



Volume XXXVII No. 9 March 2017

“Lent stimulates us to let the Word of God penetrate our life and in this way to know the fundamental truth: who we are, where we come from, where we must go, what path we must take in life....” — Pope Benedict XVI.

CHAPLAIN’S REPORT

Father David McGuigan

No report.

GRAND KNIGHT’S REPORT

Michael Murphy

Guest Column

By Brother Knight, Lawrence P. Grayson

A Nation Divided

“A house divided against itself cannot stand,” said Abraham Lincoln in June 1858, less than three years before the Civil War began. “It will become all one thing or all the other,” he continued. “Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it...or its advocates will push it forward, till it shall become lawful in all the States.”

Today, the social compact of the United States is again being severed, not by the issue of slavery, but by race, sex, ethnicity, color, national origin, religion, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender expression, and other lines of fragmentation that can be exploited by wedge politics. As intense as the controversies arising from these matters are, they are more like lacerations on the surface of society. The underlying, fundamental chasm centers on

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divergent beliefs in God and the importance of religion for leading one’s life.

The divide was exemplified by two recent events held days apart. On Jan. 21, hundreds of thousands of women gathered for the first Women’s March on Washington and its companion demonstrations in other cities and nations. They claimed the recent presidential election insulted, demonized and threatened women. Those favoring pro-life, however, were not welcome because the core issue of the demonstration was a woman’s right to abortion. On Jan. 27, hundreds of thousands of people participated in the 44th annual March for Life in Washington, with companion parades across the United States and the world. They had one message: every human life is valuable and must

be protected from conception until natural death. The opposing views expressed at the two gatherings are irreconcilable.

The divergence in dealing with religiously-based issues is clearly exhibited in opposing actions of the Obama and Trump presidential administrations. Forty-eight hours before the end of Obama's term on Jan. 20, a rule went into effect to prohibit states from withholding federal funds for family planning from Planned Parenthood. Four weeks later on Feb. 16, the House voted to void the rule. Senate action and the President's signature are expected soon.

Under the Obama Administration, annual funding to Planned Parenthood increased significantly, rising to \$554 million in 2015. On Jan. 30, the *Protect Funding for Women's Health Care Act* (S.241), which would prohibit Planned Parenthood from receiving any federal funding and redirect the amount it would have received to health care providers that do not perform abortions, was introduced in the Senate.

Last August, a Federal District Court enjoined the Obama Administration from enforcing a directive ordering public schools to allow students to use bathrooms and locker rooms consistent with their gender choice, rather than biological sex. The Obama Administration appealed, but on Feb. 10, the day after Jeff Sessions was sworn in as Attorney General, the Justice Department withdrew the petition.

On one side of the divide are religiously-committed people who uphold the innate dignity of every human being, the sanctity of human life at all stages, marriage as only between one man and one woman, and freedom of conscience in guiding one's public actions. On the other side are the religiously-indifferent. They overwhelmingly view human dignity as being conferred when one can function as a person, a woman to have a right to abort her own child, marriage as a union between consenting adults regardless of gender, and a religious-formed conscience as subordinate to LGBT demands. The two groups conflict not only theologically, but clash culturally and politically, as well. They allow no middle view, no room for compromise.

America is a pluralistic nation, in which people of numerous persuasions must live and work

together in freedom, peace and justice. This can only occur and be sustained if the people are bound together by common principles, shared values and underlying societal mores. It is morality, not laws, which forms such bonds. Throughout most of America's history, morality and its attendant virtues were rooted in Judeo-Christian teachings. These religious ideas shaped people's beliefs and convictions, and guided their behavior. They provided the basis for the nation's social policy and law, and created a framework for the nation's public life.

The various Christian denominations have many differences, but they share more convictions than separate them. The gulf between belief and unbelief, or commitment and indifference, borders on the unbridgeable. The religiously-committed and the religiously-indifferent have very divergent perspectives on the purpose of human life, on the reason for creation. A person who believes that life on earth is transitory and that one will spend an eternity in heaven or hell depending upon how that life is lived will make vastly different choices than one who believes that the here and now is all there is.

