



Knights of Columbus

St. Oliver Plunkett Council 13440

Knights News



Issue 12

February 2025

Chaplain <u>Father Cyriac</u>	Grand Knight <u>Javier Tavira</u>	Deputy Grand Knight <u>Carey Scruggs</u>	Financial Secretary <u>Frank Montelione</u>	Treasurer <u>Mark Layton</u>	Advocate <u>Ray Prosek</u>	Warden <u>Richard Bellnier</u>
Recorder	Chancellor <u>Bill Childress</u>	One Year Trustee <u>Fritz Siler</u>	Two Year Trustee <u>Robert Barnard</u>	Three Year Trustee <u>Todd Morrow</u>	Inside Guard <u>Patrick Chiah</u>	Outside Guard <u>John Spudich</u>

Around the Council

Every event on this list is a chance to live our faith in action—serving coffee, giving blood, praying the rosary, studying Scripture, or simply showing up to support one another. The strength of our council doesn't come from a few busy hands, but from many willing ones.

Make it a goal to attend at least one—or better yet, several—of these gatherings. Family members are welcome to give a hand or just partake of some of these activities. Your participation truly matters.

We hope to see you there.
Vivat Jesus!

Sunday, 2/22/26 – Donuts & Coffee (KBC), after the 1:15 PM Mass. Stay after Mass for fellowship and hospitality. Help serve, clean up, or simply sit and welcome parish families. A friendly smile and conversation go a long way in building community.

Thursday, 2/26/26 – Men's Bible Study (JPPII Center), 7:00pm
Join your brother Knights and parish men for Scripture, discussion, and prayer. participant.

March Events & Service Opportunities

Sunday, 3/1/26 – Blood Drive (KBC), 8:00 AM–2:00 PM (volunteers 7:00 AM–3:00 PM)
Give the gift of life or help with set-up, registration, and hospitality.

Sunday, 3/8/26 – Divine Mercy Chapel (Rosary Garden), after each Mass Weather Permitting

Take time for prayer and reflection with your family and fellow parishioners. All parisher families are encouraged to attend.

Monday, 3/9/26 – Planning Meeting (Library), 7:00 PM
Have ideas? Want to help shape upcoming programs?
This is

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From the Desk of the The District Deputy S.K. Robert Barnard:



Reflecting Faith, Charity, Unity, and Fraternity During the Lenten Season

The Knights of Columbus is built upon four core principles—Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism. Each of these foundational values not only guides the actions and spirit of the Order but also deeply resonates with the meaning and practices of Lent in the Catholic tradition.

Charity: Serving Others During Lent

Lent is a time of self-examination, sacrifice, and service. The principle of Charity, the first and foremost pillar of the Knights of Columbus, calls members to give generously of themselves—whether through volunteering, supporting parish initiatives, or helping those in need. This spirit of giving aligns perfectly with the Lenten practice of almsgiving, encouraging Knights to embody Christ's love by reaching out to the marginalized and vulnerable.

Unity: Coming Together in Faith

The principle of Unity inspires Knights to work together harmoniously for the common good. During Lent,

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where decisions are made and volunteers are organized. Your voice matters.

Thursday, 3/12/26 – Men’s Bible Study (JPII Center), 7:00 PM

Saturday, 3/14/26 – St. Patrick’s Celebration (KBC), 6:00–9:00 PM
Food, fun, and fraternity. Bring your family and enjoy a great evening together. Volunteers are needed for set-up and clean-up.

Monday, 3/16/26 – Rosary & Council Meeting (Sanctuary/KBC), 6:00 PM
Pray together first, then handle the business of the council. Bring a family or parish member with you. If you only attend one meeting this month, make it this one.

Thursday, 3/26/26 – Men’s Bible Study (JPII Center), 7:00 PM

You may already see movement here as well. I envision targeted fundraising efforts tied to specific initiatives: proceeds from one event going to Wreaths Across America, another supporting the veterans’ shelter, and so on. I also see value in a dedicated fundraiser for our Uniform Assistance Fund, with clear communication to our parishes that while the funds remain within the Knights, the uniforms directly benefit both our parishes and our broader community through our participation in patriotic and civic events.

