



Supreme Master  
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# The Catholic Patriot

Supporting our Country, Community, and Church  
With

Respect and Honor

*Knights of Columbus Fourth Degree*

## Our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.”

Worthy Sir Knights,

For many July Fourths, I have sat on my front porch swing back in Germantown, Tennessee. It is an old wooden swing with several coats of paint that has traveled from our first home to our third home, over the past twenty-six years, and will soon make another journey to a new home in Connecticut.



The ritual is always the same. I sit on the swing with a cup of coffee and a home made blueberry muffin. I sit there, enjoying both, as I once again read over the words of our Declaration of Independence. And then, I come to those final words:

*“And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.”*

For me, this is no random practice of patriotic fervor, but a reminder of a Fourth of July long ago in 2005: the day I left home for Afghanistan. The day I hugged my wife, Theresa, and our then two children, Madeleine and Joseph, and said goodbye; not knowing if I would ever see them again. All on July 4<sup>th</sup> because the Army has terrible timing it seems. Or do they?

Looking back, if one has to go to war, can there be any more compelling time to go than on his or her nation’s birthday? Can there be a more powerful reminder of all that is at stake and of all that has been sacrificed to get to this moment? And if we are patriots, does it not remind us that long ago we were called to pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor to serve a cause greater than individual selves?

For all the sadness of July 4, 2005, eventually, there was also July 8, 2006, when at 0300 Hrs. on a Sunday morning, my flight home landed in Bangor, Maine. We exited the plane in the pitch black darkness of a Maine night, tiredly marched across the tarmac and into the terminal, where the night was suddenly devoured by the bright lights of the terminal where hundreds of those dedicated, amazing volunteers in Bangor, came out in the dark of night to ensure we were properly welcomed home. A few moments later, still physically tired but spiritually reenergized, I had my first meal back in the United States: a cup of coffee and a Maine blueberry muffin. Even now, waves of great and complicated emotions sweep over me as I recall that moment.

As Patriots, May we always remember that God calls each of us in so many ways to love and serve both our Church and our country. Let us, time and again, resolve to pledge all we have to each other and to our Church, and to our respective countries. **Vivat Jesus!**

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# Knights Find a Prefect Use for Retired Capes and Used Wedding Dresses

## Take Notes

How many times have we asked what do we do with our retired capes and wedding dresses taking up space in the closet. Well, **Bay of the Holy Spirit Assembly 2573** in Louisiana has the prefect answer that would probably be true in just about every assembly. Assembly 2573 donates capes and wedding dresses to the Compassionate Burial for Indigent Babies program. The CBIB uses the capes and dresses to to line the baby's casket and create gowns for the precious baby.

According to CBIB founder, Lise Naccari, in most states, the remains of miscarried babies less than 12 weeks old are disposed in medical waste instead of being buried. Most families who experience the loss don't know they have option of burial and some, unfortunately can't afford a funeral and burial. The Knights in Assembly 2573 have found a way to help ensure that these babies are buried with dignity and respect.

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THE CATHOLIC WEEK

## KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS BAY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ASSEMBLY 2573

# Knights donate capes, wedding dress to provide burials for indigent babies

Submitted by William Wilhelm

"All life deserves to be buried with dignity and respect." This is the mission statement of "Compassionate Burials for Indigent Babies, a Louisiana nonprofit founded by Lise Naccari, who found this calling after her own miscarriage.

According to Naccari, "In most states, miscarriages of babies less than 12 weeks are tragically disposed in medical waste instead of being buried. Most families who experience the above miscarriage don't know they have the option of burial and some, unfortunately, can't afford a funeral and burial." This is when CBIB comes in to help.

In Louisiana, by law medical staff is required to present a family with a document advising them of their right to bury their child. Families often reach out to Naccari, who steps in and takes care of everything, from arranging a funeral home to the burial of the baby.

