

BADGER BULLETIN

JULY 2026



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Meet Your New State Chaplain



IT WAS ON SATURDAY, JUNE 20, 2026, that his Excellency, Gerard William Battersby, Bishop of the Diocese of La Crosse, installed me as the Chaplain of the Knights of Columbus for the State of Wisconsin. My two-year term spans from July 1, 2026, until June 30, 2028. As I begin this term of two years, and as I develop a sense

of what my duties will be, I thought I would use my first article for the Badger Bulletin as a means of introducing myself.

I am the fourth of ten children born to Robert and Clair Redfern. I was raised on the family farm, some 20 miles south east of the town of Forbes, New South Wales, Australia. We grew cereal crops; primarily wheat, barley and oats. We also cultivated alfalfa and clover as means of feeding sheep for wool and fat lamb production. After completing high school, I pursued studies in agricultural science at the University of Sydney. This was followed by a PhD in agricultural entomology.

It was during my postgraduate studies that the Lord was moving my heart to follow what would become my priestly vocation. Eventually, I began formal studies at the University of St Thomas Aquinas, the "Angelicum" in Rome. It was during my second year of philosophy that I was introduced to his Excellency, Raymond Leo Burke, who was the Bishop of La Crosse at the time. He invited me to consider the Diocese of La Crosse as my new home. I accepted the invitation, completed my priestly formation at the Pontifical North American College in Rome, and

was ordained to the priesthood at St Joseph the Workman Cathedral, La Crosse, on the Solemnity of the Birth of St. John the Baptist, June 24, 2006.

My first assignment was as the Associate Pastor of St John the Baptist Church, Marshfield, and Christ the King Parish, Spencer. I was also appointed as the chaplain of Columbus Catholic School in Marshfield. It was within weeks of my arrival that I met members of the Marshfield Council of the Knights of Columbus, and I was invited to consider entering into this great fraternity of Catholic men. Within weeks of becoming a member, I received a call from the local Field Agent and was introduced to many aspects of membership with the Knights of Columbus.

I have served in a number of parishes within the Diocese of La Crosse and am currently the Associate Pastor at Saints Peter and Paul Parish and St Vincent de Paul Parish in Wisconsin Rapids. It has been a blessing to work and worship alongside members of the Knights of Columbus throughout my years of priestly ministry.

While I am still in the process of learning what my duties are as State Chaplain, I have no doubt that these years will be fruitful. I have already met the State Officers who are the members of what we are calling "a team of teams". I am honored to be the spiritual guide for these Catholic men and their spouses who have selflessly come forward to serve Christ and His Church. *Vivat Jesus!*

"For the love of Christ compels us." (2 Cor. 5:14a)

"The love of God is the greatest treasure."

Fr. Michael McGivney



SUMMER IS A SEASON of activity, fun, and an opportunity for every Knights of Columbus Council. Families are gathering, parishes are full of visitors, communities are hosting festivals and patriotic celebrations, and people are looking for meaningful ways to serve. For Knights, this is the perfect time to be visible,

active, and welcoming. Our programs of Faith, Family, Community, and Life are not simply events on a calendar; they are our living witness of Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism.

This summer, every Knight should be encouraged to take part in at least one Council program. Help at a parish picnic. Volunteer at a food drive. Support a family activity. Join a prayer service. Assist veterans, widows, seniors, and neighbors in need. March in an Honor Guard. Small acts of service can have a lasting impact when they are offered with faith and brotherhood. Summer programs also give our Councils a chance to show the parish and community who the Knights are: Catholic men committed to serving God, strengthening families, defending life, and building up the common good. The Strong Right Arm of the Church.

Participation also strengthens recruitment. The best invitation to join the Knights is often not a speech, but an example. When the 600,000 Catholic men in Wisconsin see Knights serving with joy, praying with reverence, and working side by side for a worthy cause, they begin to understand the value of membership. Councils should make every summer event a recruitment opportunity. Wear council shirts or badges. Place membership information at parish gatherings. Personally invite Catholic men to help with a project, attend a social, or learn more about our mission. A simple invitation can open the door to a lifetime of faith-filled service.