Having laid out these plans, I want to acknowledge something important: I represent a group of men, and not everyone will always agree on the best path forward. If you believe the Assembly should head in a different direction, I ask that you reach out to me directly. I welcome your input and value your perspective.
Vivat Jesus,

Catholics are invited to join in communal prayer, fasting, and reflection, strengthening bonds within families, parishes, and communities. Knights can foster unity by organizing Lenten events, leading Stations of the Cross, and supporting parish missions, echoing the call to be one body in Christ.

Fraternity: Supporting One Another on the Journey

around fundraising two years ago. I believe we became focused on collecting money and lost sight of the real goal: funding meaningful projects. We are carrying a sizeable balance in our savings account “just in case.” Before we can have a productive conversation about how to use those funds—and address the concerns of those who fear running out—we need reliable, transparent ways to fund our programs.

Fraternity reminds Knights that they are brothers, supporting each other in faith and life. Lent provides an opportunity to deepen these relationships, offering encouragement and accountability in spiritual growth. Whether through group prayers, spiritual retreats, or simple acts of kindness, Knights help one another persevere through the challenges of Lent.

Patriotism: Living Faith in the Public Square

While Patriotism may seem distinct from the spiritual practices of Lent, it calls Knights to witness their faith in society. Lent teaches humility and service, values that can inspire Knights to be active, ethical citizens and to promote justice and peace in their communities. By living out their faith publicly, Knights honor both their Church and their country.

As the Knights of Columbus journey through Lent, the Order’s principles serve as a roadmap for spiritual renewal and service. By embracing Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism, Knights deepen their faith and strengthen their commitment to Christ, the Church, and one another.



A NOTE FROM OUR PASTOR AND CHAPLAIN

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Blessings of Peace! As you settle into the New Year with joy and hope, I wanted to assure you of my prayers for a blessed year and encourage you to engage in the life and mission of the parish. Our life as Catholics presents us with many blessings along with various challenges. Our parish is blessed with many diverse and multi-generational parishioners. Last year we welcomed over 360 new families and 450 young people in our Faith Formation programs.

I invite you to engage in the life and ministries of the parish so that we can continue to be a vibrant and amazing community. Please join one of our ministries or organizations to give yourself in the service of the parish using your time, talents, and treasure.

The season of Lent, or the "spring" time of grace, will be soon upon us. It's a time of renewal and return to the Lenten practices that will help cleanse our souls and motivate us to care for our neighbor. It is a time of penance, prayer, and almsgiving. Faith without works is like a tree without fruit. Faith demands an interior conversion and a deeper commitment of the Gospel.

So, I encourage you to discover what kind of spiritual practices you are going to do as a family. How well can you join the parish community in prayer, worship and

other events to deepen your spiritual growth?

Please know that the priests, Fr. Cyriac, Fr. Fred, and Fr. Ron, Deacon Mike, Deacon Jaime, along with our staff are

available and willing to help you deepen your faith in any way we can. Please feel welcome to call, email, visit, and attend our services. Let's make this season of grace a true season of renewal and growth.

With prayers and blessings,

Fr. Cyriac

[\(Lenten Schedule Attached\)](#)



As we begin the season of Lent, it is worth taking a moment to reflect on what this season truly means for us as Catholic men and Brother Knights of St. Oliver Plunkett Council 13440.

Lent is more than simply giving something up or adding another devotion to our routine. At its heart, Lent is a season of conversion—a deliberate time set aside to examine our lives, turn away from sin, and renew our commitment to follow Christ more closely.

Lent finds its roots in the 40 days Jesus spent fasting and praying in the desert before beginning His public ministry. Those days were marked by preparation, sacrifice, and complete reliance on God. In the same way, Lent invites each of us to step back from distractions and comforts so we can refocus our hearts on what truly matters. Through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, we learn discipline, humility, and trust in God's grace.

The Church also understands Lent as a preparation for Easter, the greatest celebration of our faith. Historically, Lent was the time when new converts prepared for baptism and when those who had fallen away sought reconciliation. Even today, Lent calls each of us to remember our baptismal promises and renew our desire to live as faithful disciples of Christ.

For us, as Knights of Columbus, the meaning of Lent connects directly to our call as men of faith and action. Lent challenges us not only to grow spiritually, but to put that growth into practice. Prayer strengthens our relationship with God. Fasting teaches self-control and sacrifice. Almsgiving moves us beyond ourselves and into service of others. These are the same virtues that shape our principles of Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism.