In 2023, CBIB buried 41 babies, relying on monetary donations, and volunteers who build caskets for the babies. Other volunteers use retired Knights of Columbus capes and wedding dresses to line the baby's casket and create gowns for the precious baby. Local Knights of Columbus Color Corps also provides an Honor Guard, and often act as pallbearers at the funeral home and cemetery.

The mission of CBIB was presented to Sir Knights at a meeting in Daphne at the Bay of the Holy Spirit Assembly 2573. The Knights agreed to contact their members to gather retired KofC capes and take them to Naccari, along with a



Submitted by William Wilhelm

William Wilhelm and Lise Naccari show a wedding dress donated to "Compassionate Burials for Indigent Babies."

\$500 donation.

Sir Knight Charles Badamenti, who is also a parishioner at Christ the King Church in Daphne, was present at the meeting and moved by the mission of CBIB.

According to Badamenti, "I knew my late wife Deborah would want to do something for this organization." Chuck met with his daughters and other family members and together they ultimately decided to donate Deborah's 1996 wedding dress to CBIB.

Badamenti said, "As honorable as the CBIB mission statement is, it was not an easy thing to part with my dear wife's wedding dress. However, I knew she would be absolutely honored that her dress was used to envelope a precious baby."

## Dates to Remember

### July 22, 2024 District Master Quarterly Training

“Planning for Success”

The first step to a successful year is having a great plan. No matter what level you are at, a plan is required to be successful. While there are some lucky people out there for whom things just seem to happen, remember this is not the lottery. Success takes hard work and planning.

We will also be discussing the (VAVS) Veteran Affairs Voluntary Service Program; also known as ***Serving Those That Served***.

## For Love of God and Country

Supreme Master Michael McCusker was recently interviewed for the Supreme Council’s monthly Chaplain’s Report about military service, patriotism and the mission of the Fourth Degree. Click [HERE](#) to read.



### ***Training for the next fraternal year, plan ahead now.***

*When I was a new Fourth degree Knight and bought my first cape, chapeau, and sword. I was very proud to show up for my first call out at a Catholic funeral home in downtown Nashville, Tennessee to honor a brother Knight who had passed away.*

*Well, when I arrived there were already a number of other Sir Knights there, and I asked what do I do? The answer I got was, stand out here and watch what we do and do that. My first honor guard may have been my last.*

*It felt wrong to not be prepared to honor our brother this way. I had never served in an honor guard before and was also nervous, which made me NOT want to serve. I would rather leave than honor a brother Knight, whom I had known and worked many programs with over the years, because I feared making a mistake at his wake.*

*I decided to ask someone else and was glad I did. He took me aside and showed me a few quick tips on how to hold, present, and carry the sword, and what to do while we were at the coffin. His suggestion was pray the rosary for the brother's family while standing at attention, it makes the time go faster and you can connect with God and the brother's family through prayer. (I still do that while at attention).*

*The point is that every Vice Supreme Master should be offering monthly tips to the District Masters, the District Masters should be passing those tips to the Faithful Navigators and Marshals of his District, every Faithful Navigator and Color Corps Commander should take time during each Assembly meeting to train the members of his assembly, especially those new members before they end up in the backroom of a funeral home not knowing what to do.*

*We will start again next month with tips from the Drill Manual and Manual of the Sword so we can all be prepared and sharpen our skills as we step out in front of our parishes as the visible arm of the Order.*

*If you want membership to increase, if you want honor guards for your programs, if you want to communicate our love for our faith, our country, and our Order, then take the time to train and prepare for what your Assembly, District, and Province plan for the next fraternal year.*

*Call or email me with any training tips you would like to have me cover in these articles.*

Fraternally,  
Michael J. Porter  
PSD,FM,FVSM  
4th Degree Director of Training



The New Fraternal Year has arrived! Make sure and prepare by scheduling at least 2 exemplifications per district! And when you schedule those exemplifications, make sure that you send the information for the spreadsheet schedule to me! I have prepared a new spreadsheet for the new fraternal year. I will keep the old spreadsheet going forward so that we can complete the entries showing the results of exemplifications held. So please send that information to me if you have not already done so.

