Knights Fill Mary’s House for Year of Faith Pilgrimage
Celebration Marks 50th Anniversary of Knights Tower Carillon

On Sunday, Sept. 8, nearly 4,500 Knights and their families and friends traveled to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. Filling the Great Upper Church of the nation’s preeminent Marian shrine, they gathered for the Year of Faith Pilgrimage as music from the 56-bells of the Knights Tower Carillon called them to prayer.

The pilgrims joined Supreme Knight Carl Anderson and Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William Lori of Baltimore, together with other K of C leaders and guests, at “America’s Catholic Church” to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Knights Tower Carillon and to reconsecrate the Order to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

An honor guard of approximately 500 Fourth Degree Knights led the opening procession for the Solemn Mass, which was celebrated by Archbishop Lori and concelebrated by Archbishop Gérald Cyprien Lacroix of Quebec, primate of Canada, among others. Immediately following Mass, a prayer program commenced that included exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, a Marian meditation led by Archbishop Lacroix, the recitation of the rosary, remarks by the supreme knight, and an act of reconsecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary led by the supreme chaplain and supreme knight.

Sept. 8 traditionally marks the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, nine months after the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception.

Archbishop Lori began his homily by noting the relevance of Jesus’ words in the Gospel reading, which seemed “tailor-made for this occasion”: “Which of you wishing to construct a tower does not first sit...
down and calculate the cost to see if there is enough for its completion?” (Lk 14:28).

The 329-foot Knights Tower, funded by a $1 million grant from the Order and completed in 1959, together with its 56-bell carillon that was dedicated on Sept. 8, 1963, has a symbolic purpose, the supreme chaplain said. “I would submit that the Knights Tower should be seen as a tower of faith that rises in our midst as sign and symbol of the Church’s faith.”

Citing Pope Francis’ first encyclical, Lumen Fidei (The Light of Faith), Archbishop Lori proceeded to cite several ways that the Knights Tower is “an apt symbol for the faith that we profess.” For instance, it is built on a solid foundation, just as Christians are called to firmly establish their faith on the truth (cf. Lk, 23). While “faith knows because it is tied to love” (26), the tower also represents the Knights’ works of charity as they “bear witness to the truth of God’s love.” Moreover, just as faith involves hearing and seeing (cf. 29), the Knights Tower “directs our gaze and lifts our spirits upward,” and “the bells open our ears to the Word of God.” Finally, the “structural unity and integrity” of the tower evokes the unity and “communion of the Church” as well as the “interconnected elements” of the faith (cf. 38, 46).

After Mass, Archbishop Lacroix led the congregation in prayer and meditation before the Blessed Sacrament. The recitation of the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary followed, with the decades being led by state deputies from throughout the East Coast who traveled to the Basilica with delegations from their state councils.

Supreme Knight Anderson echoed the supreme chaplain’s sentiments in his remarks: “Just as the carillon of the Knights Tower sends beautiful music into our nation’s capital and reminds all who hear it of this place of God, our lives as Catholics and as Knights of Columbus must also reach out to enrich others and remind them of Our Lord’s presence among us.”

The Supreme Knight went on to speak about the significance of Mary’s title as the Immaculate Conception, which he said is reflected not only in the patronage of the National Shrine but also in the home parish of Venerable Michael McGivney, the founder of the Knights of Columbus.

“Our Lord sees and loves and saves Mary before she had free will, before she could speak, before she could breathe, before her parents were even aware of her existence,” Anderson said. “And thus Mary, the Immaculate Conception, is the paragon of human dignity. Because, in reaching out to Mary with extraordinary grace while still in the womb, God reminds us that our dignity comes to each of us as a gift from the Creator.”

The supreme knight further noted that a two-year Orderwide Marian Prayer Program dedicated to the Immaculate Conception was inaugurated Aug. 7 at the Supreme Convention in San Antonio. The program features a painting of Our Lady that hangs above the main altar in the Basilica-Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Quebec, the primatial church of Canada. A large reproduction was on display at the foot of the basilica’s sanctuary during the pilgrimage.

Before the final benediction, Archbishop Lori prayed an act of reconsecration of the Knights of Columbus to Mary. In part, the prayer read: “O Mother of the human family, Mother of America, and Mother of the Knights of Columbus, we confidently entrust ourselves and our families to you. … Obtain for us strong faith and the grace of eternal salvation. Pray that we might be dedicated entirely to your Son. We pray that by your motherly care our Order and our hearts, newly consecrated, and belonging totally to God, may be a special portion for Him, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”

The carillon’s largest bell (or bourdon), which is known as the Mary Bell, sounded after Supreme Knight Anderson led the congregation in praying the Sub Tuum Praesidium, a prayer to Mary from the first centuries. Weighing 7,200 pounds, the Mary Bell features fleurs-de-lis, the emblem of the Order, and the inscription: “MARY IS MY NAME / MARY IS MY SOUND / BELOVED MOTHER / QUEEN OF HEAVEN AND EARTH / QUEEN OF THIS DEAR LAND / FOR KNIGHTS TO GOD AND COUNTRY BOUND / AND ALL WHO HEAR MY VOICE / I SING THE PRAISES OF GOD.”

