

FRATERNAL STRUCTURE

IN THE PAST 135 YEARS THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS HAS ENJOYED MANY SUCCESSES. THESE ARE A CREDIT TO THE UNIQUE STRUCTURE UNDER WHICH OUR ORDER OPERATES AND THE CALIBER OF MEN ATTRACTED TO OUR RANKS.

THE ORDER'S TIME-PROVEN STRUCTURE IS THE BASIS OF A STRONG AND EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION AT ALL LEVELS OF OPERATION (COUNCIL, DISTRICT, STATE AND SUPREME). IT ENCOURAGES MEMBER INVOLVEMENT IN A WIDE RANGE OF ACTIVITIES AND IS THE MECHANISM BY WHICH WE PROMOTE GROWTH IN MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT, NEW COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT, AND CHARITABLE OUTREACH.

FOUNDED BY THE VENERABLE MICHAEL MCGIVNEY, A PRIEST AT ST. MARY'S CHURCH IN NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT, THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS WAS CHARTERED AS A FRATERNAL BENEFIT SOCIETY ON MARCH 29, 1882. AS SUCH, IT PROVIDED FOR THE LIFE INSURANCE NEEDS OF ITS MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES AND PROMOTED FRATERNITY AND BROTHERHOOD THROUGH MANY CHARITABLE, EDUCATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS INVOLVEMENTS. IT CONTINUES TO DO SO TODAY.

THE ORDER OPERATES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAWS RELATING TO FRATERNAL BENEFIT SOCIETIES. THESE REGULATIONS REQUIRE A REPRESENTATIVE FORM OF GOVERNMENT COMPRISED OF A SUPREME OR LEGISLATIVE BODY AND SUBORDINATE BRANCHES. MEMBERS ARE ELECTED, INITIATED AND ADMITTED INTO THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS IN KEEPING WITH THE PROVISIONS OF ITS CHARTER, CONSTITUTION AND LAWS.

THERE ARE FOUR MAJOR LEVELS OF OPERATION IN THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS; THE SUPREME COUNCIL, THE VARIOUS STATE COUNCILS, DISTRICTS AND THE MORE THAN 15,000 SUBORDINATE LOCAL COUNCILS.

JUST AS ONE CLIMBS THE STEPS FROM THE GROUND FLOOR (WHICH SUPPORTS THE WHOLE STRUCTURE) SO IT IS WITH THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS. IN THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS THE FIRST STEP IS THE LOCAL COUNCIL.

CHARTERS ESTABLISHING LOCAL COUNCILS ARE GRANTED UPON SUBMISSION OF A ROSTER OF AT LEAST 30 MEMBERS OR APPLICANTS FOR MEMBERSHIP (20 FOR NEW COUNCILS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA). THE PRESIDING OFFICER IS THE GRAND KNIGHT. AS THE CHIEF OFFICER OF THE COUNCIL, HE IS

CHARGED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF OBSERVING THE LAWS OF THE ORDER IN HIS COUNCIL. IN ADDITION, THE GRAND KNIGHT IS THE CHOSEN LEADER OF HIS COUNCIL AND, AS SUCH, IS EXPECTED TO PROVIDE THE LEADERSHIP NEEDED.

TITLES OF OTHER OFFICERS ARE SIMILAR TO THOSE OFFICERS ON THE SUPREME AND STATE COUNCIL LEVEL, WITH SOME ADDITIONS. IN ALL THERE ARE 17 COUNCIL LEADERS, 12 OF WHOM ARE ELECTED ANNUALLY BY THE MEMBERSHIP. THREE ARE APPOINTED BY THE GRAND KNIGHT, INCLUDING A PROGRAM DIRECTOR AND MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR. THESE TWO DIRECTORS ARE GIVEN THE TASK OF IMPLEMENTING THE "FAITH IN ACTION" PROGRAM AND ENSURING MEMBERSHIP GROWTH IN THE COUNCIL. THEY APPOINT ADDITIONAL DIRECTORS (FAITH, COMMUNITY, FAMILY AND LIFE) WHO SUPERVISE THE VARIOUS COMMITTEES CHARGED WITH COUNCIL PROJECTS AS WELL AS MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION. EVERY NEW KNIGHT IS ENCOURAGED TO BECOME ACTIVE IN HIS COUNCIL BY SERVING ON ONE OR MORE OF THESE COMMITTEES.

"FAITH IN ACTION" IS A PROGRAM THROUGH WHICH LOCAL AND STATE COUNCILS CAN PUT INTO OPERATION MANY NEEDED

PROGRAMS BY UTILIZING THE TALENTS AND ABILITIES OF THE MEMBERSHIP. FLEXIBILITY ALLOWS LOCAL AND STATE SELECTION OF ACTIVITIES OF INTEREST TO THE MEMBERS. MANUALS AND HANDBOOKS ARE PROVIDED BY THE SUPREME COUNCIL TO THE KNIGHTS SELECTED FOR THE VARIOUS DIRECTOR POSITIONS, AND ARE ALSO AVAILABLE ON THE ORDER'S WEB SITE, KOFC.ORG.

