



Knights of Columbus

St. Oliver Plunkett Council 13440

Knights News



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



Grand Knights Message S.K. Todd Morrow

Thank you to all my Brother Knights who participated in events this year. Over the past years our Council has faced the problems many volunteer organizations have – 80% of the work is done by 20% of

the Council members. Despite the limited participation, we made it work.

Throughout the year, we engaged in various events and activities that brought our community together. We worked at the concessions stands at several Stripers games bringing in substantial funds to aide our projects and it also provided great entertainment and camaraderie among participating members. Our participation in back-to-school events with the Knights was a success, and special thanks go to Javier Tavira for his contributions.

We also contributed to hurricane relief efforts, providing much-needed support to affected communities.

Additionally, we organized multiple blood drives, helping to save lives and support local hospitals.

Our Handicap Drives saw Council members distribute Tootsie Rolls for donations, and we are grateful to Robert Barnard for his efforts in this regard.

We celebrated St. Patrick's Day with a very successful dinner event, and thanks again to Robert for his contributions. There were other events throughout the year that may not be listed here, but they were equally important and appreciated.

On a personal note, I am deeply thankful for the support I received from everyone during my illness; your kindness and encouragement were invaluable.

Please support your new Grand Knight, Javier Tavira in all his future endeavors.

From The Desk Of The District Deputy S.K. Robert Barnard



Unity in Purpose: Strengthening the Bonds of KofC Council 13440

Fostering Collaboration and Shared Goals to Enhance Our Mission

Introduction

Unity is the cornerstone of success for any organization, and for Knights of Columbus Council 13440, it is the foundation that empowers us to fulfill our mission. As members of this esteemed council, we are bound not only by tradition but also by shared values that guide our actions and inspire our collective purpose. This article explores the importance of unity in purpose among council members and offers insights into how we can strengthen our connections to advance our goals.

The Essence of Unity

Unity is more than mere camaraderie; it is a profound sense of alignment in our intentions, efforts, and vision. For Council 13440, unity is about embracing our roles as Knights dedicated to charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism. It is about recognizing that we are stronger together, with each member contributing unique talents and perspectives to enrich our shared mission.

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Shared Values and Vision

At the heart of our unity is the vision of the Knights of Columbus as a force for good in our community and beyond. Council 13440 has a specific role to play, not only in living out this vision but also in ensuring that our efforts align with our values of faith, service, and support. When every member is committed to these principles, we create an environment of cohesion and trust.

Strength in Diversity

Our council is composed of individuals from different walks of life, each bringing distinct skills, experiences, and perspectives. The beauty of unity lies in its ability to transcend differences and unite us in purpose. By valuing the diversity within our council, we can harness the collective strength of our membership to tackle challenges and embrace opportunities.

Challenges to Unity

While unity is vital, it is not always easy to achieve. Miscommunication, differing priorities, and a lack of engagement can erode the bonds that hold us together. Recognizing these challenges is the first step toward addressing them effectively.

Nest month I will discuss and conclude my article of **Unity in Purpose: Strengthening the Bonds of KofC Council 13440**

2025-26 Council Elections

As one Fraternal Year comes to a close, a new slate of officers for the Council is in place.

Javier Tavira is our new **Grand Knight**; **Carey Scruggs** will remain as **Deputy Grand Knight**. **Mark Layton** continues as Treasurer.

Bill Childress will hold the office of **Chancellor**, **Ray Prosek** remains as **Advocate**. **Fritz Siler** moves up to One Year Trustee and **Robert Barnard** takes over as Two Year Trustee. Past Grand Knight **Todd Morrow** fills the roll of **Three Year Trustee**. **Dick Bellnier** stepped up and will be the Council **Warden**. **John Spudich** continues as **Inside Guard** and new Knight **Patrick Chiah**, at his first meeting, volunteered to be **Outside Guard**. Thank you Patrick for stepping up. The position of **Financial Secretary** is not an elected position, and **Frank Montelione** remains in that position.

We cannot emphasize the need for support from all members to ensure the Council's success, we encouraging members to contribute time to assist in our projects, even if it's just 15 minutes before or after Mass. Congratulations to all and pray for another Star Council Award.

Robert Francis Prevost, now known as Pope Leo XIV, is the first American-born Pope.



He was born on September 14, 1955, in Chicago, Illinois. His father was of French and Italian descent, and his mother was of Spanish descent. He has two brothers, John Joseph Prevost and Louis Martín Prevost, both of whom have expressed pride in his historic papacy.

He studied at an Augustinian minor seminary and later earned a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from Villanova University in 1977. He joined the Order of Saint Augustine in 1978 and made his solemn vows in 1981. Father Prevost was ordained a priest in 1982 and later earned a doctorate in canon law in 1987.