I look forward to working with you in the new fraternal year!

Fraternally and Patriotically,

Micheal Thumm, FVSM  
Director of Ceremonials

## Louisiana District Knights Show Honor and Respect

### *Bishop Dorsonville's Final Journey*



Louisiana Knights say goodbye to their bishop, friend, fellow Sir Knight, and long-time supporter of the Order.

Bishop Mario Dorsonville was a true servant of God who served as shepherd of the Houma-Thibodaux Diocese in Louisiana from 2023-2024. He was a Fourth Degree member of the Knights of Columbus who loved the patriotic arm of the Order, requesting our presence at all Masses he celebrated, whenever it was possible.

## DeSmet Province Knights Help Celebrate Anniversary



Knights from Assemblies 3589 in West Fargo, 785 in Mandan, and 793 in Jamestown help celebrate North Dakota State Chaplain Father Chad Wilhelm's 30th Anniversary. Eighteen Sir Knights participated in the Honor Guard for the Mass held at St. James Basilica in Jamestown, ND. After Mass, the Knights led a Corpus Christi procession.



Worthy Sir Knights,

Thank you for your continued success in creating new assemblies. There are currently many new assemblies in infancy stages. Just a couple of notes of which you should be aware: First, you need 30 members to start a new assembly. It would require very extreme conditions to allow less than that and only our Supreme Master may give approval.

Secondly, when wanting to create a new assembly, the District Master (DM) should be stick hand-ling it, and the VSM should be kept in the loop. I have been involved in instances where a member of an assembly wanted to create a new assembly without the DM even knowing about it. To make it a success, it needs to be a team effort.

Lastly, I just want to remind you to start thinking about next year's new assembly goals. It's time to start putting a plan together for the 2024-2025 fraternal year.

Thank you for keeping me in the loop and getting me involved. Hopefully, I can help make the process easier.

Thank you and God Bless,

Respectively,

Dale Hofer, PSD

Director of New Assembly Development.

## Denver Knights Exhibit Catholic Patriotism



Knights participate in the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage in Denver Colorado. The canopy was carried by Titus Conwell (Event Lead Color Corp Commander) and Joe Kallina (Assembly 2294 Color Corp Commander). They were joined by Assembly 2813 Sir Knights Mike Tracy and Ralph Schmitt.

## Thirty new Sir Knights attend Exemplification held in Daphne, Alabama, hosted by Assembly 2573



### Sometimes the Most Effective Communication Doesn't Require a Speech

During my career in the Knights, I have made no secret that I was raised in a fraternal community. That is, my parents ensured I was around the right people as I develop into a young man. At the age of ten, many Knights in our small parish made it a point to engage me in activities, but this story is not about me. It is about the future of the Knights and the need for good communications.

One day, serving in an honor guard during a corporate communion, a young man had his eyes on us the whole time as we stood at present sword. After Mass, I met up with the young man that was there with his brother and mom. I told him "I notice you never looked away as we stood there!" He said, "Ya. I think it looked cool!" A couple months later, he was in the hall with his mother after a pancake breakfast, and I asked him if he could help me pick up the syrup bottles. He said "I guess." A couple months later, I saw him ask another Knight if he could help pick up the syrup, as he was picking them up. The next month he walked into the kitchen and asked if we needed the syrup picked up. Over the years, as he grew up, so did the tasks he did for us including setting up youth activities during our family picnic. He graduated school and later enlisted in the Army. I remember the first time he showed up to Mass in that Green Class A uniform. There were a lot of proud men in church that day. He eventually married and has a lovely wife and three young children; raising them in the Catholic Church. He works with the Vocational School as a safety instructor going around to different companies, teaching safety. Of course, he became a Knight and served many positions within our council. He also served more recently as the State Membership Director, helping to lead Oklahoma to multiple Circles of Honor. He served as our State Programs Director, as well as Communications Director, when I was state deputy. Currently, he is the financial secretary for the largest council in the state and is also the State Advocate for Oklahoma.