We grew up hearing "What are you giving up for Lent". The true question should be "What are you doing to change your life for lent?". My personal change began last Lent when I decided to recite the Rosary every day. I sometimes slip but my journey with the Rosary is one of praying every day in one form or another. I seldom miss a day without the Rosary.

A commitment to service is one form of the imitation of Christ. Commit to giving more time to serve to our Council. Recently, St. Oliver's held a Ministry Fair. If you attended, volunteer to a ministry within the Parish to serve the church community.

This Lent, I encourage each Brother Knight to make a deliberate commitment. Choose one daily prayer and remain faithful to it. Embrace a meaningful personal sacrifice that stretches you beyond the minimum requirements. Most importantly, put charity into action by supporting our council's efforts, serving our parish, and reaching out to a neighbor or family in need.

Lent is not meant to be lived alone. As Brother Knights, we walk this journey together, encouraging one another by our example and our service. If we live this season well, our Lenten commitments, whether it truly is giving up something or a commitment to give something, will draw us closer to Christ and strengthen our council, our parish, and the families we are called to serve as we prepare our hearts for the joy of Easter.

Recent Court Decisions Affecting Catholics



(December 2025 – February 2026)

Over the past two months, a small but significant number of court decisions have affected Catholic institutions and ministries. While there have been no new U.S. Supreme Court rulings on the merits during this period, developments at the state and international levels have reinforced important legal principles with direct relevance to the Church.

Wisconsin Supreme Court Reinforces Religious Liberty for Catholic Charities

In mid-December 2025, the Wisconsin Supreme Court issued a decision upholding the religious-liberty protections of Catholic Charities Bureau of the Diocese of Superior. The ruling came after the state attorney general attempted to continue challenging Catholic Charities' exemption from the state unemployment insurance system—despite a unanimous U.S. Supreme Court decision earlier in 2025 affirming that exemption.

The Wisconsin court rejected the state's renewed challenge and enforced the federal ruling, making clear that state authorities may not redefine or undermine the religious identity of Catholic ministries once constitutional protections have been established. Legal observers noted that the decision strengthens church autonomy and limits future attempts by states to re-litigate settled religious-liberty questions.

Source: Baptist Press, "Wisconsin Supreme Court upholds Catholic charity's religious liberty," Dec. 16 2025 February-2026.docx

NEWS FROM THE VATICAN

KNIGHTS AT THE VATICAN: A LEGACY OF SERVICE & HOPE

The Baldacchino Restored to Glory

As millions of pilgrims journeyed to Rome for the **2025 Jubilee Year**, they were greeted by the breathtaking sight of **Bernini's Baldacchino** in all its original, gleaming splendor. Fully funded by the Knights of Columbus, this \$750,000 restoration was the first systematic cleaning and repair of the iconic 400-year-old structure in over two centuries.



The restored Baldacchino, a masterpiece preserved for the 2025 Jubilee through the generosity of the Order

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A Historic Audience with Pope Leo XIV

Following his election in May 2025, **His Holiness Pope Leo XIV** (the first American Pope) received Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly and Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William Lori for a private audience on July 4, 2025. The date—Independence Day—added a layer of patriotic significance to the meeting of the American-born pontiff and the leaders of the Order.



Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly pledges the loyalty and prayers of 2.1 million Knights to His Holiness Pope Leo XIV

Key Highlights of the Meeting:

- **The "Cor" Initiative:** The Pope expressed deep interest in the Knights' new men's spiritual formation program.

- **A Personal Gift:** The Supreme Knight presented the Holy Father with an archival photo of the Navy ship on which the Pope's father, Louis Prevost, served during the D-Day landings.
- **Unity & Charity:** The Holy Father commended the Knights for being "tangible signs of hope" in a fragmented world.

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Join Us in Prayer

As we move through the 2026 liturgical season, we invite all members to continue the **Novena for the Holy Father**.

- **Intention:** For the strength and wisdom of Pope Leo XIV as he leads the Church.
- **Action:** Recite the *Prayer for the Holy Father* at your next Council meeting.

"The Knights of Columbus will always stand in solidarity with Pope Leo XIV as we support the Church's mission of evangelization." — **Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly**

SAINTS OF THE MONTH FEBRUARY THRU MARCH

As we move from mid-February into the holy season of Lent, the Church places before us saints whose lives reflect faithful perseverance, sacrificial love, and quiet strength—virtues central to our calling as Knights of Columbus.

