The Gift of Sharing

Supreme Knight Carl Anderson joined Connecticut Knights as well as firefighters and police from New Haven, Conn., to give out new winter coats to children in need at John S. Martinez Magnet School. The event served as a kickoff for a K of C initiative that will supply police and fire department personnel with children’s winter coats, which they can then distribute during their workdays.

“I want to thank the dedicated men and women of our community police and fire departments, and the teachers here, for your dedicated service to make a difference in the future of our children,” Supreme Knight Anderson said. “This initiative, and those like it, strengthens the links with those who need help. That’s what today is all about. That is what makes our community great. All of us here remember a time when someone reached out to us, when someone shared with us.”

“Someday, you will do the same,” he added to the children present for the event.

Principal Myrna Montalvo also spoke to the students, saying, “We want to thank our friends here today, who did all this fantastic work to give you this gift, the gift of sharing.”

Police Lt. Sam Brown, who helped start the co-sponsored program last year with the help of State Deputy Thomas Vita, also attended the event. Lt. Brown shared how happy he was that the New Haven Police, and now the New Haven Firefighters, were involved in this initiative.

Police Chief Dean Esserman agreed, saying, “Police and firefighters have big hearts and compassion, and that’s what makes them great police and firefighters. This is a remarkable program by the Knights of Columbus, and it shows that they care deeply about the community.”

In Connecticut 4,680 coats were distributed this year in 35 communities, including New Haven, Bridgeport, Stamford, Hartford, Waterbury, Groton and New London, where more than 2,000 coats were given to children during the state’s successful Black Friday distributions.

Scoring for Charity

One week before Super Bowl Sunday, Knights of Columbus from California and the Supreme Council joined Football Hall of Famers Anthony Muñoz and Dave Casper, and several other coaches and players, to distribute coats to students at an inner-city Catholic grammar school in San Francisco.

More than 270 students at Our Lady of the Visitation school received new coats as part of this event, which was sponsored by the Knights of Columbus, Catholic Athletes for Christ, the Raiders Foundation, the Jack Del Rio Foundation and the Anthony Muñoz Foundation. Among the Knights of Columbus attending the event were members of Church of the Visitacion Council 12683, Supreme Advocate John Marrella, Supreme Director James Scroggin, California State Deputy Ed Huestis and Past State Deputy Ray Warriner.

“It’s a great blessing for young people to see these outstanding professional athletes and coaches who have competed successfully in the NFL and who are not ashamed to say that the most important thing in their life is their faith in Jesus Christ,” said Supreme Advocate John Marrella.

Grand Knight Checklist – March & April

- Remember these upcoming dates:
  - April 10 — Suspension date for councils failing to submit the Per Capita Tax and Catholic Advertising Fund assessments to the Supreme Council. Failure to pay the assessments prior to April 10 will result in suspension of the council. A suspended council may not be seated at their state convention, nor are its members eligible to be delegates to the Supreme Convention.
  - If your council has not yet done so, submit the Survey of Fraternal Activity (#1728).
  - Make sure your council is on the path to earning the Star Council Award.
Family of the Year and Service Program Entries

If you haven't yet done so, please submit your Family of the Year entry and other Service Program entries to your state council. Before sending the entries, confirm that your jurisdiction's deadline hasn't passed. The deadlines occur sometime before your state conventions, which take place April 1-May 29, 2016.

When preparing your council's Service Program Awards entries remember that the activity must have been held during the current fraternal year to qualify. Likewise, only one activity may be submitted per category. Awards are based upon one project or activity conducted by the council, rather than a series of activities in a particular section of the Service Program. If you are unsure of the category, refer to the Service Program chart in the Surge...with Service manual (#962), as entries in the wrong category risk being disqualified. Also disqualified are late entries — the best of programs don't have a chance if received after the deadline and your jurisdiction's judging has taken place.

When preparing an entry, be sure to explain the following:

- Nature of the activity. Does it demonstrate the objectives of the Service Program?
- Participation of membership. How many members participated? What percentage of your council's membership participated?
- Results. How did the results affect the Church, community, council, family, culture of life or youth? Did your council itself benefit from sponsoring the project?
- Program originality. Was the program something new?

Supreme Knight Carl Anderson and his wife, Dorian, join Archbishop William Lori and Michigan State Deputy Robert W. Fox and his wife, Sandra, in honoring the Weingartz family as the 2015 International Family of the Year.

Knights Serve as Leaders at International Eucharistic Congress

One year after Pope Francis made his historic visit to the Philippines, the nation hosted another major event — the 51st International Eucharistic Congress in Cebu City, Jan. 24-31.