He served as a missionary in Peru for many years, holding various positions. He became Bishop of Chiclayo, Peru, in 2015.

Bishop Prevost served as Prior General of the Augustinian Order from 2001 to 2013. In 2023, he was appointed Prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops. He was elevated to Cardinal by Pope Francis in 2023.

He was elected Pope on May 8, 2025, taking the name Leo XIV. He is the first American-born Pope.

Why Pope Leo XIV Chose his Papal Name

Pope Leo XIII, born Vincenzo Gioacchino Raffaele Luigi Pecci in 1810, reigned as pope from 1878 until his death in 1903. His papacy was renowned for its intellectual vigor and a forward-thinking approach that sought to bridge the gap between centuries-old Church traditions and the rapidly changing modern world of science, philosophy, and emerging social issues.



A man of deep scholarship, Leo XIII was often called “the scholar pope.” He had a profound respect for the classical teachings of Thomas Aquinas and played a key role in promoting Thomism—a revival of medieval scholastic philosophy—to engage with modern intellectual currents. His encyclical *Aeterni Patris* (1879) championed this revival by encouraging theological studies that could serve as a robust framework for the Church in an age of rapid intellectual change. His commitment to intellectual renewal helped prepare the Church for the philosophical and scientific challenges of modernity.

Perhaps his most influential legacy lies in his approach to social justice, primarily articulated in his groundbreaking encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891). This document laid the foundation for modern Catholic social teaching by addressing the plight of workers and the ethical dilemmas posed by the burgeoning industrial economy. In it, he argued for the rights of laborers, the

ethical obligations of employers, and the importance of a balanced approach to capitalism and socialism. His insights into economic justice and the rights of workers created a moral framework that continues to influence Catholic social doctrine even today.

In addition to his theological and social contributions, Pope Leo XIII worked to reform the administrative aspects of the Church and engage with global issues of his time. He promoted dialogue with contemporary intellectuals and even reached out to secular leaders, positioning the Church as a thoughtful contributor to discussions on morality, economics, and politics. His proactive engagement sought to reconcile faith with reason in a world undergoing rapid change, leaving a legacy of a Church that could be both rooted in tradition and open to progressive ideas.

Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly Following the Election of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV stated “Pope Leo XIV, the first American Pope, assumes the Petrine ministry with a strong familiarity with the Knights of Columbus. I was honored to meet with him in 2023, shortly after the beginning of his tenure as Prefect of the Vatican’s Dicastery for Bishops, and I know firsthand of his sincere appreciation for the Knights of Columbus and our service to the Church around the world. Our Order began during the pontificate of Pope Leo XIII and

in the years ahead, we will proudly stand with Pope Leo XIV as we seek together to build up the Kingdom of God.



The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of Catholic Charities in a case concerning religious exemptions from unemployment taxes. Catholic Charities argued that it should not be required to pay unemployment taxes because it is a religious organization.

Wisconsin state authorities had previously determined that the charity’s activities such as housing assistance and job

training were not “distinctively religious,” and therefore did not qualify for an exemption.

In a unanimous decision, the Supreme Court overturned the lower court ruling, emphasizing that religious organizations should not have to engage in specific practices, such as worship or proselytizing, to be recognized as religious entities under the law. Justice Elena Kagan noted the importance of treating all religions equally without scrutinizing their doctrine.

This decision reflects the court’s ongoing engagement with cases related to religious freedoms and the separation of church and state. If you’d like to explore the full article, you



can find it here. **Congratulations to Deacon Fred Williams** who was ordained to the transitional diaconate in Savannah on May 31st. A transitional deacon is a man who’s on his way to be ordained to the priesthood.

Through our Refund Support Vocations Program (RSVP) our Council has supported Fred through his studies in the

Seminary based in Savannah. Fred is the son of Council Member Micky Williams and Joan Williams and brother of JP Williams our former Insurance Rep.

“The joy and thanksgiving I have to all who have supported me in my vocational journey” said Fred. “I ask for your continued prayers as I continue forward toward the priesthood!”



Deacon Fred will be serving and presenting the homily at the 5pm Mass on June 15



BACK TO SCHOOL WITH THE KNIGHTS! 2ND ANNUAL SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE JUNE 7 TO JULY 13

At the State Convention our Back To School With Knights took second place Statewide for charitable programs conducted by Councils Statewide.

Last year, though the cooperation of St. Vincent DePaul, we distributed full backpacks to over 50 children. These supplies go to families who may be struggling financially. The program not only focuses on supplying needed supplies but the psychological affects that youngsters face when they return to school without the proper supplies.