Late February: Faithfulness Under Trial

The latter half of February reminds us that holiness is often lived through steadfast faith in ordinary circumstances. Saints commemorated during this time include witnesses such as St. Polycarp (Feb 23), a bishop and martyr who remained faithful to Christ until death, and St. Walburga (Feb 25), known for her life of prayer and service within the Church. Their examples encourage us to remain firm in our Catholic faith and consistent in charity, even when doing so requires perseverance.

March: St. Joseph and the Call to Quiet Strength

The Church traditionally dedicates the month of March to St. Joseph, whose Solemnity we celebrate on March 19. St. Joseph stands as a powerful model for Catholic men—obedient to God's will, devoted to his family, and faithful in humble service. Without speaking a recorded word in Scripture, St. Joseph teaches us that leadership is rooted in action, responsibility, and trust in God.

March also presents heroic witnesses such as Sts. Perpetua and Felicity (Mar 7), martyrs who gave their lives for Christ, and St. Patrick (Mar 17), whose missionary zeal transformed a nation through faith, courage, and perseverance.

As Knights of Columbus, may the saints we honor from February through March inspire us to live our faith with conviction, serve our families and parishes with humility, and walk together in fraternity as we prepare our hearts for Easter.

THE THREE VOICES OF GOD: PRIEST, PROPHET, AND KING

(Read the full article at [Catholic Answers](#))

God is a "gentleman" of speech. While He could thunder from the heavens to command us, He usually speaks through the quiet whisper of prayer or the words of prophets. However, there are three extraordinary moments in the Gospels where God speaks audibly to the world. Each time, He confirms Jesus as the fulfillment of the three sacred Old Testament offices.

1. The Priest (The Jordan River) At Jesus' baptism, the Father's voice breaks the silence: *"You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."* This was a priestly ordination. Standing with John the Baptist (a descendant of Aaron), Jesus is "anointed" by the Spirit to begin His mission as our Great High Priest.

2. The Prophet (Mount Tabor) During the Transfiguration, God speaks from a cloud: *"This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!"* Here, Jesus is revealed as the "New Moses." He is the definitive Prophet whose every word carries the full authority of God.

3. The King (Jerusalem) Just before the Passion, Jesus prays for God to glorify His name, and the Father responds: *"I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."* This confirms Jesus' royalty. His "coronation" is His entry into Jerusalem, and His "throne" is the Cross where He triumphs over death.

The Knight's Reflection By speaking audibly at these three milestones, the Father ensured there was no ambiguity. As Knights, we are called to follow this same Jesus—our Priest, our Prophet, and our King—and to mirror these roles by serving our families, speaking the truth, and leading with humility.



A Busy McGivney Lent

As we look ahead to the penitential season of Lent, it is also a good time for Guild members to look back on the busy pastoral life of Father Michael McGivney. The early months of 1882 were full of activity for the young priest, not only with the usual duties of Mass, confessions, baptisms and marriages, but also with visits to condemned

prisoner James "Chip" Smith, and final plans for the formation of the Knights of Columbus.

A key date that year was February 2, when he and the first members met to establish "a purely original organization" and appointed Father McGivney to draft the constitution and bylaws.

February 22 marked the beginning of Lent, a season of forty days of fasting and continued Friday abstinence. Nevertheless, Father McGivney stayed fully engaged in his mission, corresponding with parishes throughout Connecticut and noting several positive replies.

On March 17, St. Patrick's Day, a play called "Eileen Oge" was staged to rave reviews by a group trained by Father McGivney.

The fine work of Father McGivney on the constitution and bylaws led the Connecticut legislature to quickly grant a charter to the Knights of Columbus on March 29, Celebrated annually as Founder's Day.

Our own Lent may not hold such momentous events, but we pray that our disciplines may be fruitful for our spiritual life through the intercession of Blessed Michael McGivney!