The 250th anniversary of American independence gives us an even greater reason to act. As our nation

prepares to commemorate this historic milestone, Knights can help lead a celebration rooted in gratitude, prayer, service, and Patriotism. Councils might organize a patriotic rosary, sponsor a flag retirement ceremony, support local veterans, participate in Independence Day parades, host a parish or community cookout, or plan a service project in honor of the anniversary. National efforts connected to America's semiquincentennial emphasize volunteer service, civic engagement, and shared moments of reflection; Knights are especially well suited to bring those themes to life in our parishes and towns.

The Knights of Columbus has also highlighted the 250th anniversary as a year of prayer and charity, encouraging councils and assemblies to support devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. That focus reminds us that true patriotism begins with virtue. We honor our country best when we serve our neighbors, protect human dignity, strengthen families, and turn our hearts toward God. A council that combines patriotic works with charitable action offers a powerful witness to both Church and country.

Plan a summer calendar that includes faith formation, family fellowship, hands-on charity, patriotic observances, and visible recruitment. Ask every member to bring one guest, make one phone call, or volunteer for one program. Reach out to younger men, fathers, parish leaders, recent retirees, and those who may be seeking a deeper connection to Catholic life. Let them see that the Knights offer friendship, purpose, and a concrete way to make a difference.

This summer can be more than a busy season; it can be a season of renewal. By serving faithfully, recruiting personally, and celebrating America's 250th anniversary with prayerful patriotism, the Knights of Columbus can help our parishes and communities grow stronger. Let us be proud of our faith, grateful for our country, and ready to, as the Worthy State Chaplain Fr. Redfern says, invite more men to join us in the vineyard, to work.

Vivat Jesus!



AS MY TERM AS Wisconsin State Advocate concludes on June 30, 2026, I want to share a final update on our Safe Environment Program – one of our most critical responsibilities for protecting our children, youth, and vulnerable adults while strengthening our councils.

June 23, 2026 Statewide Data (Required Safe Environment Roles)

ROLE	ROLE FILLED	COMPLIANT	COMPLIANCE RATE
Grand Knight	287	243	83.8%
Program Director	257	194	66.9%
Community Director	246	174	60.0%
Family Director	243	174	60.0%

- > 229 councils have all four required roles filled.
- > Only 125 councils (54% of those with all roles filled / 43% overall) are in full compliance.

A council cannot achieve full Safe Environment compliance unless every one of these four positions is filled and each officer has completed both the required training and (where applicable) the background check.

Why This Matters

The Knights of Columbus Supreme Council emphasizes that protecting those we serve is a sacred duty rooted in our Catholic faith and fraternal mission. As stated on the Supreme website and in our program guidelines:

“The Knights of Columbus Safe Environment Program is designed to help councils create and maintain a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults through training, background checks, and ongoing awareness.”

Without complete staffing and compliance in these roles, our councils risk gaps in protection, potential delays in program participation, and challenges in meeting

Supreme Council standards. Every council needs dedicated Brothers willing to step up – especially for Family Director and Community Director, which also require Praesidium background checks.

Key Reminders for Compliance

- > Form 185 & Form 365: Review information carefully. Use personal (non-company) emails. Correct errors before submission.
- > Training (All Roles): Complete “Preventing Abuse and Protecting Those We Serve” via Praesidium Academy. Print and submit certificates.
- > Background Checks (Family & Community Directors only): Authorize via the Praesidium email link. Knights of Columbus covers the cost; valid for 3 years.
- > July Timeline: Supreme is finalizing data; invitations will go out end of July. Act now to avoid delays.

Special Note: The Grand Knight may also serve as Program Director (no background check required for either), which can help smaller councils meet requirements efficiently.

Call to Action

If your council is among those still working toward full compliance, please:

1. Fill any vacant roles immediately.
2. Ensure all officers complete training and background checks.
3. Submit updated Forms 185/365 and certificates to your District Deputy and Grand Knight.