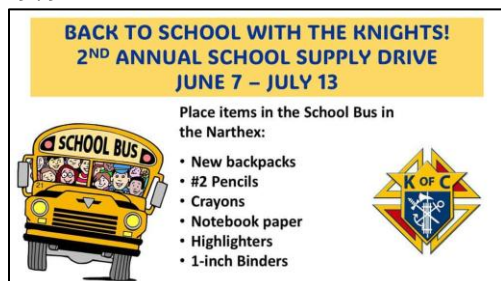
Barbara Stone, President Of The St. Vincent Society, wrote: “The parents all expressed their gratitude that their child/children would be able to return to school with new bookbags and supplies. Speaking with parents before and after the program showed how much this meant to them. When we contacted one mother about the program she started crying. She was dealing with chemotherapy treatments that left her with no money for school supplies. Even if she had the money, she didn’t have the strength to go shopping. She just kept telling me that God had answered her prayers. Following the day St. Vincent de Paul heard from many parents expressing their thanks for the supplies and the way their children were treated.”

Our program begins June 7th and runs through July 13th.

Place donations in the collection box in then narthex. Items needed:

- #2 pencils
- New backpacks
- Wide ruled notebook paper
- Highlighters
- Colored pencils
- Crayons
- 1 inch binders

For more information contact Sir Knight Javier Tavira at 678-577-4979



SAINT OF THE MONTH



St. Anthony of Padua

Born Fernando Martins de Bulhões in Lisbon, Portugal, in 1195, St. Anthony of Padua came from a wealthy family. His early years were marked by his dedication to studying theology and Latin at the Abbey of Santa Cruz. Inspired by the Franciscan friars, he left the abbey and joined the

Franciscan Order, adopting the name Anthony.

Anthony's missionary zeal led him to attempt preaching in Morocco, but illness forced him to return. His journey took an unexpected turn when his ship was blown off course, leading him to Sicily and eventually Tuscany. Initially assigned to a hermitage, Anthony's eloquent preaching soon gained recognition, impressing even Francis of Assisi.

Throughout his life, Anthony was credited with miraculous events, including preaching to fish when people refused to listen. His legacy continued to grow, and he was canonized within a year of his death in 1231. Later, he was declared a Doctor of the Church. Widely venerated as the patron saint of lost items, St. Anthony is often depicted with a book and the Infant Jesus.

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Saint Joseph is recognized as the patron saint of fathers. Why is he the patron saint of fathers? He was the earthly father of Jesus: While Jesus was not biologically Joseph's son, Joseph accepted the responsibility of raising him. He protected and provided for the Holy Family: Joseph demonstrated incredible faith, trusting in God and taking care of Mary and Jesus, especially in times of crisis. He serves as a model of a loving and courageous father: The Church looks

to St. Joseph as an example of what it means to be a good father, highlighting his virtues such as acceptance, courage, and dedication to his family. Beyond his role as patron saint of fathers, Saint Joseph is also patron of: The Universal Church Families Workers (especially carpenters) Expecting mothers and unborn children A happy death Immigrants Travelers House sellers and buyers And many other causes
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June is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus primarily because the Church celebrates its solemnity in this month. The devotion traces back to the 1670s, when Jesus appeared to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, revealing His heart as a symbol of divine love, aflame and crowned with thorns.

He asked for a special feast to honor His Sacred Heart and gave her 12 promises for those who venerated it, including grace, peace, and the assurance of final repentance for those who receive Communion on nine consecutive First Fridays.

Though initially met with hesitation by Church authorities, the devotion spread, and by 1856 Pope Pius IX established the feast universally.

June thus became a month not just of liturgical observance, but one inviting deeper devotion to Christ's mercy and sacrificial love.

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 14-15 Distribution of Father's Day Gift – After All Masses

June 14-15 Back To School With The Knights

June 16 - 6pm Rosary, followed by Dinner and 7pm Business meeting

June 28-26 Back To School With The Knights

Comical Closing

A cop pulls over a carload of nuns. The cop says, "Sister, this is a 55 MPH highway. Why are you going so slow?" The Sister replies, "Sir, I saw a lot of signs that said 41, not 55."

The cop answers, "Oh, Sister, that's not the speed limit, that's the name of the highway you are on!" The Sister says, "Oh! Silly me! Thanks for letting me know. I'll be more careful."

At this point, the cop looks in the backseat where the other nuns are shaking and trembling. The cop asks, "Excuse me, Sister, what's wrong with your friends back there? They are shaking something terrible."

The Sister answers, "We just got off Highway 101."