AN INFORMED AND ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP IS THE GOAL OF EVERY COUNCIL. THE SERVICE PROGRAM IS A MEANS TO THAT END.

THE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR OVERSEES THE WORK NECESSARY FOR RETENTION OF MEMBERS AND RECRUITMENT OF NEW KNIGHTS. MAKING MEMBERS AWARE OF THE INSURANCE PROGRAM IS ANOTHER RESPONSIBILITY OF THE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR IN COOPERATION WITH THE COUNCIL'S PROFESSIONAL FIELD AGENT.

THE APPOINTMENT OF A COUNCIL CHAPLAIN AND A FINANCIAL SECRETARY COMPLETES THE ROSTER OF COUNCIL OFFICERS. THE RECOMMENDATION OF A COUNCIL CHAPLAIN BY THE GRAND KNIGHT, DEPUTY GRAND KNIGHT AND THE TRUSTEES MUST BE MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ANY RULES ESTABLISHED BY THE

BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE IN WHICH THE COUNCIL IS LOCATED. IT IS CUSTOMARY THAT THE BISHOP WILL ANNOUNCE THE APPOINTMENT AS SOON AS A SELECTION HAS BEEN MADE.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY IS APPOINTED BY THE SUPREME KNIGHT AND SERVES A TERM OF THREE YEARS AFTER WHICH AN EVALUATION OF HIS PERFORMANCE IN THE OFFICE WILL BE MADE BY THE GRAND KNIGHT AND TRUSTEES BEFORE CONSIDERATION CAN BE GIVEN TO REAPPOINTMENT TO ANOTHER TERM.

DISTRICTS

TO MAKE ADMINISTRATION EASIER AND TO PROMOTE INCREASED ACTIVITY, SUBORDINATE COUNCILS – GENERALLY FOUR TO FIVE WITHIN A GIVEN GEOGRAPHIC AREA – ARE FORMED INTO DISTRICTS, THE SECOND STEP OF OUR FRATERNAL STRUCTURE. A DISTRICT IS SUPERVISED BY A DISTRICT DEPUTY.

HIS RESPONSIBILITY IS TO OVERSEE ALL ASPECTS OF THE DISTRICT OPERATION, PARTICULARLY AS IT PERTAINS TO COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION, CHARITABLE OUTREACH AND MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT. THE DISTRICT DEPUTY SERVES A VERY IMPORTANT ROLE AS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SUPREME KNIGHT, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND THE STATE DEPUTY TO THE LOCAL

COUNCILS.

THE KNIGHT SELECTED AS A DISTRICT DEPUTY, USUALLY A PAST GRAND KNIGHT, IS AN INTELLIGENT, REPRESENTATIVE CATHOLIC WHO IS RECOGNIZED IN THE COMMUNITY AS AN OUTSTANDING LEADER. HE INSPIRES IN THE MEMBERSHIP JUSTIFIABLE PRIDE IN THE ORDER AND ITS OFFICERS.

THE DISTRICT DEPUTY IS A PERSON THOROUGHLY FAMILIAR WITH THE PROGRAMS OF THE SUPREME AND THE STATE COUNCILS AND IS ALWAYS READY AND WILLING TO INTERPRET THESE PROGRAMS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE COUNCILS IN HIS DISTRICT. THE DIRECTION THAT COUNCILS TAKE IN PROGRAMMING AND MEMBERSHIP PROMOTION DEPENDS IN A LARGE PART ON THE GUIDANCE OFFERED BY THE DISTRICT DEPUTY. FOR THE ORDER TO ACHIEVE ITS GOALS, COUNCILS MUST BE SUPPORTED WHOLEHEARTEDLY BY THE DISTRICT DEPUTY.

STATE COUNCIL

THE THIRD STEP IN THE PYRAMID ARE THE JURISDICTIONS KNOWN AS STATE COUNCILS. THESE ENCOMPASS MORE THAN 15,000 SUBORDINATE COUNCILS TO WHICH OVER 1.9 MILLION MEMBERS BELONG. BOTH MEMBERSHIP AND COUNCIL GROWTH

HAVE SHOWN SIGNIFICANT GAINS, PARTICULARLY OVER THE PAST 30 PLUS YEARS.

THE STATE COUNCILS ARE MADE UP OF THE STATE DEPUTY AND THE OTHER STATE OFFICERS (CHAPLAIN, SECRETARY, TREASURER, ADVOCATE AND WARDEN), THE LAST LIVING PAST STATE DEPUTY, THE GRAND KNIGHT AND A PAST GRAND KNIGHT FROM EACH LOCAL COUNCIL IN THE JURISDICTION. THE STATE COUNCIL MEETS ANNUALLY TO ELECT A SLATE OF OFFICERS HEADED BY THE STATE DEPUTY, ELECT DELEGATES TO THE SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING, AND CONDUCT THE BUSINESS OF THE ORDER WITHIN THE JURISDICTION.