Together, we can finish strong and enter the new fraternal year with every council protected and compliant. Thank you for your dedication to this vital work.

Vivat Jesus!



MY ARTICLE FOR THE Badger Bulletin this month will attempt to provide you with some information about my new position as State Director of Training for Wisconsin.

Over the past two years as your State Deputy, I have come to notice that there are key Council Officers, District Deputies and various Committee Directors and Chairman who we all rely on greatly to perform their assigned duties have not been given all the tools and training required that would allow them to do their jobs more efficiently and effectively.

I asked our new Worthy State Deputy Ross Larson for the opportunity to take on this new state role and to be responsible for providing our current & newly appointed & elected individuals across a variety of assignments state-wide with the tools & support they need from the State & Supreme Council.

It's a lofty goal, but I am dedicated to providing each of you the opportunity to succeed by providing the resources necessary.

During the month of July, we will work out what our objectives & priorities will be & which positions or

individuals will need further support now & in the future months ahead.

One priority is to have a qualified trainer & an assistant trainer in each of the 5 dioceses to provide either face-to-face, one on one training, or virtual training, or on-site group training as needed.

As you may have heard if you attended our 125th State Convention, Supreme is moving toward easier online only reporting and to eliminate paper reports entirely in the near future. We also just launched the initial phase of our new Engage State Website, and this too will greatly improve communication and reporting procedures.

We will together work as a team to provide anyone with the necessary knowledge to make managing their responsibilities not a burden but easier less time-consuming & more enjoyable.

I look forward to serving next year as the State Training Director & IPSD.

I offer my congratulations and hereby commit my full support to the new slate of State Officers and the membership in general as we move forward into another exciting year.

Thank you all for the opportunity to serve all of you.

Vivat Jesus!

STATE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

LESTER KOSTERA

AS WE CONCLUDE THIS FRATERNAL YEAR, I am proud to reflect on the tremendous success we achieved in both membership and programs. I am already looking forward to the year ahead, confident that the train will continue moving forward with strong momentum and continued growth in membership.

I want to extend my sincere gratitude to each, and every one of you for the hard work and dedication you have shown to the state of Wisconsin. Your commitment is the foundation of our success, and I look forward to continuing this important work together in the coming fraternal year.

Vivat Jesus!





AS OF JUNE 18, Wisconsin has brought in 749 new e-members this fraternal year. This represents growth of over 17% this year. As a state, we continue to transfer 74% of these e-members into Active Councils, one of the best conversion rates in the order. Thank you to all of the Councils that are using e-membership to bring in their new members.

We currently have 154 e-members from the 2025-2026 fraternal year that have not yet been transferred into Councils. As we start the new Fraternal Year, I encourage all Councils to review their Prospect List (e-members) and Candidate Lists and bring in as many new members as possible. Bringing these new members into your Council will get you a fast start on meeting your McGivney Awards goal. While in person exemplifications are preferred, if schedules are not working out, please use the On-Demand Online Exemplification to get these brothers into your Councils and then invite them to get involved.

REMINDERS

WGK & WFS please frequently review your councils **Prospect** tab. Should you experience any difficulty with this process, please email me regarding these outstanding assigned e-members and I will gladly assist you.

Do not send Form 100's to Supreme for new members. Keep them for your council's records. If you must use a Form 100, scan it, email it to Supreme, and keep the original for your council records. Since Form 100's must be manually processed at Supreme, they can lead to data entry errors and delays. Utilizing e-membership or the **Candidate** tab for new members are the preferred ways to bring in new members. **The date field is the date they were exemplified by your council. Once you enter those dates in either tab, the members will be automatically transferred to your council's roster within the next week.**

If you have any questions or concerns, contact me. I am in your State Directory.

Vivat Jesus!

PROSPECT TAB

Shows you e-members that have joined online via the Supreme app. The date field is used to transfer them into your council when they have completed their exemplification. With e-membership, new members enter their own data and confirm their membership, and then they receive an e-mail from Supreme. These e-members are then part of the state council, and get assigned to a local council. Until the local FS enters the exemplification date, these members remain part of the State Council. Local councils get credit for them when the exemplification date is entered by the FS to transfer them into your Council.

