



COUNCIL #1116 EASTHAMPTON, MA

Greetings Brother Knights,

I hope this letter finds you and your families well as we enter this Christmas season. I wanted to take this opportunity as we close a very unique calendar year filled with several challenges to thank all of you for your continued support of our Council in numerous ways over the past year.

2020 began normally for Council 1116, with our members staffing the Coffee Shop and running our annual Free Throw Contest, as well as joining together in prayer for Holy Hours, the Novena for Life, and our 5th Sunday Rosary Program. This was in addition to the many other ways our members typically volunteer in the Parish and local community such as the Cot Shelter Program, REY, and various liturgical roles. It was business as usual, but it changed dramatically (as did so many aspects of our lives) shortly after our Mardi Gras Party and Chalice of Salvation appearance.

We began soon after the virus outbreak to hold our meetings virtually, while trying to serve as best we could in the areas of Faith, Family, Community, and Life. In fact, we were so successful in doing so, that we were able to earn a Columbian Award for the Faith in Action programs that we were able to run despite the various challenges. During this time, our members were integral in the essential Take and Eat program, as well as at the Easthampton Community Center. We also had members step up and provide multiple services for vulnerable members of the community as part of our No Neighbor Left Behind outreach, and our insurance Agent (and Council member) Bob Sass never ceased to provide his excellent services for our Insurance and Financial needs. Though limited, we were able to persist in prayer in various and creative ways as a Council throughout the lockdown and thereafter, the importance of which cannot be over-stated.

Though we were thankfully able to hold another successful Pierogi Sale this Fall, we were forced to cancel reliable fundraisers like the Scholarship Breakfast and Polka Party, as well as charity events like the Mother's Day Rose Sale and Tootsie Roll Drive. Despite these setbacks and therefore limited funds, we were still able make donations to the needy thanks in large part to the generosity of our members. We were also able to purchase a travelling mass kit as an ordination gift for Rev. Valentine Nworah, as well as smaller gifts for 2 other newly ordained priests who we've been sponsoring through RSVP, and support other worthy causes like The Bethlehem House and Wreaths Across America.

After 7 weeks of being deprived of the Sacraments, we were finally able to resume public masses beginning on May 23. That weekend, in addition to producing an instructional video, our members began assisting at all 6 weekend masses by ushering before, assisting at communion during, and cleaning/disinfecting after each one; a process that has continued for each subsequent weekend and holy day since. Thank you to the many men who we have been able to continually depend on to provide these services. Our council is very blessed to have you.

Enclosed is a form for you to report any volunteer hours that have not already been documented on any sign-in sheets. Please fill it out and bring it with you to our January meeting on the 12th, or by mailing it in before then. Remember that it is also time to pay your dues (\$20) for the upcoming year. You can pay in person at a meeting, by mail, or through PayPal on our website (kofc1116.org). Also

enclosed, you will find a contact survey. Please take the time to fill that out as well (with your name), so we can keep in contact with each of our members in ways that work best for each individual.

Our Council has resumed meeting in person on the **2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00** at the REY building on the Franklin Street campus. Unfortunately, we are not able to serve refreshments at this time, but we do still hold our 50/50 raffle towards the end of the meeting. We have many new State raffle tickets available for those interested in those as well. Please note that our meetings are socially distanced, and face coverings are required for the time being.

Unique as it was, 2020 was still a busy year and a successful one for Council 1116, and I expect more of the same in the weeks and months to come. Once again, we would not be able to provide the outreach that we do were it not for the dedication of our membership and their families. To all of you who have continued to donate your gifts of time, talent, and treasure, thank you very much for your commitment to Council 1116. If you are not able to donate those gifts at this time, then we would very much appreciate your prayers on our behalf, and please let us know if we can be of assistance to you in any way. If you have been away for awhile and would like to become active again, we welcome whatever ways in which you are able to assist. There is no lack of opportunity or need. We also welcome any prospective members who would like to join our Council, especially now, since there has never been an easier time to join or advance in Degrees. This is one area that has been lacking this year, and we could really benefit by having more worthy men by our side to help us accomplish the goals that we have as we look ahead.

Finally, I wanted to thank our spiritual fathers for their ongoing prayers and support of our Council's activities, especially during this challenging year. We would not be able to accomplish all that we do without the full support of our Pastor, Rev. Douglas McGonagle, Parochial Vicar Rev. John Gawienowski, and our Chaplain Rev. Frank Furman. I would encourage all of you to show these men our appreciation.

Once again, I hope everyone continues to have a very merry Christmas, and that we never forget the reason for the season. May God continue to bless each of you and your families. Let's bring some new members into our ranks in the year ahead. Recently, we observed as our founder, Fr. McGivney was Beatified at the cathedral in Hartford. May we continue to live out his vision, and look to him for guidance and assistance. It is with that in mind as we turn the calendar to 2021 that we ask, Blessed Michael J. McGivney, PRAY FOR US.

Vivat Jesus,

William T. Labrie

Grand Knight



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