THE STATE DEPUTY IS THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE ORDER IN HIS JURISDICTION. AS SUCH, HE IS CHARGED WITH THE DUTY OF ENFORCING THE LAWS AND POLICIES, AND PROMOTING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE ORDER IN HIS JURISDICTION. HE PRESIDES AT ALL MEETINGS OF THE STATE COUNCIL AND IS AN EX-OFFICIO MEMBER OF ALL COMMITTEES OF THE STATE COUNCIL. IN ADDITION, HE HOLDS ALL THE RIGHTS AND POWERS GRANTED BY THE LAWS OF THE ORDER TO DISTRICT DEPUTIES.

AT THE ANNUAL STATE CONVENTION, THE STATE DEPUTY

MAKES A WRITTEN REPORT ON THE CONDITION OF THE ORDER IN THE JURISDICTION AND DELIVERS THE REPORT ORALLY DURING THE FIRST OFFICIAL SESSION OF THE MEETING.

THE STATE DEPUTY IS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND THE SUPREME KNIGHT AND HAS SUPERVISION OVER ALL OF THE LOCAL COUNCILS WITHIN HIS JURISDICTION. THE SUCCESS, THEREFORE, OF THE ORDER'S PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE DEPENDS UPON HIS TALENT, ENERGY AND DEVOTION TO THE DUTIES OF THE OFFICE.

SUPREME COUNCIL

THE SUPREME COUNCIL, THE ORDER'S TOP LEGISLATIVE BODY, IS COMPOSED OF THE SUPREME OFFICERS (SUPREME KNIGHT, SUPREME CHAPLAIN, DEPUTY SUPREME KNIGHT, SUPREME SECRETARY, SUPREME TREASURER, SUPREME ADVOCATE, SUPREME PHYSICIAN AND SUPREME WARDEN), SUPREME DIRECTORS AND LIVING PAST SUPREME KNIGHTS. DIRECTORS ARE ELECTED FOR THREE-YEAR TERMS BY DELEGATES TO THE ANNUAL SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING. SUPREME COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP ALSO INCLUDES THE STATE DEPUTY AND THE LAST LIVING PAST STATE DEPUTY OF EACH

STATE COUNCIL AND SUCH DELEGATES AS ARE DULY CHOSEN BY THE STATE COUNCILS.

EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY IS VESTED IN THE SUPREME OFFICERS WHO ARE ELECTED ANNUALLY BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

EACH YEAR BEGINNING ON THE FIRST TUESDAY IN AUGUST, THE ANNUAL SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING IS HELD. AT THE SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING, THE DELEGATES ELECTED AT THE VARIOUS STATE CONVENTIONS DISCUSS AND DECIDE WHAT PROJECTS, ADDITIONAL LAWS, OR ACTIVITIES WILL BENEFIT THE ORDER'S MEMBERSHIP. THE DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURE OF THE ORDER ALSO PROVIDES THAT NON-DELEGATE MEMBERS MAY ATTEND THE SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING, ALTHOUGH THEY MAY NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCEEDINGS. THIS PRIVILEGE IS RESERVED TO THE ELECTED DELEGATES, WHO ARE THE STATE AND LOCAL COUNCIL VOICE AT THE MEETING.

AT EACH ANNUAL SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING, THE SUPREME COUNCIL ELECTS EIGHT INSURANCE MEMBERS TO SERVE AS DIRECTORS FOR A TERM OF THREE YEARS EACH. AS PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS CONSISTS

OF TWENTY-FOUR INSURANCE MEMBERS, THE SUPREME CHAPLAIN, AND LIVING PAST SUPREME KNIGHTS.

ANNUALLY, AT ITS FIRST REGULAR MEETING HELD ON OR AFTER SEPTEMBER 1, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTS A SUPREME CHAPLAIN AND A SUPREME WARDEN. AT THIS SAME MEETING, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPOINTS THE SUPREME KNIGHT, THE DEPUTY SUPREME KNIGHT, THE SUPREME SECRETARY, THE SUPREME TREASURER, THE SUPREME ADVOCATE AND THE SUPREME PHYSICIAN FROM THEIR OWN RANKS. THESE SUPREME OFFICERS SERVE FOR A TERM OF ONE YEAR.

THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS HAS A PROUD HISTORY OF ACHIEVEMENT DUE IN NO SMALL PART TO ITS STRUCTURE – A STRUCTURE THAT INVITES AND MOTIVATES MEMBERS ON ALL LEVELS OF OPERATION. THE RESULTS OF THE ANNUAL FRATERNAL SURVEY ATTEST TO THIS. THE EXTENT TO WHICH OUR ORDER AND ITS MEMBERS INVOLVE THEMSELVES BOTH IN DOLLAR CONTRIBUTIONS AND IN HOURS OF LABOR VOLUNTEERED REFLECTS POSITIVELY ON OUR STRUCTURE. THE ORDER CONTINUES TO GROW AND WILL DO SO IN THE FUTURE - THANKS

TO OUR STRUCTURE AND THE MEN WHO ARE A PART OF IT ALL!

VIVAT JESUS!