Clicking on this blue box will take you to the Prospect training.

CANDIDATE TAB

Used when you recruit a member locally or are handling a member transfer request or a reinstatement of a prior member. The Candidate tab can best be described as an online Form 100. The candidate tab training covers new members and transfers into local councils.

Clicking on this red box will take you to the candidate training.

ONLINE CEREMONIAL

Click on this box to take you to the **Online Ceremonial** invitation site.



SPOTLIGHT

SPECIAL OLYMPICS HONOR GUARD



Above left photo (left to right):

William (Bill) Conger, Lake Mills a member of the Christopher Columbus Assembly 2275 - Columbus
Jacob Zydowsky, Athlete from Pardeeville
Ed Zykowsky, Pardeeville - Jacob's Dad and Caddie
Joe Loy, Fennimore a member of the Fr. Samuel Mazzuchelli Assembly 1202 - Lancaster

NEW RICHMOND EXEMPLIFICATION



CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR BROTHER KNIGHTS in Wisconsin that took the step to become Sir Knights. We welcome you to the Patriotic Degree. The Eastern District reached their goal set by Supreme and Western was the closest it has been in many years. The new members will hopefully continue to be active in their Councils and build up the Patriotic aspect of the Assemblies which they joined.

We have several activities that Sir Knights can be active in within Wisconsin without the purchase of a uniform. But do remember that a 4th degree uniform is required to participate in any honor guard activity. But some activities that do not require a uniform. Consider having a learning activity about the Warriors to Lourdes project and then raise funds to support that project by Supreme. Do a Patriotic or a Veterans Rosary in a public setting such as in a cemetery. Have a flag raising ceremony or a flag retirement ceremony in conjunction with the American Legion or the VFW in your area. Work with your local schools to explain or teach about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights or the Declaration of Independence. Hold a Blue Mass or a White Mass to honor or celebrate or pray for those in active service, those in the medical profession or those that are Police, Firefighters, EMTs. Participate in local parades and have a float that is related to Patriotic history. Those can be supported with and without the uniform to name just a few projects.

Congratulations also to the Assemblies that met their quota for membership and thank you to all the men that joined the 4th degree. You are setting an example for your Brother Knights. Now, what will it take to get more brother knights into the 4th degree? We know of Assemblies that mention that they don't have enough men to cover events such as Corpus Christi processions. The easiest way to do this is to recruit more Brother Knights to become Sir Knights. Only about 1 percent of the men who joined the third degree in 2025-2026 took the next step to join the 4th degree. The Masters of the Eastern and Western District of Wisconsin are here to help you grow in membership, but we also want to let you know that you are the "boots on the ground" in your local area. We have ideas and are more than willing to go the extra mile to help you out.

To our local Council officers – we need you to help us in supporting the 4th degree. Most times you will receive an invitation letter from the District Master about an upcoming exemplification in Wisconsin. Please read the letter at your Council meetings or put something in your Council newsletter. Provide possible candidates with the



information and encourage them to take that next step. When we do this, we find that the Assembly can then provide enough honor guard to support Council activities in the parishes. Ask your Assemblies what you can do to assist them in getting out the messages.

To our Assemblies, please work with your local councils and support their activities. Remember that all Sir Knights are Council members and should continue to support all Council activities. Try to respond to all council requests for help with the uniform. Consider fundraisers to help with the uniform cost. Maybe base it on the number of events that they do honor guard. Every 4-5 events get you 20% of the uniform cost until paid in full. Or up to 50% of the uniform cost. Anything that the Assembly can do to assist the new Sir Knights in getting a uniform is helpful to the Patriotic Degree.