A large and increasing component of the religiously-indifferent are nones, that is, those who are atheists, agnostics or have no religious affiliation. According to Pew surveys, the number of Americans identifying as nones was just under 23 percent in 2015, compared to 15 percent in 2007. A most distressing finding is that the largest single factor driving the rise of nones is Catholic defections. About 28 percent of nones are former Catholics. In the eight-year period between the two Pew surveys, the number of Americans claiming to be Catholic decreased by 3 million, shrinking their share of the U.S. population from 24 to 21 percent, which now is less than that of nones.

Although one-third of American adults were raised as Catholics, four in ten no longer identify themselves as such. Beyond defections, there are those who claim to be Catholic, but do not faithfully practice it. Among self-identified Catholics, only 64 percent are absolutely certain that God exists, 58 percent consider religion important in their lives, and a mere 35 percent attend Mass each Sunday.

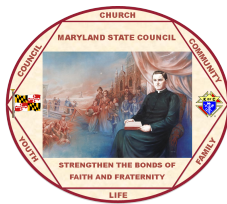
This apathy, along with desertions, has consequences. The future of religious freedom in the United States may well rest on the outcome of the struggle to establish a materialistic, religiously-intolerant society, spurred by the growth of the religiously-indifferent, or a religiously-tolerant, secular society grounded in spiritual values, advocated by the religiously-committed. Like Lincoln's view of slavery, this struggle will end only when the supporters of one of these immutable views have no further means to resist the supporters of the other.

SUPREME COUNCIL REPORT

www.KofC.org

Please check out the webpage for a variety of informative and enlightening articles and news about recent events for the KofC around the world.

STATE COUNCIL REPORT



Please check out the State webpage (www.kofc-md.org) for information on upcoming State events and programs.

DISTRICT DEPUTY'S REPORT

Bill Adams, District Deputy

My Brothers of District 21,

Lent is a glorious time of the Church year. It is a time for us to reflect on the sacrifices our Lord made for our salvation. It is a time of fasting, prayer and sacrifice on our part. Traditionally everyone gives something up as a show of our face. I would suggest instead of giving up chocolate, or meat or something similar, we think of a renewed commit to our vows to the Church and our Order. Maybe give up some time, to pray, to volunteer for good works, be more loving and less confrontational towards each other and our fellow man. This is

the Charity that not only springs from a kindly heart, but the ennobling virtue placed in the heart of men by our Lord.

We are in the home stretch of the Fraternal Year. Let's make our final push for our programs and our membership. We have degrees every month in our district, so let's show the state what we can do. The convention is coming in May, our theme for district 21 is First Responders, we plan to honor them with our display this year. Thank You for your support this year, and as we get ready for Officer elections I encourage all to volunteer for positions and I look forward to providing my support for your new officers.

Vivat Jesus
Bill Adams
District Deputy 21



Knights of Columbus
INSURANCE
YOUR SHIELD FOR LIFE

COUNCIL BENEFITS ADVISOR

Mike Hurley

"Mailbox Money"

Maybe you've heard this buzzword in the financial planning community – Mailbox Money. Just what does this mean? Quite simply...creating an income stream from your existing assets that is sent to you once a month (typically electronically) that covers all your monthly set expenses.

Why is this important? Because if you structure your assets in a conservative manner to cover all your monthly fixed expenses you can both not have to worry about going broke and actually spend any other assets or income streams on fun stuff – like travel, gifts for the grandkids and going out to dinner.

At the Knights of Columbus we specialize in creating "Mailbox Money." Our annuity products have numerous structured and flexible income

options that allow you to use your 401k, IRA and savings to create monthly income streams that will fit your lifestyle.

