



# Knights of Columbus

## St. Oliver Plunkett Council 13440

### Knights News



Issue 16

June 2026

## Growing Our Council in the Spirit of Blessed Michael McGivney

### Your Council News

Elections are over, and Council 13440 is beginning an exciting new chapter with a dynamic and energetic leadership team. We warmly welcome our new Grand Knight, Patrick Chieh, and Deputy Grand Knight, Charly Ezirike. Both bring fresh ideas, enthusiasm, and a renewed commitment to service that will help guide our Council forward in faith, fraternity, and charitable works. We look forward to supporting them as they build on the strong foundation already established by past officers and members.

This past Father's Day celebration was a great success and a wonderful example of what we can accomplish when brother Knights come together in service. We extend sincere thanks to everyone who volunteered their time, helped with setup, served meals, greeted families, and stayed afterward to clean up. Your assistance made the day special for the fathers of our parish and helped create a warm, welcoming event that reflected the spirit of our Council.



Back to School with the Knights is one of Council 13440's most meaningful service programs, and it has even earned recognition at the state level. Each year, we help provide backpacks filled with school supplies for families in need, giving students the tools and encouragement they need to begin the

school year with confidence. At this time, however, donations are lighter than we had hoped, and we need the support of our brother Knights, parish families, and friends to help make this effort a success. Donations of backpacks, notebooks, pencils, pens, crayons, folders, glue sticks, and other basic school supplies are greatly appreciated. Monetary donations are also welcome and will be used to purchase needed items in bulk. This program is a wonderful way for us to live out our commitment to charity and support the children of our community as they prepare for a new school year. Please consider contributing what you can and helping us continue this award-winning tradition of service.

Manning booths at the Stipers games brings in funds needed to support our Fraternal Mission. The more Council members that assist, the more the Council makes. Please consider working a few hours during the baseball season and allow us to continue financing our program.

Our next planning meeting will be held on **July 13** and will also serve as an important business meeting for the Council. Brother Knights are encouraged to make every effort to attend as we review upcoming programs and discuss service opportunities. Our regular monthly business meeting will be on July 20<sup>th</sup>. The evening will begin with the Rosary, followed by a light dinner before the meeting. Your presence and participation help ensure that Council 13440 continues to move forward with unity, purpose, and a strong commitment to charity.

### From the Desk of the The District Deputy

#### Robert Barnard:

Brother Knights,

As your District Deputy, I want to take this opportunity to encourage every member of our council to renew our commitment to growth, service, and faithful brotherhood. The Knights of Columbus was founded by Blessed Michael McGivney to meet real needs: to strengthen Catholic men in their faith, to protect families, and to unite men in service to the Church and community. That mission is just as urgent today as it was in 1882. Father McGivney understood that Catholic men are called to do more than attend meetings or wear a badge of membership. He called men to become brothers: men of prayer, men of charity, men who stand with one another, and men who strengthen their parish and families through visible witness. When we invite a man to join the Knights, we are not simply adding a name to a roster. We are offering him a path to deepen his faith, serve others, and become part of a brotherhood that can help him live his vocation as a Catholic man.



### Grow Through Charity

Charity is the first principle of our Order and the clearest way we show Christ to others. Every council should be known for compassionate action: helping families in need, supporting parish ministries, defending life, assisting the vulnerable, and responding when our community is hurting. Growth begins when men see that our council is active, generous, and joyful in service.

### Grow Through Unity

Unity reminds us that no Knight serves alone. We are strongest when we work together with our pastor, parish staff, families, and fellow parishioners. A council that is united is dependable, organized, and welcoming. Let us make sure every member has a role, every new Knight feels included, and every program supports the mission of the parish.

### Grow Through Fraternity

Fraternity is more than friendship; it is Christian brotherhood. We must look after one another, pray for one

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another, and encourage one another to grow in holiness. A council that practices true fraternity notices when a brother is absent, supports families in difficulty, and creates opportunities for men to build lasting relationships rooted in faith.

### **Grow Through Patriotism**

Patriotism calls us to be faithful citizens who serve the common good with integrity, gratitude, and respect. Our public witness matters. Whether we support veterans, honor civic responsibilities, promote religious liberty, or serve alongside community partners, we show that Catholic men can be a steady and generous presence in society.

### **A Practical Call to Growth**

Growth will not happen by accident. It requires prayer, planning, and personal invitation. Each of us should identify Catholic men in our parish who would benefit from the Knights and personally invite them to join us. Invite them to a service project, a family event, a faith formation opportunity, or a council meeting. Let them first experience who we are and then ask them to become part of the mission.