The Knights of Columbus has more than 350,000 members in the predominantly Catholic country, where the Order began operations in 1905. Hundreds of Knights served as delegates to the congress, and many others were key figures in the Masses, presentations, processions and publicity for the weeklong event.

In addition, the Supreme Council was a major sponsor of the congress, providing funding for the satellite uplink that broadcast the proceedings worldwide. The Order also funded the printing of a daily newspaper and other media materials, provided for free to all participants.

The congress opened with the arrival of Pope Francis' personal envoy to the event, Cardinal Charles Bo of Yangon, Myanmar, who offered Mass for tens of thousands of people at Cebu's Independence Plaza.

Bringing together some 15,000 official delegates from around the world, the International Eucharistic Congress also featured presentations by clergy and leading theologians, catechetical sessions for various age groups, youth rallies and visits to local parishes. Charitable programs were also held to aid the poor, the imprisoned and those still suffering from the devastating effects of Typhoon Haiyan, which struck the area in November 2013.

The official host of the congress, Archbishop José Palma of Cebu, has been a member of the Knights for nearly 40 years. He issued a closing statement: “We are convinced that the Holy Spirit sends us forth in order to proclaim the story of Jesus. This congress is like the gathering of the early disciples when they joyfully shared stories of how each of them encountered the risen Lord in the Scripture and in the breaking of the Bread.”

A large contingent of Fourth Degree Knights from throughout the Philippines lead the eucharistic procession through the streets of Cebu City on Jan. 29.
A s Lent comes to a close, Christians around the world reflect on the suffering and death of Christ through various meditations, prayers and liturgies. These devotions help us understand the depth of Christ’s love, the love which supported the heavy burden of his cross.

Many still carry the burden of the cross. In Iraq and Syria, anti-Christian violence has reached unimaginable dimensions, with men, women and children forcibly removed from their homes, tortured, raped and even crucified simply because they are Christian. This campaign of “religious cleansing” has terrorized not only Christian communities but also other religious minorities in the region. As many flee to refugee camps, others find no escape, with estimates that one Christian is killed every hour every day.

Many simply don’t know of the persecution faced by these people, and many who do ignore their cries for help.

Help their voices be heard by hosting a three-day Solidarity Cross Campaign (from Good Friday to Easter Sunday) to raise awareness and financial assistance for persecuted Christians and other religious minorities.

First, order 5-inch olive wood crosses ($5 each, minimum order of 10) crafted by Christians in the Holy Land. Then obtain permission from your chaplain or pastor to sell the crosses to local parishioners before or after Holy Week services. While selling the crosses, share the story of the Christians’ tragic plight, and share how the sale of each and every cross strengthens our ability to provide them with financial support and humanitarian assistance. These crosses also serve as a daily reminder to pray for our suffering brothers and sisters in the faith.

Crosses should be sold for a suggested donation of $10. For details on ordering the crosses, please contact the Supply Department.

Once your sales are complete, send the net proceeds to the Christian Refugee Relief Fund by visiting christiansatrisk.org. Or, send checks or money orders payable to Knights of Columbus Charities at P.O. Box 1966, New Haven, CT 06509-1966. The memo portion should indicate that the check represents the proceeds from the sale of the Solidarity Crosses.

Thank you for your prayers and assistance.

Join the Campaign for Life in Canada

The National March for Life in Canada will be held in Ottawa on Thursday, May 12, 2016. A candlelight prayer vigil will be held the evening before. Candlelight prayer services, Masses, rallies, conferences and other events will also be held in Ottawa during this three-day period.

To receive materials in time for your council to show its support, order Defend Life signs (#9341) and other culture of life support materials by calling 203-752-4403 or sending an email to william.obrien@kofc.org. Provide your name, address, council number, telephone number and the number of signs you would like. The signs are available in English and French; please specify language preference when ordering.

For more information on pro-life events in Ottawa, visit marchforlife.ca.

Charity, from Page 1

Marrella continued, “By sponsoring this event, the Knights of Columbus can give the students and teachers at this school a clear picture of faith in action, as these athletes and coaches show what it really means to be a Christian man.”

Helping to distribute coats to the students were Oakland Raiders coaches Bill Musgrave, Ken Norton Jr., Todd Downing, Nick Holz, Rob Moore, Sal Sunseri, Jake Peetz and Rod Woodson, along with Raiders players Austin Howard, Taiwan Jones, Andre Holmes, George Atkinson III and Giorgio Tavecchio.