Finally, Archbishop Lacroix invited all those present to consider making another pilgrimage in 2014 to his home diocese of Quebec. The year will mark the 350th anniversary of the historic parish of Notre-Dame de Quebec, the mother parish of Canada and the United States.

Also among the special guests and dignitaries present for the Mass and prayer program was Cardinal William Baum, a former archbishop of Washington. It was Cardinal Baum’s predecessor, Cardinal Patrick O’Boyle, who presided at the inauguration of the Knights Tower Carillon in 1963. On that occasion, Cardinal O’Boyle declared, “To the members of the Knights of Columbus, in the name of all the bishops of the United States, I say we are deeply grateful for this wonderful gift. Long after we are gone, this tower and these bells will be paying honor to God and to his Mother.”

Indeed, although the Year of Faith Pilgrimage was a special occasion of prayer and celebration, the bells of the Knights Tower Carillon sound numerous times each day, welcoming pilgrims from near and far to Mary’s House.

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.
The Mysteries of the Rosary

In the rosary, Mary leads us to her son as we meditate on the mysteries of salvation.

Archbishop William E. Lori
Supreme Chaplain

Reprinted from the November 2011 issue of Columbia.

From time to time, I stop by the Knights of Columbus headquarters to bless rosaries for distribution to members and their families. These rosaries include the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe and the K of C emblem, which invite us to invoke the patroness of our Order and to pray for one another in a spirit of charity, unity and fraternity.

The rosary is always in season, for it helps us enter more deeply into the central mysteries of our faith that we celebrate in the liturgy throughout the year.

To begin, let us first recall what John Paul II taught us about the rosary itself. Toward the end of his papacy, he issued an apostolic letter titled *Rosarium Virginis Mariæ* (*The Rosary of the Virgin Mary*). We can draw from it a deeper understanding of the rosary, along with a renewed resolve to pray it each day and to teach our families to do the same.

CONTEMPLATING THE CREED

We begin the rosary by holding a small crucifix in our hands while praying the Apostles’ Creed. This is a clue to the whole meaning of the rosary, a prayer that contemplates all that Christ did for our salvation. The Creed is not only a summary of the foundational truths of our Catholic faith; it is also a proclamation of God’s saving deeds, revealed and accomplished by Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. Praying the Creed, we should echo the Blessed Virgin Mary’s song of praise: “The Almighty has done great things for me and holy is his name!” (Lk 1:49).

Next, we move to the first bead separated from the crucifix by several links. Here we pray the Our Father to become like the Christ of the Beatitudes. No one can help us pray as Jesus taught better than Mary, for she perfectly embodied the kingdom of God and shared most fully in his saving mission.

There follows three beads grouped together, prompting us to pray the Hail Mary, in turn, for an increase in faith, hope and love — the theological virtues that are given to every Christian in baptism. In the rosary, we ask Mary’s intercession to grow in these foundational virtues and thereby prepare us to encounter the mysteries of the rosary — events pertaining to the life of Christ by which God’s hidden plan of salvation was revealed.

After the initial prayers and after each decade, consisting of 10 Hail Marys each, we pray the Glory Be. This prayer expresses adoration, praise and thanksgiving to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and serves to remind us that the mysteries of the rosary are the work of the Trinity. By meditating on these mysteries in the company of Mary, we are drawn more deeply into God’s own life and love.

Following the Glory Be that concludes each decade, it is common to add the Fatima Prayer, given during the apparitions of Mary in Fatima, Portugal, in 1917: “O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, lead all souls to heaven, especially those in most need of thy mercy.” This prayer reminds us that we always experience God’s love as mercy, as throughout the rosary we meditate on all God planned and accomplished in order to save us. In doing so, we are aided by Mary, the Mother of Mercy, as we ask her to “pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.”

TO JESUS THROUGH MARY

In many of these mysteries that we contemplate as we pray each decade of the rosary, the Blessed Virgin Mary has played a visible role. In others, Mary is perhaps less visible but no less present. But in each case, Mary leads us to Jesus. In other words, the rosary is a Christological prayer: It is seeing Christ through the eyes of Mary and entering into her memory, where the events of Jesus’ life were kept and understood like nowhere else. In the rosary, we call upon Mary to help us meditate on the mysteries and events in salvation history that has given us new life in Christ.