Yes, he too was raised in a fraternal community. In about five years, I will be one of those proud men sitting in banquet room, as he makes his first address as State Deputy. So, yes, ***sometimes the most effective communication doesn't require a speech, just an action.*** Or as St. Francis once said, "preach often, and when necessary, use words."

Next time you see that young man looking at you, introduce yourself. You never know. He may be your future state deputy! What if your action today inspires the next Supreme Knight? No matter, now it is time for action!



For the summer and fall months, **Warriors to Lourdes** will be the Program of the month. Now is a perfect time for all the Faithful Navigators to reach out to the Councils that feed your Assemblies and collaborate in raising money to support **Knights of Columbus Charities, Inc.**, which uses a percentage of overall donations to enable our wounded veterans attend this pilgrimage.

The Warriors to Lourdes program is a smaller pilgrimage within the International Military Pilgrimage, which began in 1946 to promote reconciliation and peace after World War II. Ever since, for one weekend in May, Lourdes, France has become a place of prayer and healing for active-duty military and veterans representing more than forty nations. The Knights of Columbus in a partnership with the Archdiocese of Military Service U.S.A. (AMS U.S.A.) provides the opportunity and means for current and former service members suffering from physical, mental, spiritual, and moral wounds to attend the pilgrimage in Lourdes for a period of prayer and spiritual guidance. All expenses for accepted applicants are covered by Knights of Columbus Charities, Inc.



What an incredible act of charity it would be to send our warriors to Lourdes for the International Military Pilgrimage. Every \$3,000.00 raised sends a U.S warrior to Lourdes. I would like to see every province raise enough money to send at least one of our warriors to Lourdes. You might want to reach out to the State Deputy in your jurisdiction to see if they could set up a Warriors to Lourdes designated fund in their charitable account where assemblies and councils can send their donations for this program, and since charitable accounts fall under 501c3, individuals or companies from your assemblies may be eligible to receive a tax credit for their support of Warriors to Lourdes.

If you are wondering how your assembly can raise funds for this incredible program. Here is what **St. Gregory the Great Council 12821 in Warwick, Rhode Island** did to collect money from four Masses during Veterans Day Weekend. The goal was to collect sufficient funds to send at least one Wounded Warrior to Lourdes (approximately \$3,000). To that end, the St. Gregory the Great Knights offered to match the first \$1,500 collected over Veterans Day Weekend. The fundraiser was an enormous success, with a collection from four masses of \$2,700, for a total (with matching funds) of \$4,200. Just think! What could our incredible assemblies do with the support of the three to four councils that feed their assembly?

If you know a Warrior who wishes to apply to attend the pilgrimage or if you would like to volunteer as a companion for a pilgrimage, please visit the Warriors to Lourdes website ([www.warriorstolourdes.com](http://www.warriorstolourdes.com)) and fill out the Warrior to Lourdes application, which will be available in the late fall.

To make a donation, scan the QR code below on your mobile device or make checks payable to **Knights of Columbus Charities, Inc.** Please include “**Warriors to Lourdes Pilgrimage Fund**” on the memo line of your check and mail it to:

**Knights of Columbus Charities**  
**1 Columbus Plaza**  
**PO Box 1966**  
**New Haven, CT 06509-1966**

Questions about donations?  
 Call 860-694-5713.



Companions are invited to attend and may be offered needs based financial assistance on a case-by-case basis with a validated Chaplain’s certification of need. The AMS/KofC package rate for companions and volunteers traveling from the United States to Lourdes is \$3,000.00 for double occupancy and \$3,300.00 for a single occupancy room. The applications are reviewed for selection each January by the Order’s Warriors to Lourdes Team, which includes the Supreme Master and a medical Director. If you have any questions, please email [Lourdes@kofc.org](mailto:Lourdes@kofc.org).

Please let me know what your local assemblies are doing to help our Warriors attend this pilgrimage.