This winter, the Knights of Columbus distributed 78,576 coats in 1,600 communities throughout the U.S. and Canada. Events were held not only at schools, but also at military bases and in Native American communities and inner-city neighborhoods, sometimes through partnerships with local police departments. Since the program began in 2009, more than 310,000 coats have been distributed in 49 states and all 10 Canadian provinces.
Knights of Columbus Safe Environment Program and the Domestic Church

The Knights of Columbus is committed to providing a safe environment for all young people participating in our programs and activities. In partnership with Praesidium, a leader for more than 20 years in providing knowledge and tools to safeguard against sexual abuse, the Knights of Columbus continues its strong tradition of maintaining the highest standards regarding the protection of young people. Through this partnership, Knights serving in key leadership roles have access to services that help keep young people safe, including Praesidium’s Armatus® online abuse awareness training and background screenings.

An exclusive hotline to report child safety concerns, as well as an informational line to address your questions on the Safe Environment Program, are available at the following:

Emergency Hotline: 1-844-KOFC-SAFE (1-844-563-2723)
Information and Questions: 1-203-800-4940 or youthleader@kofc.org

As members become more involved with parish-sponsored activities through the Building the Domestic Church initiative, the Knights of Columbus Safe Environment Program continues to help the Order maintain the highest standards in the protection of young people. A cornerstone of the Knights of Columbus Safe Environment Program is that members first comply with all diocesan youth protection policies. Check with your pastor, parish administrator or diocesan safe environment coordinator to find out more.

In addition to the youth protection requirements established by local dioceses and parishes, councils sponsoring official Knights of Columbus programs and activities in their parishes are required to comply with the policies of the Knights of Columbus Safe Environment Program. To ensure that all Knights understand and meet the requirements of these policies, they are available in English, Spanish and French.

The Domestic Church: What It Means For Your Councils

As part of the Building the Domestic Church initiative, councils have been asked to support families and their local parishes.

While some officers have expressed concerns about the level of involvement such an initiative requires, you can begin supporting your parish in just a few easy steps.

First, read the materials on the initiative, especially the Building the Domestic Church: The Family Fully Alive (#10162) family prayer program and the supreme knight’s columns in the December, January and February issues of Columbia.

Second, meet with your pastor to discuss the initiative, explaining how your council’s goal is to meet the needs of the parish. Be open to new ideas and opportunities that your pastor may have for your council. If your pastor is not your council chaplain, be sure that your chaplain joins you for this meeting.

Last, schedule regular appointments with your pastor to keep him informed about updates to Domestic Church materials and to continually demonstrate your council’s availability and flexibility in serving the parish.

For more information, visit kofc.org/domesticchurch.

Vocations Resources

On Sunday, April 17, the 53rd World Day of Prayer for Vocations, councils are encouraged to conduct programs and activities that promote vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life.

The annual Vocations Resource Packet (#4418) is being mailed in early March to grand knights in the United States and Canada. Included in the packet is a printed pamphlet containing Pope Francis’ annual message on vocations as well as an order form to request additional materials in advance of the World Day of Prayer for Vocations.

The day of prayer is the perfect opportunity to explain to prospects and recruits the details of the Order’s Refund Support Vocations Program (RSVP). Through the program, councils, assemblies and Squires circles “adopt” one or more seminarians or postulants and provide them with financial assistance and moral support.

RSVP money is used by seminarians and those in religious formation for tuition and books, car insurance and maintenance, travel during vacations, emergency expenditures and other living expenses. Knights also write letters to the students, sponsor dinners for them and, most importantly, pray for them as they discern the call to religious life.

Qualifying councils and assemblies receive a $100 refund for every $500 donated (up to a limit of $2,000 donated to an individual), while the refund for Squires is $20 for every $100 donated. In the Philippines and Mexico, councils and assemblies receive the local equivalent of US$50 for every US$250 donated.

For further information and additional materials, please visit kofc.org/vocations.

Send in Your Survey Now

Councils, assemblies and circles should have completed the 2015 annual Survey of Fraternal Activity (#1728) and submitted it to the Supreme Council office by Jan. 31. If you have not already done so, please send in your survey immediately.

This form is available at kofc.org/forms or in the Council Reports Forms booklet (#1436).
Is your council following the Knights of Columbus on social media?

Stay up to date on all things K of C by connecting with us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. You can also search for Order news using the hashtag #KofC.

This Lent, Knights are encouraged to use social media to share how their councils are answering Pope Francis’ call to grow in faith by performing the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

Each week during Lent, the Knights of Columbus social media pages will feature resources on the works of mercy and the unique ways Knights can lead their parishes in Lenten practices and Year of Mercy activities.

Post your pictures and stories to Facebook, Twitter and Instagram with the hashtag #KnightsKnowMercy, and you might be featured on the Supreme Council's official page.