So here's the main point of this article – you've heard us Council Benefits Advisors talk about accumulation products for years...we now want to further that conversation to include "income products". Let us know if we can assist. Give me a call (410-913-7835) or an email Michael.hurley@kofc.org.

Vivat Jesus

COUNCIL NEWS

Maryland State Council Family of the Year!

As it was announced at last night's Social Meeting, please join me in congratulating our very own 2016-2017 Maryland State Council Family of the Year — the Gioio Family.

Having been selected as our own Council's Family of the Year, they were submitted to the Maryland State Council for which they were selected over all other of the Council's candidates. They will now compete at the Supreme level for the 2016-2017 International Family of the Year.

The Gioios are just the second family ever selected from our Council by the Maryland State Council for such an honor with the Greuls being the prior selectee.

Your prayers and continued support are appreciated for such a wonderful family that are so very generous and caring in all of their time and resources. If you have any additional testimonies, stories, or photos of the Gioio family in action from this fraternal year to contribute to the Supreme FOY package, please contact me as soon as possible.

Vivat Jesus,
Grand Knight

From the Webmaster:

Please monitor your emails for spam, phishing, spoofing, or any other type of hacking. A member received a bogus email from a

member whose email account appears to have been spoofed. I strongly recommend Council members immediately change your PERSONAL email account password, replacing it with a strong password. What is a strong password? A strong password is one that contains a mix of upper and lower case letters, numbers, and two or more special characters, at least 8 characters long.

If you feel you have received a bogus email through the Council's Website email service, please copy and paste the bogus email to a Word document and forward the Word document and any details you can to our Webmaster. Webmaster Ray will forward the "invasions" details to UKnight Support Services for their assistance.

LECTURER'S REPORT

Richard Perron

No report.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Joe Kirschensteiner

No report.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Ray Miles, Recorder

The Good of the Order Door Prize of \$68 was won by Brother Dennis K. Maher.....BUT.....Brother Dennis was NOT present at the February Council Business Meeting!!! Therefore, the Good of the Order Door Prize for the March Council Business Meeting will be \$89. The winning member must be present at the meeting on March 8, at 7:30 p.m. in the downstairs Community Room at St Joe's Church to claim the prize.

ACTIVITY REPORTS

CHURCH

Peter O'Sullivan

Tuesday Rosary

This tradition began following the 9/11 tragedy and has continued without interruption. In addition to the victims of 9/11, we remember our service and law enforcement men and women and other intentions as they arise. Everyone is invited to come to the Cassidy Center at 7:30 p.m. whenever you have an hour to spare on a Tuesday night.

Adoration

Our Council has committed to have members present from 7:00 - 8:00 a.m. every Sunday morning. All Knights, their families, and friends are invited and encouraged to participate in this beautiful activity.

COMMUNITY

George Snediker

No report.

MEMBERSHIP

We welcome our new members, those re-activated and transferred! Join in with what interests you have and provide us with your feedback and inputs. Looking at what we do from a different perspective helps to keep us grounded and is the life-blood of any Council.

We have a moral obligation to offer membership in the Knights of Columbus to every eligible Catholic man.

Please reach out to Catholic men you meet or know at church to see if they may be interested in joining our brotherhood. If you are not sure what to say or do, do not hesitate to contact me or any Past Grand Knight of our Council. Also, remember that there are materials at our Bulletin Board area that is behind the steps to the new Hall. You are welcome to hand out any of the information on the Knights to a

prospective candidate. We will add more Form 100's to the drawer for recruitment use. Let me know if we need more materials to be stored there.

Degree Schedule: <http://www.kofc-md.org/docs1617/degrees/Degrees.pdf>

Greg Lofton, PGK, Membership Director

COUNCIL

No report.

PIT BEEF

David Love

It is getting that be time of the year were we need to start thinking of the Council's Pit Beef activities for 2017. In 2016, we brought in just over \$ 8,000 to the council through 3 events in Westminster (The fourth of July, The Maryland Wine Festival and the Fall Harvest Days.)