It is never too late to plan for joining the 4th degree. We continue to invite all third-degree knights in good standing to take the Patriotic Degree whenever one is held. Don't wait until one comes into your "backyard" as it may be a long time if there is no sincere interest in an area. The upcoming exemplifications that are scheduled as of June 15th are as follows:

- > September 19, 2026: All Saints Parish (Berlin)
- > October 17, 2026: St. Mary Catholic Church (Tomah)

These are two wonderful opportunities to join the Patriotic Degree just after the 250th birthday celebration of the USA.

Remember that the Patriotic degree is not separate from the Third Degree. We are all one body of Catholic men with a common purpose. The 4th degree is the Patriotic Degree, and we are watched over by District Masters at the state level. We are all under the jurisdiction of the State Deputy Ross Larson. We need all of you to consider joining the 4th degree. Happy Independence Day! *Vivat Jesus!*



THE STATE CHARITY COMMITTEE is taking a well-deserved break from the busy ticket season that past few months leading up to the State Convention and the drawing at the State Deputy's Banquet. As I complete my first official year

as the State Charity Director I cannot forget the importance of teamwork within the Committee. The renewal of gratitude to all the members of the State Charity Committee cannot go unnoticed.

I kindly ask that we give a round of applause to two members of the Committee who have submitted their retirement request after this year's season. Brother Robert Pizur from the Madison Diocese and Brother Dennis Berendes from the Diocese of Superior. They have, again, put in many hours of service to the State Charity Committee. May God richly bless them for their service and their support of the mission of the Knights of Columbus. With their departure we have great news! Brother Knight and Immediate Past State Charity Director Bernie Heit has graciously offered to resume the role as State Charity Coordinator for the Diocese of Madison replacing Brother Robert Pizur. Welcome back Bernie! We knew you couldn't stay away too long! We continue to seek the replacement for Brother Dennis in the Superior Diocese. Please prayerfully consider taking this role. We hope to have an interested person or a duo to resume those duties in the position by July 15. There is no obligation to take over the role if someone inquires about the duties and responsibilities. Reach out to me for more information.

The results are in for sales and comparisons for the 2025-2026 ticket season:

2025-2026 Sales Year			2024-2025 Sales Year	
Diocese	Sales	Tickets	Sales	Increase/Decrease
GB	\$144,760	28,952	\$145,865	Decrease
LAX	\$128,495	25,699	\$141,505	Decrease
MAD	\$124,245	24,849	\$118,995	Increase
MKE	\$142,110	28,422	\$129,015	Increase
SUP	\$ 70,775	14,155	\$ 52,550	Increase

These stats are for informational reference only. No matter the differences between the two years **everyone** did a great job in providing **charitable** efforts. That is the first **virtue** of our Order and what comes from our **faith** and **heart**. Only each member knows how well they did and how much impact they will make to those who are in need of our support during times of unique challenges, sufferings, and joys.

The list of this years winners can be found on our **new** state [website](#).

Councils that submitted their Council Charity Grant Form will have their rebates processed and distributed in the near future. Thank you for your patience.

The State Charity Committee will be gathering in August to begin the process of putting together the 2026-2027 Charity Raffle Ticket packets. They will be available for distribution at the annual Diocesan Huddle meetings. Please watch your email inbox and State Badger Bulletin for more information on the dates and locations.

Thank you, again, for all the kind support and care your council puts into the charity throughout the year!

Vivat Jesus!

"If you truly want to help the soul of your neighbor, you should approach God first with all your heart. Ask him simply to fill you with charity, the greatest of all virtues; with it you can accomplish what you desire."

+ St. Vincent Ferrer, Priest (1350-1419 A.D.)



SPOTLIGHT

COUNCIL 9385 LAUNCHES CATHOLIC ATHLETES FOR CHRIST

By Joe LaMere

THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS have long had a meaningful connection to American athletics. From Babe Ruth and Vince Lombardi to Gil Hodges and Floyd Patterson, many well-known names in sports have been associated with the Order. Today, that tradition continues in a new way through a growing partnership with Catholic Athletes for Christ (CAC), a national apostolate that helps athletes, coaches, and families live their faith through sports.