Please be advised that all social media and other internet-based media must be in compliance with the Knights of Columbus Member Social Communications Policy and Guidelines, which can be located on the Officers' Desk Reference.

Fraternal Training Webinars

Over the past few months, elected and appointed council officers were invited to participate in various fraternal training webinars. The live webinars provided suggestions on Building the Domestic Church While Strengthening Our Parish and earning the Star Council Award.

For those who missed these live discussions, webinar archives are available at kofc.org/webinar.

Additional webinars will be held on March 19 and June 4 at 2 p.m. For further details, please contact the Department of Fraternal Services at 203-752-4270 or fraternalservices@kofc.org.

Stay on Track

Wondering if your council is eligible to earn the Star Council Award?

Councils that are conducting well-rounded programs and activities may qualify to receive the Star Council Award. To be eligible, councils must conduct and report at least four major programs in each of the Service Program categories (Church, Community, Council, Family, Culture of Life and Youth).

Or, as an alternative, councils may conduct a single featured program in each category, thereby fulfilling all requirements for that category. The featured programs, and their respective categories, are the Refund Supports Vocation Program – RSVP (Church), Habitat for Humanity or Global Wheelchair Mission (Community), Special Olympics (Council), Food for Families (Family), Ultrasound Initiative or a March for Life event (Culture of Life), and Coats for Kids (Youth).

The Star Council Checklist Poster (#5104) helps keep councils on track by providing a simple list of the requirements and deadlines. Copies of the poster may be ordered by contacting the Supply Department at 203-752-4214 or emailing supply@kofc.org.

Additional materials to help your council succeed at programming and becoming a Star Council can be found at kofc.org/surge.

Prospect a New Member

Identifying the many eligible Catholic men who would enjoy participating in the Order is easier than you think.

Step 1. Gather names.

Utilize all possible sources of potential leads, including:
• The Parish Directory
• Catholic Newspapers
• Church Bulletins/Advertisers
• Church-Related Activities
• Community Activities
• Athletic Associations/Activities
• Recruiting Drives
• New Parishioners

Step 2. Make an appointment.

Send a letter to each prospect explaining how he will benefit from membership in the Knights. Include a Membership Invitation (#2599).

Within a week of the mailing, follow up with a phone call to the prospect. Ask for a convenient time to meet with him and, if applicable, his wife to discuss the benefits of the Order.

Step 3. Meet with the prospect.

Discuss the Order’s many charitable, fraternal and spiritual programs, and explain the various benefits extended to his family, community and church.

Discuss any concerns or questions posed by either the prospect or his spouse.

Help the prospect complete a Membership Document (#100). Please be advised that all Membership Documents must be received, processed and recorded at the Supreme Council before noon EST on June 30 to be counted toward 2015-16 fraternal year quotas.

Advise the prospect of the date of the Admission Degree Exemplification. If possible, accompany the candidate; if not, make arrangements for a council member to act as mentor and guide to the candidate.
Actively Sharing Christ’s Mercy

During this Jubilee Year of Mercy, Pope Francis has been highlighting the importance of God’s loving message of compassion and pardon. The yearlong celebration confirms the Church’s role in sharing God’s mercy, from which no person touched by grace can be excluded. As seen in the below reports of their activities, councils throughout the Order are concretely participating in extending this message of mercy. If you’d like to share details and photographs from similar events taking place in your council, please email knightline@kofc.org.

Knights of Our Lady Council 11191 in Prestonburg, Ky., collected a number of items for the homeless shelter in Pike County. The Knights delivered towels, washcloths, t-shirts, aluminum foil, coffee and a number of other requested items to the veterans who receive assistance at the shelter.

Assumption Council 10545 in Keyser, W.Va., organized a steel band concert to raise funds for a local food pantry. Council members also held a baby bottle campaign at their parish to benefit the Family Crisis Center and Special Olympics.

St. Mark the Evangelist Council 7613 in San Antonio, Texas, delivered 24 wheelchairs to Catholic Charities. Members of the council also joined volunteers in cleaning up debris and repairing flood damage at a home in Little Blanco River.

Members of Okemos-St. Martha Council 10006 in Michigan serenaded patrons at local restaurants in exchange for donations. More than $4,000 — enough money to provide 32,000 meals — was contributed to local food banks from this two-day event. The council also donated nearly 50 coats to the St. Vincent Home in Lansing.

Father Myron V. Miller Council 5833 in Stamford, Conn., hosted a men’s night of reflection titled “What the Pope Is Saying to Us.” The event, led by guest speaker Ed Mechmann, discussed Pope Francis’ call to live the Gospel in the modern world. The council plans on making such nights of reflection a regular event, hoping to help men in their community better imitate Christ.