Do we want to do the same events? Do we want to do any other events, maybe in downtown Sykesville? Drop me a note or give me a call and let me know what you are thinking.

In addition, of course, if you are interested and willing to help in any way with the Pit Beef events, let me know. There is some paper work (for the county), inventory counting, and shopping that needs to be done prior to the event. Set up and prep. the morning of the event, then cooking, slicing, sandwich making, customer service and drinks during the day, then clean up and packing at the end. A couple of hours of time for a lifetime of memories are to be shared. Students can earn service hours as well.

Westminster Farm Museum Events

- 4th of July Fireworks (all day starting at 9am, sales — 3pm 'til dark).
- MD Wine Festival (Saturday and Sunday, Sept 16th and 17th).
- Fall Harvest Days (Saturday, October 14th).

Hope to hear from you soon.

God Bless,
David

CONCESSION STAND PROJECT

Tony Gioio



Metallica concert Wednesday May 10th

Concert starts at 6:00 pm, gates will open at
4:00 pm

we will start stand set ups at ~ 2:00pm

This should be an amazing event (a little
different audience than Beyonce)

I predict that this will be our most profitable
event for the whole year

So let's not miss out sign up

now

Contact Tony Gioio 410-552-5579

FAMILY

Jarvis Abellana

Family of the Month

Our Family of the Month are the Grasleys. Al and Linda, along with daughter Catherine and son Matthew prays the Rosary for Peace on Tuesdays. Al teaches at St. Joseph's Church's Youth Ministry, and also our Council's Culture of Life Director. Linda leads the Children's Liturgy on Sunday masses, and as a Greeter for our parishioners. Catherine is an Altar Server on

Sunday masses, and on special occasions. Matthew is an active Scout. We credit the success of our Family Dinner and Movie Nights to their tireless efforts. As always, the Grasleys joined the March for Life in Washington DC and in Annapolis MD, and coordinating this year's Annual Baby Bottle Drive to support our local Pregnancy Center. The Grasleys continuously set themselves as role models - for faith, family, and community.

Our Family Night Schedule

Let's start with Spaghetti dinner and desserts. Popcorn served all evening. What better way to share the evening. Join us. Events are held at the Fellowship Hall. Please sign up at the Cassidy Center.

March 4th: Kubo and the Two Strings

ABP Fulton J. Sheen's prophecy:

"The book was published as long ago as 1933 but it could be describing with uncanny accuracy the situation today. Sheen wrote, "We are at the end of a tradition and a civilization which believed we could preserve Christianity without Christ, religion without a creed, meditation without sacrifice, family life without moral responsibility, sex without purity and economics without ethics. We have completed our experiment of living without God..."

How prescient he was, though I am surprised that even in 1933, when Christian traditions and values in society and in family life still seemed to be stable and intact, he could see the writing on the wall. I think even Sheen would have been staggered at the speed at which his prophesy has been realised: changes in the definition and meaning of marriage; routine and widespread abortion; increasing pressure to legalise euthanasia – these are only some of the more obvious features of modern life taken for granted in the western world."

By Francis Phillips; (reviews books for the Catholic Herald, Apr 4, 2014).

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/commentandblogs/2014/04/04/how-prophetic-were-fulton-sheens-words-80-years-ago/>

CULTURE OF LIFE

Al Grasley

Baby Bottle Campaign 2017 this weekend (March 3/4th)

Brothers, another lent another baby bottle campaign, please plan on handing out baby bottles after mass this weekend, and raise funds for multiple pregnancy centers in the area. More to follow on e-mail.

Jane Roe, of Roe VS Wade, had died

A voice for Pro-Life she will be missed.

McCorvey was 22, unmarried, unemployed and pregnant for the third time when in 1969 she sought to have an abortion in Texas, where the procedure was illegal except to save a woman's life. The subsequent lawsuit, known as Roe v. Wade, led to Supreme Court's 1973 ruling that established abortion rights, though by that time, McCorvey had given birth and given her daughter up for adoption.