For nearly two decades, the Knights have supported CAC's mission. Together, they have helped make Mass available at Major League Baseball and National Football League stadiums and have taken part in charitable efforts such as Coats for Kids and programs for Special Olympians at the Super Bowl, the NFL Combine, and NFL team venues. Catholic athletes and coaches, including Mike Piazza, Jack Del Rio, and Joe Lombardi, have helped bring attention to this important work.

That mission is now reaching young people in local communities through "Winning with Christ," a collaborative effort between the Knights of Columbus and CAC. Adapted from CAC's High School Charter Program, the initiative offers a sports-based faith curriculum that councils can help support in their parishes and schools.

Each session focuses on a Christian virtue, including Charity, Honesty, Humility, Meekness, Moderation, Purity, Sportsmanship, and Teamwork. Through stories from sports, Scripture, prayer, and guided discussion, students are invited to see how their faith can shape the way they compete, lead, serve, and support one another.

One of the new pilot chapters is being led in Holmen, Wisconsin, by Fourth Degree Knight and former Grand Knight Joe LaMere of Father John Rossiter Council 9385 at Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish. LaMere hopes the program will help Catholic athletes and their families grow closer to Christ by sharing the Gospel through sports. The chapter encourages young people to be bold "Cathletes" — Catholic athletes who put God first.

The program is open to middle and high school

students involved in athletics, orchestra, choir, robotics, and other activities. Fathers are also invited to participate, helping strengthen parish relationships and build a faith-centered community for families. Meetings begin with prayer. A moderator introduces the monthly virtue, and council members help lead small-group conversations using prepared questions. Participant feedback helps shape future topics so the sessions remain meaningful and relevant to students' lives.

The Wisconsin chapter continues to grow as students invite teammates, friends, and family members. In addition to monthly gatherings, members and coaches meet before school each week in the chapel to pray the rosary and bring their intentions to God through the Blessed Mother.

The group also builds fellowship through meals, local collegiate sporting events, parish service projects, and parish activities. These opportunities help students connect faith, teamwork, and service both on and off the field.

Through "Winning with Christ," the Knights of Columbus and Catholic Athletes for Christ are giving councils a practical way to accompany young people, support families, and renew the Catholic tradition of forming character through sports.

For questions about the program or to explore starting a chapter through your council, please contact [Ray](#) or [Joe](#).

Vivat Jesus!





SPOTLIGHT

WELCOME NEW STATE OFFICERS



NEED HELP WITH ULTRASOUND FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN?

There is a great pro-life organization out in Yelm, Washinton called [4US](#). They will help with 25% of the cost of the ultrasound. **Yes! Half** of your council's obligation! Here's their [website](#).

> We have no Ultrasound Projects going on at this time! Thank you for your support in this area! If you are thinking about heading one up, I have one for you to do **in Uganda**! Contact me [here](#).

ASAP GRANTS

We pray that the month of June left your council's checking account **empty** after giving away all your money to pregnancy centers in your area. For every \$500 your council or assembly donates to a pregnancy resource center or maternity home (up to \$2,000), the match it with \$100. But, you have to [apply for it!](#) You only need two forms, a [Donation Receipt Letter](#) and a [W9](#).

CHOOSE LIFE WISCONSIN GRANT FUND

Any pro-life pregnancy center or maternity home can apply for a grant from Choose Life Wisconsin, the Choose Life Plate People! Apply [here](#) any time.

You can also purchase Pro-Life license plates. The more plates we have on the road, the more the pro-life message will be shared, and the more money there will be for the Pregnancy Resource Centers. The extra \$25 you pay for the plate is **tax deductible** if you itemize on Schedule A. More information [here](#).

Vivat Jesus!



JOIN THE FATHER MICHAEL MCGIVNEY GUILD



Honor His Legacy. Advance His Cause.

Strengthen Your Faith During the Jubilee Year of Hope.

As the Church celebrates the Jubilee Year of Hope, Catholics everywhere are called to renew their faith and walk more closely with Christ. What better way to respond than by drawing inspiration from our founder, Blessed Michael J. McGivney, who gave his life to strengthening families, building parish communities, and bringing hope to those on the margins.

