifice**

**WW II Veterans Honored**
In honor of the 65th anniversary of the end of World War II, Union (N.J.) Council 4504 arranged to have a U.S. flag flown over the USS Arizona memorial in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The flag was then transported to New Jersey, where it was presented to council veterans at a special ceremony. Twenty-one World War II veterans and their families attended the event, in addition to local resident Thomas Mahoney, who survived the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941.

**VA Remodel**
Michigan Fourth Degree District #2 began a program called “Operation: Patriotism” to help remodel and refurbish hospice care rooms at area VA facilities. Knights made an initial donation of $7,000 to remodel a room at the VA facility in Ann Arbor with new wallpaper, window dressings, a television and furniture.

**Hospital Help**
St. Joseph Council 4810 in Greenlawn, N.Y., assists with Mass at the Northport VA Medical Center every Sunday morning. Since 1969, Knights have accrued more than 57,000 volunteer hours at the hospital.

**Hero’s Breakfast**
St. Matthew Council 13012 in Topeka, Kan., held a charity breakfast to benefit Lt. Daniel B. Cnossen, a Navy SEAL who lost both legs after triggering a roadside bomb in Afghanistan. The event raised more than $4,400 to help Cnossen and his wife with additional expenses not covered by the military.

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Members of Padre Burgos Assembly in Manila, Luzon, stand at attention during a wreath-laying ceremony April 9 to commemorate Araw ng Kagitingan (“Day of Valor”). The annual event recalls both the Battle of Bataan during World War II and the subsequent Bataan Death March in which American and Filipino prisoners of war were forced to march from Bataan to Tarlac. In nearby Paranaque, Padre Pedro Dandan Assembly, Kagitingan Assembly and Our Lady of Buensuceso Assembly provided an honor guard for a similar ceremony.

Grand Knight Frank Pannocchia (right) of Father Vincent Capodanno Council 11958 at Marine Corps Base Quantico (Va.) presents Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA, with a check for $500. The funds will help support diocesan vocations. Archbishop Broglio is a member of Santo Tomas Apostol Council 12027 in Las Piedras, Puerto Rico.

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The families of Nebraska soldiers killed in action finally have something to celebrate, thanks in part to the lobbying efforts of a Knight of Columbus.

Bob Wolf of Father Timothy P. Molony Council 2681 in Scottsbluff, Neb., along with Pat Mracek of Hay Springs and a legion of supporters, were instrumental in getting the state to issue Gold Star Family license plates — special plates that commemorate loved ones killed while on active duty in the U.S. military.

Gov. Dave Heineman presented the first Gold Star plates to Wolf and Mracek in honor of the sons they lost in Iraq.

“I am honored,” Heineman said, “to present the first Gold Star plates to families whose loved ones helped defend our nation and who were instrumental in the creation of Nebraska’s Gold Star license plate.”

Bob Wolf and his wife, Chris, received the first numerical Gold Star plate in honor of their son, Spc. James Wolf, who was killed in Iraq in 2003. James was also a member of Council 2681 at the time of his death. Pat Mracek and her husband, Jim, received the first personalized plate in honor of their son, Cory, who was killed in Iraq a year later.

In a letter published in the Courier, the official newsletter of the Knights of Columbus Nebraska State Council, Bob Wolf wrote, “I asked my brother Knights in Nebraska to help me make this happen, and they responded with the fraternity that is the cornerstone of our brotherhood.”

Anyone demonstrating lineage to a veteran who died while in good standing during active military service with the United States is eligible to apply for Nebraska’s Gold Star plates. And fees from the plates will be used to operate the Nebraska Veteran Cemetery System.

Wolf, for one, knows that his son would have been proud. “The three things that he loved most were his family, the Army and the Knights.”

Protecting Troops, One Rosary at a Time

by Eddie O’Neill

Pat Evans, who heads up the organization, said that the idea for Ranger Rosaries first began as an activity for students. It has since grown to include 26 rosary-making groups and countless individuals from around the United States who are putting beads and crucifixes together for the troops.

She added that the rosaries provide an important faith connection between the troops and the Church, as well as a sense of comfort and protection.

Furthermore, there is no shortage of demand for the Ranger Rosary product. Popularly known as “combat rosaries,” chaplains have a variety colors to choose from. Handmade with durable parachute cord, the rosaries are available in olive green, black, desert camouflage and more. Included with each is a pamphlet on how to pray the rosary as well as scapulars, Divine Mercy booklets, and St. Michael the Archangel medals with prayer cards.

Evans says that these packets have been requested by all of the military academies, as well as the Coast Guard and the Merchant Marines.

“They all want these rosaries before their soldiers leave the academy and go into service” Evans said. “That shows you, too, what a reputation Our Lady has.”

For more information on the program, visit rangerrosary.com

Editor’s Note: A version of this article originally appeared in Our Sunday Visitor Nov. 15, 2009, and is reprinted here with permission.

A Nebraska Knight is instrumental in getting license plates in honor of fallen soldiers

by Patrick Scalisi

A Moving Tribute

Bob Wolf (far right) and his wife, Chris, stand with Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman during a special ceremony to inaugurate the Gold Star Family license plate program.

PATRICK SCALISI is the associate editor of Columbia magazine.