Decades later, McCorvey underwent a conversion, becoming an evangelical Christian and joining the anti-abortion movement. A short time later, she underwent another religious conversion and became a Roman Catholic.

"I don't believe in abortion even in an extreme situation. If the woman is impregnated by a rapist, it's still a child. You're not to act as your own God," she told The Associated Press in 1998.

March for Life Maryland – March 13th

Kathy Reid will be car pooling with fellow parishioners down to Annapolis for the MD March for life on Monday the 13th. Please try and attend.

<http://www.marylandmarchforlife.org/>

2017 – Is shaping up to be a great year for Life.

At CPAC this week, pro-life vice president Mike Pence called for making permanent a ban on taxpayer funding of abortions. Pence also said repealing Obamacare is coming and that President Donald Trump is following through on pro-life promises he made during the election. Read full story here:

<http://www.lifenews.com/2017/02/24/vice-president-mike-pence-calls-for-permanently-banning-taxpayer-funding-of-abortions/>

Stay Strong, God is on our side!

Al Grasley,
"Pro-Life Guy"

C.U.F.P., INC. (HOME CORPORATION)

Harold Bernadzikowski, President
Ray Miles, Treasurer

Brothers,

It is with great enthusiasm that I can report that settlement was completed on Monday February 27th, and the Home is officially SOLD! This has been a long and slow journey and it was a concerted effort by the Board, and the Council, to accomplish it. I want to especially thank John, Dan, Roy, George, and Alex Pacifico for all of the times they went and cleaned up the home: cleaned the bathrooms, mopped the floors, mopped up the water that would leak into the Home after a rainstorm, and beyond, to keep it in presentable condition for potential buyers.

The proceeds are being kept safe and sound until the Investment Committee (Ways and Means Committee) is fully established by the Council and rules and by-laws created to govern the utilization of the funds - for whatever purpose(s) are ultimately decided.

Respectfully,
Harold B.
President

WARDEN'S REPORT

No report.

ASSEMBLY REPORT

Greg Lofton

No report.

OPERATION WELCOME HOME

The calendar of OWHMD events for August and September can be found at:

www.operationwelcomehomemd.org

Please consider attending one of these events—it is a wonderful feeling to show our returning troops how much support they have.

Baltimore Chapter OF GK's

Gregory McClain— President

<http://www.mdkofc.org/baltimore/default.htm>

Chapter meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at 8:00 P.M. at the Council home of one of our affiliates.

SHEEN'S COLLEENS CORNER

Joanne Turgeon

Schedule of Activities:

March:

- Seniors' Prom

We hope to have several field trips to area attractions that help us to celebrate our Catholic Faith such as Mass and tour in DC at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and Mass at the Franciscan Friary in Ellicott City followed by dinner. We hope to make our events a family activity so that we can grow in faith and fellowship together.

Please feel free to call me or email if you need any information or would like to know more about our group of women eager to serve our community and each other.

Joanne Turgeon

jlturgeon@hotmail.com

410-549-9341

If you know of a member who is sick or is recently deceased, please email or call the Chancellor as soon as possible. (TonyGioio@comcast.net or chancellor@kofc7612.org)

Please pray for our recently deceased Brothers, family members', and friends:

- Thomas Patrick Martin— Deceased 11/12/2016—Father of Brother Chris Martin
- Brother David Theodore Coyle Sr.—Deceased 10/21/2016—Father of Brother Ted Coyle and grandfather of Brother Zach Coyle
- Jennifer San Fellipo—Deceased 10/10/2016—daughter of Brother Frank San Fellipo
- Brother Knight Dave Smith—Deceased 8/12/2016
- Raymond Kibler Miles, Jr.—Deceased 9/17/2016—Father of Brother Ray Miles

Please pray for our sick and injured:

- Sarah Mandella—wife of Brother Mike Mandella
- Carol Herrura—relative Brother Mike Hurley
- Sammie Needham—requested by Brother David Love, PGK
- Carmella Gioio—sister of Brother Tony Gioio
- Thomas Ryder—brother of Brother Chris Ryder, PGK
- Pam Murphy—wife of Grand Knight Mike Murphy
- Carolyn Nacewicz—wife of Brother Mark Nacewicz
- Wesley Hohl—son of Brother Ray Hohl
- S/K Greg Lofton, PGK
- Brother Neil Forthman
- Patty Vaccarino Fuller—wife of Brother Jay Fuller
- Fr. Paul Reich

Please pray for our special intentions:

- Seminarians: Robert Katafiasz and Lee Benson, both at St Mary's Seminary

Contact Information—for this year’s officers and directors.

Officer	Name	eMail	Phone
Chaplain	Fr. David McGuigan	mcguigand@saintjoseph.cc	(o) 443-920-9116 (c) 443-977-7627
Grand Knight	Michael Murphy	cmdcm.murphy@gmail.com	(c) 410-790-0284
Deputy Grand Knight	Tony Gioio	tonygioio@comcast.net	(h) 410-552-5579 (c) 443-798-5671
Chancellor	Tony Gioio, Jr.	tonygioio87@gmail.com	(h) 410-552-5579 (c) 540-742-5586
Warden	Eric Klezer	eklezer@hotmail.com	(h) 410-549-3181 (c) 410-596-0998
Financial Secretary	Bill Wachter	wwachter156@gmail.com	(h) 410-795-2288 (c) 443-506-4809
Treasurer	Joe Kirschensteiner	joeykirsch@comcast.net	(h) 443-920-3943 (c) 410-218-8485
Advocate	Jarvis Abellana	jarabe1981@yahoo.com	(h) 410-549-0664
Lecturer	Richard Perron	richardperron0901@gmail.com	(h) 410-795-7649 (c) 410-227-7749
Communiqué Newsletter	Chris Martin	ChrisandBeth@Mac.com	(c) 240-328-7634
Membership Director	Greg Lofton	Greg.h.lofton@bge.com	(h) 410-795-8090 (c) 443-717-0465
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Council Director	<i>Vacant</i>	<i>Vacant</i>	<i>Vacant</i>
Concessions	Tony Gioio	tonygioio@comcast.net	(h) 410-552-5579 (c) 443-798-5671
Pit-Beef	David Love	jdavidlove7612@gmail.com	(c) 240-417-4288
Car Raffle Chairman	Jarvis Abellana	jarabe1981@yahoo.com	(h) 410-549-0664
Family Director	Jarvis Abellana	jarabe1981@yahoo.com	(h) 410-549-0664
Youth Director	Kevin Selby	kyselby@comcast.net	(c) 410-960-3895
Community Director	George Snediker	snedikertree@yahoo.com	(c) 443-375-2938
Church Director	Peter O'Sullivan	lnfpro@comcast.net	(h) 410-795-4379
Culture of Life Director	Alan Grasley	algras@comcast.net	(h) 410-549-5668
District Deputy	Bill Adams	William.Adams@DODiis.mil	(c) 410-259-3486
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CUEP President	Harold Bernadzikowski	haroldterp93@comcast.net	(c) 410-530-0937
4th Degree Navigator	Rainer Dombrowsky	dombrowskyr@comcast.net	(h) 410-756-2521
Colleens Vice President	Joanne Turgeon	jlturgeon@hotmail.com	(h) 410-549-9341 (c) 443-340-8588

Officer and Director Candidates Wanted for Fraternal year 2017-18

Brothers, it's time to start prayerfully considering your growth as a Knight and become a leader of men. Log onto the **Members Only** section on our Council website (www.kofc7612.org). Scroll down to **Nominate Officers**, and then click **Make Your Nominations**. You may self-nominate yourself for any position for which you're interested. You may select multiple nominees for each office. Only the listed 3rd and 4th degree members are eligible. (It's not too late to become a 3rd Degree Knight!!!!) Select your nominees (elected positions), then scroll down to the bottom to submit your nominations.