By joining the Father McGivney Guild, you can (1) support his cause for sainthood and pray for his canonization, (2) deepen your spiritual life through his intercession during this Jubilee of grace, and (3) Publicly witness to our Catholic hope as a member of his spiritual family.

Membership is free and open to all who believe in his mission. Guild members receive inspiring newsletters, spiritual reflections, and invitations to special devotions honoring Blessed McGivney. Let's help make our founder a saint.

McGivney Guild Chairman

Jack Wrbanich, PSD



I WOULD LIKE TO START by expressing my gratitude! It has been an honor to be your State Program Director for the last year and a half. I know that a lot has been accomplished. With the new Fraternal year already started, I know that we can do better. We need to start this summer out strong. I know that we will support the

incoming State Program Director so this year will be very successful.

I would like to remind all of you with the start of the new fraternal year that we all can have a fresh beginning, working together in getting a big jump this summer on our goals for the year. I kindly ask that you do not wait until the

new school year begins.

As for the fall and winter programs, they should have been started with a meeting with the principals of all the schools in our area. If you wait until school begins, it will be too late to have several of the programs be the best ones for the year. I would challenge you to start new programs this year, such as hockey and soccer.

A lot of you will be in new positions. Just remember that the State Officers, District Deputies, and your council are there for you so do not be afraid to ask questions.

Our new State Deputy would like me to stay on in a different capacity, so I still will be seeing you, and answering any of your questions.

My wife Sue and myself wish you a safe and healthy journey to your goals. May God Bless you and your family.

Vivat Jesus!

A BETTER SIGHT TO SEE

SACRED HEART BILLBOARD ATTEMPTS TO COMBAT LUST

By Justin Knapp

LOCAL KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS councils in the Diocese of Madison have joined together to sponsor a billboard featuring the Sacred Heart of Jesus along U.S. Highway 14 in Middleton.

The billboard, installed on June 2, is located outside Silk Exotic, a fully nude strip club. The project was led by Knights of Columbus Council 7811 in Mazomanie, with support from Council 531 in Madison, Council 3450 in Spring Green, Council 3924 in Cross Plains, and Council 16863 in Monona.

The initiative aims to promote devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus during the month of June, which is traditionally dedicated to the Sacred Heart in the Catholic Church. Organizers hope that those who visit or pass by the area may encounter the image and be inspired to reflect, experience a change of heart, and turn toward Christ.

The image displayed on the billboard is based on the well-known 1767 painting of the Sacred Heart of Jesus by Pompeo Batoni, which is venerated in the Church of the

Gesù in Rome. This same image is also used in the Knights of Columbus Pilgrim Icon Program, in which more than 300 icons—blessed by Pope Francis through the Papal Almoner—travel among councils around the world for veneration and use in prayer services.

The billboard will remain in place for the entire month of June. The participating councils have expressed interest in fundraising again in the future to sponsor similar billboard efforts at the same location.

Vivat Jesus!





NOW THAT JUNE is in the books, we now approach our new fraternal year of 2026/2027 with great expectations! In this "special" year of our Nation's 250th anniversary we are experiencing "special" Family activities!

To start with there is a "New Faith in Action Program Guidebook" and matrix. The Faith in Action Guidebook has been updated with some new programs, as well as information about the new Columbian Award requirements, and other updates including changes to the Faith in Action portfolio.

Based on an analysis of program data and input from the field, the following changes have been made for the 2026/2027 fraternal year in reference to the **family**.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Remember that we have ample family programs available for your council to sponsor: Build-a-Bed, Quinceañera Support, & Remembering Our Faithful Departed. There are also combined family programs (e.g. Family Fully Alive is now a resource of Family Prayer Night and not a separate program). Having combined some family programs there are others that have been removed such as Family Week & Good Friday Family Promotion. Other Modifications such as "Building the Domestic Church" are also now in the Family category.