Father John Boddie Assembly in Topping, Va., held their third annual tournament to support the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program, which coordinates behavioral health and rehabilitative services for local veterans and their families. Through their annual golf tournaments, the assembly has raised approximately $20,000 to benefit the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program.

With help from parishioners, members of Father James A. Hyland Council 10991 in Hemet, Calif., renovated the food pantry at Holy Spirit Church. They received nearly 600 pounds of food items for the pantry, which will be given to the needy in the parish community.

Tell Us About Your Outreach Programs

All Knights of Columbus councils are encouraged to take part in the Orderwide Outreach Week held March 21-29 in conjunction with Founder’s Day. For more details on outreach programs and events, please consult the Fraternal Training Portal and Officers Online.

Once your program has taken place, we would love to hear about your efforts in making it a success. Share the details of your Outreach Week — or your Orderwide Church Drive (March 14-15) and Orderwide First Degree Week (March 16-22) — by sending an email to knightline@kofc.org.

Substance Abuse Awareness Poster Contest

Now is the time to begin the district/regional judging for the K of C Substance Abuse Awareness Poster Contest. State winners must be chosen in early April and submitted to the Supreme Council office by April 30. International winners are announced prior to the close of the school year.

For more information on the Substance Abuse Awareness Poster Contest, visit kofc.org/service.

Your Partnership With Special Olympics

To track your council’s involvement with Special Olympics events, be sure to complete the Partnership Profile Report with Special Olympics (#4584). Submit it to the Supreme Council home office, but keep a copy for your local council and send additional copies to your state deputy and district deputy.

This form is available at kofc.org/forms.
Many companies claim their founder was a saint. As brother Knights, our claim is not simply hyperbole: We know that our beloved founder lived a virtuous and holy life. We hope and pray that he will be raised to the dignity of the altar.

In fact, by proclaiming him Venerable in 2008, the Catholic Church has declared that Father McGivney exercised Christian virtue above and beyond the call of duty.

As members of his brotherhood, it is incumbent upon all brother Knights to act in a way that pays homage to Father McGivney, carries on his mission and works with the same virtuous spirit that animated his life. That duty applies to all aspects of Columbianism, whether it be our charitable work, our fraternal work or our business endeavors.

Those two concepts — Catholic virtue and profitable business — may seem incompatible, but the Knights of Columbus has long been a shining example of how businesses can succeed by placing faith and values before financial gain.

Our Catholic heritage permeates our business. It’s part of what makes us so unique. We call it our Catholic difference.

Asked recently about the Knights of Columbus and its Catholicism, Supreme Knight Carl Anderson replied:

“It means that we are different. We talk a lot about the “Catholic difference” of doing business with the Knights of Columbus. We present our members with a clear choice between doing business with us and doing business with a secular insurer. We are proud of our identity as a Catholic company. …

Our ethical practices, in fact, received international recognition in 2014 and 2015, when the Ethisphere® Institute designated the Knights of Columbus as a World’s Most Ethical Company®.

We stayed true to our principles and knew that if we did the right thing for the right reasons, we would get the results that we wanted — and we have. Last year marked our 15th consecutive year of insurance sales growth.

The signature way in which our Catholic identity impacts our business is in our investment strategy. We put our money where our faith is. We have established a strict screening process that prevents us from investing in any of the following lines of business:

- abortions and abortifacients
- contraception
- human cloning
- embryonic stem cell research
- for-profit health care that pays for any of the aforementioned
- pornography

We also do not invest in junk bonds or in risky investment instruments. We do not believe that the potential for profit is worth jeopardizing our Catholic faith or our solemn promise to our members and their families.

“It is a principled approach to investing,” the supreme knight said, “that highlights the depth of our commitment to our faith. And while following these principles, our investment team has consistently achieved positive and competitive financial returns.”

That’s integrity.

Not all insurance companies are fraternal benefit societies. Not all fraternal benefit societies are Catholic. Not all Catholic insurers are like the Knights of Columbus — we are different.

We are different because of who we are. We are different because of what we believe. And we are different because of the way we act on those beliefs.

It’s a difference that traces its way back to Father McGivney, and that ought to be a point of pride for all brother Knights and their families. Discover the Knights of Columbus Catholic difference. Find your agent by visiting kofc.org/findagent or by calling 1-800-345-5632.
We put our money where our faith is.

We do not invest in companies that deal in abortions, abortifacients, contraception, human cloning, embryonic stem cell research, for-profit health care that pays for any of the aforementioned, and pornography.

Find an agent at kofc.org
or 1-800-345-5632