If you are interested in any of the appointed positions, please notify the current Grand Knight. Assuming that Fr. Dave will continue as our Worthy Chaplain, any of our other priests, religious brothers, or deacons are eligible to additionally serve as Assistant Chaplains.

Council Officer Positions (Elected)

Grand Knight
Financial Secretary
Deputy Grand Knight
Chancellor
Recorder
Treasurer
Advocate
Warden
Inside Guard
Outside Guard

Appointed Officers (Appointed)

Chaplain
Lecturer

Program Positions (Appointed)

Program Director
Church Director
Vocations Chairman
Community Director
Culture of Life Chairman
Health Service Director
Council Director
Public Relations
Family Director
Youth Director
Columbian Squires Director
Membership Director
Recruitment Committee 1
Recruitment Committee 2

Recruitment Committee 3
Retention Chairman

Additional Appointments

Adopt-a-Highway Chairman
Blood Drive Chairman
Car Raffle Chairman
Concessions Chairman
Degree Team Leader
Family Movie Night Chairman
Newsletter Editor
Pit Beef Chairman
Silver Rose Sponsor
Webmaster

Don't Waste Your Lent: 7 Ways to Have a Good Lent

by Sam Guzman (online edition with links: <https://goo.gl/wcgJmH>)

Lent is a season of penance and ascetical warfare. The enemy is concupiscence, the world, and the devil. The goal is pure hearts so that we can joyfully celebrate the resurrection of our Lord at Easter, the greatest feast of the liturgical year. In a way, Lent should be a microcosm of our entire struggle on earth, just as the Paschal feast of Easter is a microcosm of our heavenly triumph in Christ. Yet, a good Lent takes focus and discipline, and it can easily be wasted.

In my own experience, I often begin the Lenten season with the best of intentions. I imagine myself going into full monk mode, fasting and praying as ardently as one of the monastic fathers in the desert. And maybe for the first week I succeed through sheer strength of will. Then, just when I am feeling good about myself, everything falls apart and I come face to face with my own weakness.

We've all been there at some point, and so today I'd like to share 7 practical ways to have a good Lent.

1. Have a plan – The fastest way to ruin Lent is to have good intentions but no plan. Be specific. "I'm going to pray more," isn't good enough. Download this helpful worksheet (<https://goo.gl/8L6fH4>) to get started. Once you've determined what you are going to do, stick to it every single day.

One word of advice: Make it doable. Often, we are overly ambitious and commit to way too much. When we fail in our Lenten goals, we grow discouraged and give up completely. This is a victory for the devil. Make your commitments modest and practical, and your Lent will be the better for it.

2. Read a good book – The saints are constantly exhorting us to read good spiritual books, and there is no better time to begin this practice than during Lent. Reading Scripture or the writings of the saints is a great place to start. Here are some suggestions for Lenten reading:

- Meditations for Lent by Jacques-Benigne Bossuet
- The Imitation of Christ by Thomas a Kempis
- Divine Intimacy by Fr. Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalene
- Humility of Heart by Fr. Cajetan Mary da Bergamo
- True Devotion to Mary by St. Louis de Montfort
- The Spiritual Combat by Dom Lorenzo Scupoli
- A Lenten Journey with Jesus and St. Paul of the Cross by Fr. Victor Hoaglund
- Happy Are You Poor by Fr. Thomas Dubay
- Letter to Friends of the Cross by St. Louis de Montfort
- Love of Eternal Wisdom by St. Louis de Montfort

3. Examine yourself – Lent is an excellent time to take an inventory of the state of your soul. What are your predominant faults? Do you have any hidden idols in your life? What is keeping you from following the will of God with all your heart? Use a thorough examination of conscience to help you assess your spiritual health.