We should also look inward. Are our meetings welcoming and purposeful? Are our programs visible to the parish? Are we supporting our pastor's priorities? Are we forming men spiritually, or only organizing events? A growing council is one that continually asks how it can better serve God, the Church, and neighbor.

Let us recommit ourselves to the vision of Blessed Michael McGivney. Let us be men who protect families, strengthen parishes, serve the poor, defend life, support our priests, and build up one another in faith. If we live the founding principles with conviction, growth will follow—not only in numbers, but in holiness, service, and impact.

Thank you for your dedication to the Knights of Columbus and to the work of your council. May Blessed Michael McGivney intercede for us as we continue to grow, serve, and remain faithful to the principles on which our Order was founded.  
Vivat Jesus!

**Robert J. Barnard**  
District Deputy



### **June: A Month to Walk with Mary**

Brother Sir Knights of St. Michael the Archangel Assembly 3410, as we enter June here in Snellville, the Church keeps Our Lady close before us through devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Sacred Heart of Jesus. These two hearts remind us that true Fourth Degree service begins with love of Christ, honor for His Mother, and a willingness to make our faith visible in the parish and community.

Mary's heart was wholly given to God. Her humility, courage, and trust teach us how to serve without seeking

attention for ourselves. Whether standing with the Honor Guard, carrying the colors, supporting clergy, serving veterans, or encouraging a brother, our purpose is the same: to give honor to God and witness to Christ with charity and conviction.

As our Assembly prepares to serve at St. Lawrence during the July 4 weekend and the parish's USA 250 celebration, Mary can help us deepen our patriotic witness. Catholic patriotism is gratitude for our country, respect for those who sacrificed, and a commitment to human dignity, religious freedom, and the common good.

This month, let us renew our devotion to the Rosary and ask Our Lady to form us into men after the Heart of Christ—faithful husbands, fathers, brothers, parishioners, citizens, and Sir Knights whose service to St. Lawrence and our community is rooted in prayer, humility, and love.

Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us. Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us.

Vivat Jesus!

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### **Bishop Barron sounds alarm over growing influence of socialism, communism in US politics**

The Minnesota bishop warned that communism is fundamentally opposed to religion because faith stands in the way of total state control.

**Bishop Robert Barron**, bishop of the Diocese of Winona-Rochester in Minnesota, about what he describes as the growing influence of politicians in the United States who identify with extreme socialism or communism. Barron argues that this trend is not merely a normal partisan shift between liberals and conservatives, but a deeper challenge to the principles he believes undergird the country.

A major focus of Barron's concern is the relationship between communism and religion. He says communism is fundamentally hostile to religious faith because religion places human institutions—government, economics, education, communication, and culture—under the authority and judgment of God. In his view, this limits the state's ability to control society completely.

Barron cites Karl Marx's belief that religion must be criticized and dismantled before political and economic revolution can succeed. He references Marx's idea that religion is the "opium of the masses," meaning that faith supposedly keeps suffering people passive by offering comfort, hope, and belief in divine providence rather than encouraging revolution against economic exploitation.

The bishop argues that this hostility to religion has appeared repeatedly in history. He points to communist or socialist regimes such as China, Russia, Cuba, Nicaragua, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Venezuela as examples where religious freedom has been restricted or suppressed. Because of this, Barron urges believers not to become complacent about the rise of such political ideologies in American public life.

The article also includes a response from **Kelsey Reinhardt**, president and CEO of CatholicVote, who supports Barron's warning. Reinhardt says CatholicVote will actively oppose candidates who promote socialism or communism, describing those ideologies as destructive to souls, families, and nations. ([Bishop Barron sounds alarm over growing influence of socialism, communism in US politics | Zeale](#))

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### **Solemnity of Saints Peter & Paul: A Call to Renew Our Mission**

Pope Leo XIV marked the **Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul** by urging Catholics to embrace Christ's mission with courage and unity. He reminded the faithful that the feast "recalls the original bond" uniting the Church worldwide and that the apostles' martyrdom reveals "the depth of God's love" for humanity Current. Pope Leo said their witness "is like a seal upon the New Testament," adding that "the blood they shed in this city revealed that Peter and Paul proclaimed the Gospel with "distinctive voices," and their differences are presented as "good news" for the Church. Their witness shows that Christian unity is built through service, reconciliation, and shared mission—not uniformity Current. They were not adversaries among the apostles but became a symbol of unity through the Holy Spirit, Pope Leo emphasized: God entrusts His mission to "imperfect but forgiven sinners" whose lives allow His grace to shine. Christ continues to reach "centers and peripheries" through those who respond to His call: *Follow me!*

The Pope also blessed the **pallium** for new metropolitan archbishops, including four from the United States. Archbishop James Golka of Denver described the shepherd's role as keeping the flock together—even laying down one's life for them. "The shepherd is one who keeps the flock together, will do anything, including lay down his life for the salvation, "I would do that in spades for the people of the Archdiocese of Denver. I've come to love them in a short time.