With the introduction of the Luminous Mysteries in *Rosarium Virginis Mariæ*, Blessed John Paul II recommended a new daily pattern for meditation on the mysteries of the rosary: On Monday and Saturday, the Joyful Mysteries — the Annunciation, Visitation, Nativity of Our Lord, Presentation and Finding in the Temple. On Thursday, the Luminous Mysteries — the Baptism of Our Lord, Wedding Feast at Cana, Proclamation of the Kingdom, Transfiguration and Institution of the Eucharist. On Tuesday and Friday, the Sorrowful Mysteries — the Agony in the Garden, Scourging at the Pillar, Crowning with Thorns, Carrying of the Cross and Crucifixion. And on Sunday and Wednesday, the Glorious Mysteries — the Resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost, Assumption and Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

After the final mystery, we pray the Salve Regina, or Hail Holy Queen. This prayer, which dates back to the Middle Ages, begs the intercession of Mary, our Queen and Mother, in a heartfelt plea. The rosary itself concludes with a prayer that we may “imitate what [the mysteries of the rosary] contain and obtain what they promise.” Conformed to Christ with the help of Mary’s prayers, we live in hope of heaven’s joy.

Knights of Columbus Rosaries

Knights of Columbus rosaries are available in either black (ROSE 1, Black) or mother of pearl (PG-157) at a price of $3 each or $2.50 per rosary when ordering 50 or more. To order please contact the Supply Department at 203-752-4213 or visit knightsgear.com (Religious and Liturgical items).
where he heard a strong call to discern a priestly vocation. He entered the Dominican Order in 1996, was ordained in 2003 and received a licentiate in sacred theology the following year from the Dominican House of Studies.

Over the years, he served as the chaplain of the two councils he helped to found on the campuses of Quinnipiac University and Dartmouth College, where he served in campus ministry. He also helped to start a council at George Washington University when he was a seminarian in Washington, D.C.

In a recent interview, Father Kalisch outlined plans for his new position.

Q: You have been involved as a leader in four local councils. How does it feel to take on this new challenge at the Supreme Council?

Father Kalisch: There is for me an incredible sense of joy and hope for what we as chaplains on the state and local levels can do for the Order and for the lives of our brother Knights. When I was campus minister at Quinnipiac University, I lived at St. Mary’s in New Haven and first got a personal sense of the life and vision of Father McGivney. Sometimes I would celebrate the daily 7:30 a.m. Mass, which is offered for all deceased Knights and their families, and of course the remains of Father McGivney are interred in the church. Now that I am returning to New Haven, I have a strong sense of following in the footsteps of Father McGivney, working at the Supreme Council of the Order that he founded. He knew the men and families of his time and responded to their needs and challenges, and it is humbling to think that we chaplains have the opportunity to continue that legacy of serving Catholic men and their families in our own times.

Q: Is there a unique Knights’ spirituality?

Father Kalisch: I think the genius of Father McGivney is that he understood that men find their spirituality mainly through activity, so he formed the Knights on the active principles of charity and unity, which leads to fraternity. Men bond best when they work for a common cause, so there is always a strong service element in the Order — what we recognize as a charity that evangelizes. As we work to build communion, we know that the ultimate communion is found around the eucharistic table. So I would say that the foundation of a Knights of Columbus spirituality is the Eucharist. Then, along with that, we have the Order’s fervent and filial devotion to the Blessed Mother, as seen in the many Marian Prayer Programs that have been held over the years, knowing that Mary always leads us to her Son. As Knights, our faith and spirituality are never simply individualistic. We are men of the Church, men of fraternity, men of families and communities. We are called to a spirituality of leadership and service that is proper to our state in life.

Q: What message you would like to send the chaplains of the Order?

Father Kalisch: First I want to say that I am here to serve both my fellow chaplains and my brother Knights. Most of all, I welcome feedback and input from chaplains so that together we can continue to build the role of the chaplain and develop his service within the councils. I have been praying for a deeper understanding of what Pope Francis has said about going out to people on the periphery of the Church, of the community, of the culture, and I think the Knights offer all of us an opportunity to put that vision into practice. If I have anything to say to my fellow chaplains, it would be to make sure that they engage their brother Knights and help bring them closer to the heart of the Church, where they can thrive and serve, where they can become truly free, men of faith and a source of grace for others. We have before us a great opportunity to touch the lives of so many Catholic men and their families; we simply need to reach out through the Knights to make a good Catholic better or bring a wandering Catholic back to the fold. As we build the spiritual foundation of every council, of every Knight, I think we will see the positive effect in our parishes, in the Church and beyond into our communities and the culture as a whole. It’s quite exciting, and humbling, to think about the work that God can do through our chaplains.