Brian Caulfield
Vice Postulator
guild@kofc.org

Knights as Resurrection Men: Living the Easter Victory

Easter is not merely a single Sunday on the calendar—this year celebrated on April 5—but a sacred season that proclaims victory over sin and death. From Ash Wednesday through the fifty days of Easter, the Church reminds us that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the foundation of our hope, the heart of our faith, and the source of our strength as Catholic men and Sir Knights. We do not journey through Lent simply to endure sacrifice, but to be transformed by the truth that Christ is risen. The Apostles themselves were changed forever by the empty tomb. Once fearful and uncertain, they emerged with courage and conviction, boldly proclaiming the Gospel to a waiting world. As Fourth Degree Knights, we are called to that same visible and public witness. Whether standing in honor guard, serving our parishes, supporting our clergy, or

expressing our patriotism rooted in faith, we are reminded that our actions speak to what we truly believe. We are not called to hide our faith, but to live it with dignity, reverence, and courage.

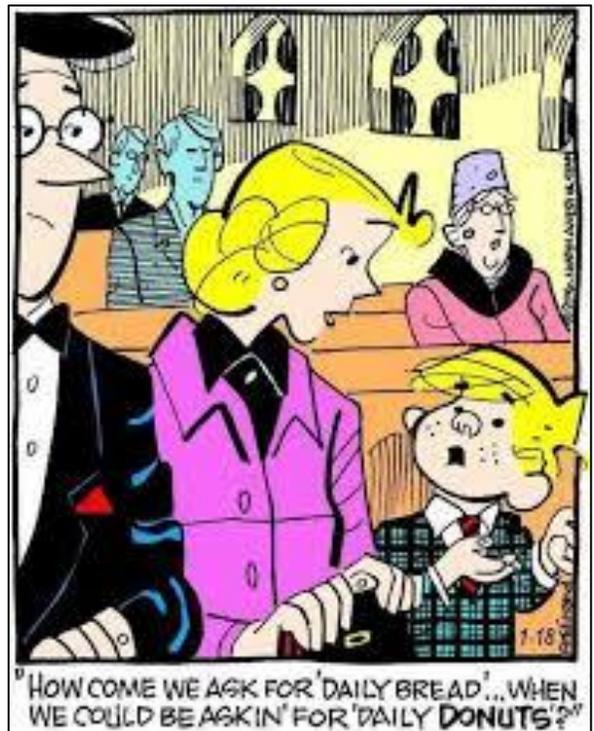
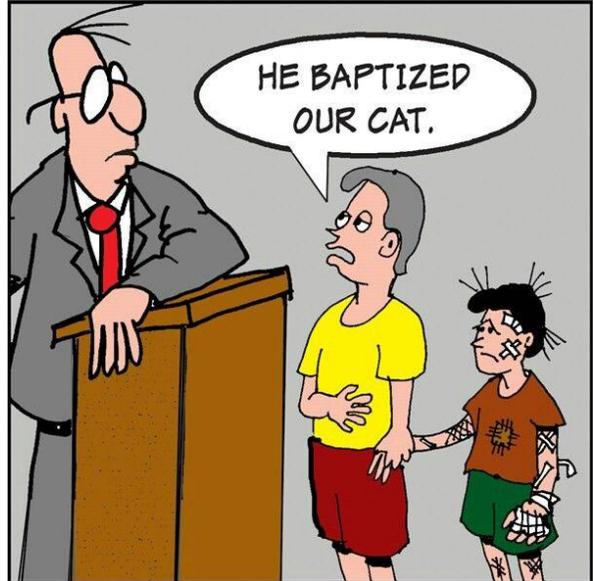
In a world often marked by division, confusion, and uncertainty, Knights are called to be men of steady hope. The Resurrection assures us that truth triumphs over confusion, light overcomes darkness, and sacrifice is never wasted. When we live as "Resurrection men," we carry that hope into our families, our parishes, and our communities—standing firm in faith while extending charity and brotherhood to others.

As we celebrate the Easter season, and especially Divine Mercy Sunday, let us renew our commitment to prayer, service, and fraternity. May our lives reflect a deep and abiding belief that the tomb is empty, Christ is Lord, and His victory is alive in us. Let us move forward with confidence and humility, striving each day to be faithful witnesses to the risen Christ.

Mother drank a little, then a little more and before they knew it, she had drunk the whole glass down to the last drop. "Mother," the nuns asked in earnest, "please give us some wisdom before you die."

She raised herself up in bed and with a pious look on her face said, "Don't sell that cow."