Pope Leo encouraged all Christians to imitate Peter's commitment to unity and Paul's tireless proclamation of the Gospel, becoming "builders of unity" attentive to the

needs of others. ([Pope Leo XIV: Peter and Paul show the path to Christian unity](#))

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### **Champion Shrine to Honor American Saints for America's 250th**

The **National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion** in Champion, Wisconsin, will mark the nation's 250th anniversary with a special **Catholic Saints of America exhibit**, held **July 1–9, 2026**. The shrine, known as the site of the only approved Marian apparition in the United States, is using the occasion of America's semiquincentennial to invite Catholics to look at the nation's history through the witness of holiness. The exhibit will highlight **76 American saints, blessed, venerables, and servants of God**, a number chosen to recall the year 1776 and the birth of the United States.

Throughout the nine-day celebration, pilgrims will be able to attend daily Mass, hear catechetical presentations, venerate relics, and learn from representatives connected with many canonization causes. The event will feature holy men and women whose lives show the many ways sanctity has taken root on American soil, including missionaries, priests, religious sisters, martyrs, converts, lay witnesses, and those who served the poor, the sick, immigrants, Native peoples, military personnel, and families.

A special Mass on **July 5** will honor **Servant of God Adele Brice**, the young Belgian immigrant who reported seeing the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1859 near present-day Champion. Her mission was simple and urgent: teach the children what they needed to know for salvation. That message remains timely for Catholic families today, especially as the Church seeks to hand on the faith clearly, joyfully, and courageously to the next generation.

The shrine also invites Catholics nationwide to join a **Novena for Our Nation**, beginning July 1, praying for families, civic leaders, religious liberty, unity, holiness, and renewal across the land. For Sir Knights, this is a fitting reminder that patriotic service is not merely ceremonial. It is a public witness that love of country must be rooted in love of God, respect for human dignity, and commitment to the common good.

Shrine rector **Fr. Tony Stephens** hopes the celebration will help Catholics recognize that **holiness is possible in today's America**. The lives of the saints remind us that God raises up witnesses in every age and place. As America observes its 250th anniversary, this exhibit calls the faithful not only to remember the past, but also to ask how each of us can become a stronger witness to Christ in our homes, parishes, communities, and nation.



The Father Michael J. McGivney Guild promotes the cause for sainthood of the founder of the Knights of Columbus, who was beatified on Oct. 31, 2020. Members of the Guild, and anyone devoted to Father McGivney, can play an active role in the cause by praying for his intercession in times of need, especially in cases of serious illness, and reporting to the Guild any favors received.

Membership in the Guild is free and open to anyone who is devoted to Father McGivney and wishes to invoke his intercession and assist in his sainthood cause through prayer. Members receive a quarterly newsletter and are remembered in a weekly Mass offered for their intentions.

Catholic men who wish to live out the vision and mission of Father McGivney are invited to [join the Knights of Columbus](#) and become part of a network of charity, unity and fraternity that serves local parishes and communities.

Father McGivney founded the Knights of Columbus in 1882 in New Haven, Conn., and died at the age of 38 in 1890. His cause for sainthood was opened in 1997, and his heroic virtue was recognized by the Vatican in March 2008, when he was declared a Venerable Servant of God by Pope Benedict XVI.

On May 26, 2020, Father McGivney took another step toward sainthood when Pope Francis approved the promulgation of a decree recognizing a [miracle attributed to his intercession](#). With the approval of this miracle, he

was beatified on Oct. 31, 2020, with the title of Blessed.

Another miracle through his intercession is needed for him to be canonized as a saint.

Those devoted to Father McGivney are encouraged to recite regularly the [prayer for his canonization](#), which is available online and on a special prayer card. You may [Report Favors](#) through this website or by email or regular mail at the addresses listed below.

To request a third-class relic or to order devotional items, click on the [order form link](#). Print out the form, fill it out and mail it to the Father McGivney Guild.

The Guild has more than 180,000 members, and you are encouraged to join by filling out and submitting the [online](#)

Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.

[form](#). Please assist in the cause of Father McGivney by spreading the word about this holy and blessed priest.

**For more information or to request a prayer card:**

**Address:**  
Father McGivney Guild  
1 Columbus Plaza  
New Haven, CT 06510  
Telephone:  
203-752-4087  
Email: [guild@kofc.org](mailto:guild@kofc.org)



### Church Bulletin Bloopers

The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.

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Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

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Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our community. Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say 'Hell' to someone who doesn't care much about you.

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For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

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Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get.

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Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.

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At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What Is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice.