As previously mentioned a key Family Program addition is a Build-a-Bed Launch! "Build-a-Bed" will be added as a new Family program for the 2026-2027 fraternal year!

Through this program, councils partner with Sleep in Heavenly Peace to build and deliver beds for kids in need. The following program resources will be available online at kofc.org/build-a-bed at the start of the upcoming fraternal year (as will the guide sheet which is pending). Plan on organizing a build in your jurisdiction this year!

Below are some Resources that may be of some help to each individual Council:

- > #11975 Program Overview
- > #11978 Flyer
- > #11965 Trifold
- > #11977 Bulletin/Pulpit Announcements
- > #11976 News Release

Please also note that many of these new programs in our Faith and Action categories are perfect for engaging Parish communities with Hispanic populations.

I realize that change can sometimes be an awkward adjustment although there are certainly positivity in these Family programs. As always, we will of course keep "Family of the Month" "Food For Families" & "Keep Christ In Christmas" as other steady Family programs!

On a side note: **Please remember** that family activities, however big or small, are **always** a good thing! That's all for now! Until we meet again, take care and stay healthy!

Vivat Jesus!



On Sunday June 28th, over 90 Sir Knights and their guests from Msgr. Peter F. Meyer, Assembly 1691 celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Assembly's charter with a Mass and luncheon at St. Anthony the Abbot Parish in Cumberland, WI. Bishop James Powers, celebrating his 10th anniversary as Bishop of the Superior Diocese and 101-year-old charter member Robert Ebner, were special honorees at the event.



All in for AI

Joshua Hopper

AI HAS HEAVILY ENTERED OUR DAILY LIVES. It's here to stay for better or for worse. I will admit that there are myriad benefits that come along with its usage: faster workflows, creativity boosters, email editing, and much more. However, as technology grows, I argue that it can easily lead to more laziness. Why should I put in the work when I can type in a few well-worded prompts and have AI do the work for me?

It is precisely this attitude that certainly befalls me as I am sure befalls many others. I make this comparison to our prayer journeys. It would be nice for God to give us a prayer guide, giving a nice, tidy schedule for our prayer and what exactly to say at each moment in the day.

Yes, our Liturgy of the Hours can accomplish a feat like this, but it can be hard to navigate and digest for a novice user. This new prayer guide will be provided to us in language that is clear for us. That would solve everything, wouldn't it?

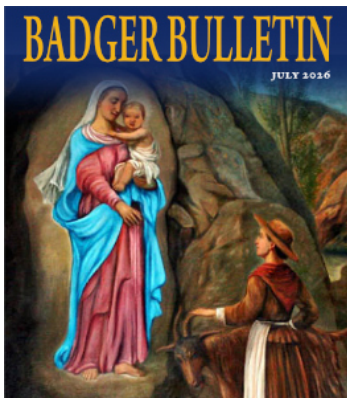
Sadly, it doesn't work that way. We need to put in that effort to approach our heavenly Father in prayer. No one, not even AI, can do it for us. Once again, I challenge us to look deep within for our faults and failings and see what proactive and actionable steps we can take right now that lead us to a better relationship with the Almighty!

Vivat Jesus!



SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- Keep articles below 500 words.
- Submit word docs to **kc2055pr@gmail**
- Send photos separately, clearly labeled, with credits.
- Prioritize quality content with articles.
- Proofread thoroughly for spelling and grammar.
- Avoid double spaces after periods.
- Be punctual! Late submissions will be excluded from future publications.



ON THE COVER: OUR LADY OF HAPPY MEETINGS

Our Lady of Laus, also known as Our Lady of Happy Meetings, first appeared to Benoite when she was seventeen and continued to visit her throughout her life. Over the course of these appearances, Our Lady asked for a house to be built for priests, with the aim of drawing people into greater conversion, especially through the sacrament of penance. The site is heavily populated with tourists each year, attracting 120,000 people on pilgrimage annually. There have also been many healings on the site as well, especially through the instructions Our Lady gave to Benoite, placing oil from a lamp on wounds.

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In service to One.

In service to all.