CHURCH OF THE COVERED DISH by Thom Tapp



COMICAL CLOSURE AND CARTOONS

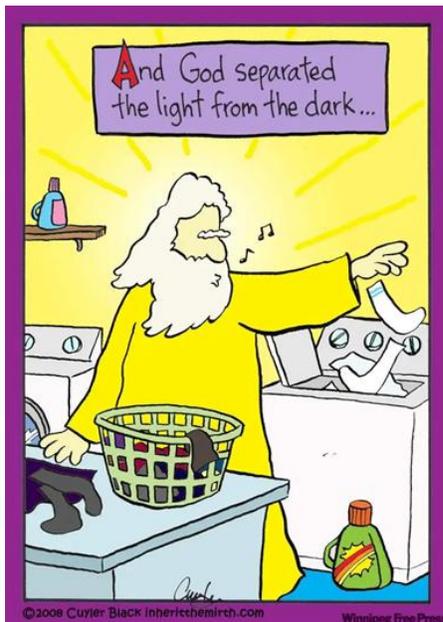
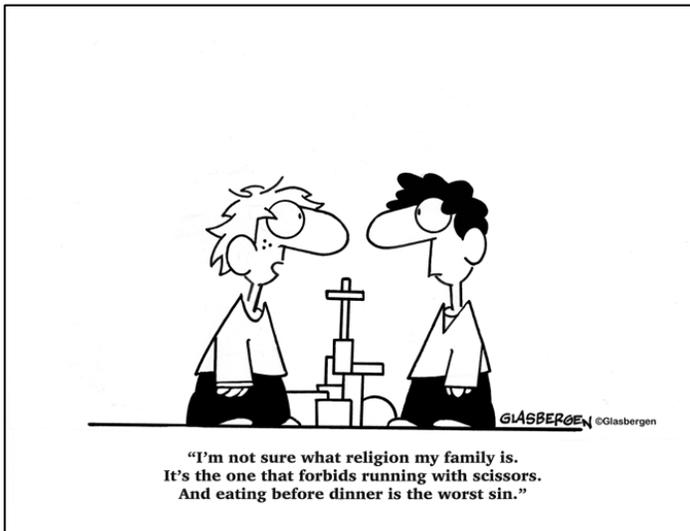
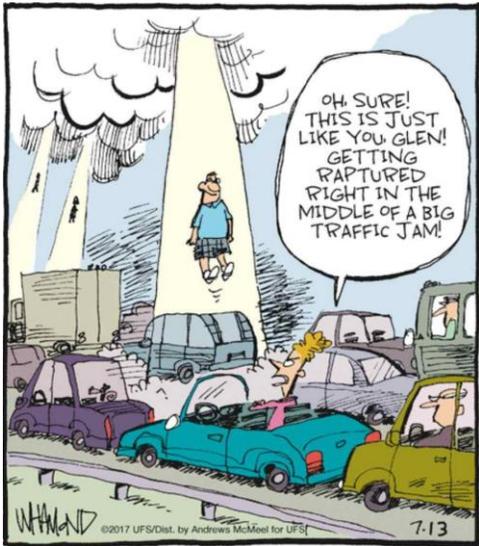
A guy goes to confession for the first time in a LLOOONNNNNNGGGGG time. He's nervous, but he takes a deep breath, makes the sign of the cross, and goes into the confessional.

Imagine his surprise to find a cushioned seat instead of a hard kneeler, a couple of really good cigars with a lighter & ashtray, and a full bar stocked with name brand liquors. Just as he's thinking to himself, "My, oh my, how things have changed in the meantime!" he hears the priest's voice say, "Who's is that and what are you doing in there?" He's says, "It's Mike, Father, and I'm going to confession."

The priest says, "Well, come out of there and get in this part of the confessional - right now, you're on MY side!" -0-

The 98 year old Mother Superior from Ireland was dying. The nuns gathered around her bed trying to make her last journey comfortable. They gave her some warm milk to drink, but she refused.

Then one of the nuns took the glass back to the kitchen. Remembering a bottle of Irish whiskey received as a gift the previous Christmas, she opened and poured a generous amount into the warm milk. Back at Mother Superior's bed, she held the glass to her lips.





In the Bible,
demons refer
to themselves as
they/them/we/us

Mark 5:1-5:13 Mark 16:9 Luke
11:24-26 Luke 8:2
Matthew 8:31