Remember, Lent is not ultimately about giving up sweets or other things we enjoy, it is first and foremost about repentance, which means giving up sin and returning to God, our loving Father. While taking inventory of your sins may be painful, it is a healthy pain that restores the soul.

4. Confess your sins – After examining your conscience, the logical next step is to go to confession. Normally, it can be hard to find a parish with confession readily available (thirty minutes on a Saturday isn't enough!), but the good news is, many parishes have increased confession times during Lent, so it's a great time to go.

Before receiving the sacrament of penance, though, remember the five requirements for a good confession: 1) Examination of conscience 2) True contrition for having offended God 3) Firm resolution to sin no more 4) Clear confession (don't hold any sins back) 5) Penance for the sins you have committed

5. Pray – Let's face it, we can all pray more, and Lent is a great time to plan and implement a daily prayer rule that can guide you the rest of the year. During this season, however, we should especially focus our prayers on repentance and contrition for our sins. Here are some suggestions for Lenten prayer.

- The Prayer of Manasseh
- The Seven Penitential Psalms
- The Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary
- The Stations of the Cross
- The Divine Mercy Chaplet
- Prayer before a Crucifix

6. Fast – I've written before about the importance of prayer and fasting, so suffice it to say that it is something we should be doing all year round, not just during Lent. Still, Lent is a very good time to refocus our efforts and renew our commitment. We should especially focus on fasting from things related to our predominant sins.

Are you addicted to Instagram or Facebook? Fast from them. Maybe you're binge watching shows on Netflix. Give it up. On the other hand, maybe you're addicted to criticizing others. Make a special effort to fast from negative speech. The point is, while fasting from certain foods is an excellent ascetical practice, we do not have to limit our Lenten fasting to things we eat. Remember the words of Jesus: "If your eye offends you, pluck it out." Nothing should stand between us and the heavenly kingdom, and we should be intentional about cutting off those things that are causing us to sin.

7. Give alms – During Lent, we especially remember the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. This is the greatest act of generosity in history, for Jesus died not just for his friends, but for his enemies. "God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

The generosity of God in Christ should impel us to be generous and merciful to others, especially those poor and in need. This Lent, find a way to give, whether it is supporting a religious order or helping at a homeless shelter. Remember the promise of Jesus, "And whoever gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he shall not lose his reward."
You Cannot Fail

I began this post by talking about my own failure, and yet, when it comes to Lenten disciplines, true failure is not really possible. I mean that even failing in our commitments can help us grow in humility and knowledge of our own spiritual poverty—and growth in these is always spiritual advancement.

This Lent, do your best. Strive to root out sin and cultivate holiness. But when you fail, realize that even those who can be considered righteous fall seven times daily (Prov. 24:16). Let your failure be a lesson in humility that drives you back to the grace of God flowing from the pierced heart of Jesus—for that is the true heart of Lent.

Join Your Mother
Each Friday During Lent*

Lenten Rosary

Fridays
at 3:00

Historic St. Joseph Church
Downtown Sykesville



* Except Good Friday

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen
Knights of Columbus, Council No. 7612
P.O. Box 256
Eldersburg, MD 21784



Council Business Meeting

Second Wednesday of the Month, 7:30 pm in the lower hall at St. Joseph's campus.

Council Officers & Program Directors Mtg.

Monday before Business Meeting, 7:00 pm in Room 11 at St. Joseph's campus.
All Council Officers and Program Directors.

CUFP, Inc. (Home Corporation) Meeting

Third Monday of the Month, 7:30 pm in Room 11 at St. Joseph's campus.
Meetings are open to all members.

Sheen's Colleens Meeting

Third Wednesday of the Month, 7:00 pm, St. Joseph's Cassidy Center

Council Social Meeting

Fourth Wednesday of the Month, 6:30 pm at St. Joseph's campus
— or as otherwise published in this Communiqué

Communiqué Deadline for Articles

20th Day of each Month