



**THE KNIGHTS
OF COLUMBUS**
IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.

NEWSLETTER
Council 9997, St. Thomas More, Austin, Tx

OCTOBER 2018

This is Council 9997's third quarter 2018 newsletter. We want to reach out to Council members routinely—both to keep everyone up-to-date on our many activities and to solicit your feedback on the Council and its direction. We're especially looking for comments from brother Knights who, for whatever reason, haven't been able to participate on a regular basis. This fraternal year is again focused on supporting our parish. As part of that, we're determined to reach out to **every** member of the Council. We need your help to broaden participation in our activities and to bolster the spirit of charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism that exemplifies the Knights of Columbus.

As you read through this newsletter, we hope you'll find something that draws you in for future events. Help us understand what you want Council 9997 to be. We're set on making the Council a place you and your family will enjoy. Also, please let us know if there is some reason that makes it difficult for you to join us for our meetings, socials, and charitable projects—whether it's something as simple as "I need a ride to the meetings and activities", or something more complicated. You can contact any Council officer through our website at STMKnights.org, either by email or phone.

ACTIVITIES IN QUARTER III OF 2018

PARTNERS AGAINST CHILD TRAFFICKING

Brother Dana Brown brought to our attention an extremely important issue while alerting us to

an organization called P.A.C.T., Partners Against Child Trafficking. 79,000 children are trafficking victims in the state of Texas alone, and 300,000 U.S. minors are lured into the commercial sex trade each year. These appalling numbers are the reason this organization has been founded in order to combat this enormous problem. The average age is 12 years old. 83% are U.S. citizens, and thus this is not a border issue alone, and virtually nothing is being done to stop it. Sure, on the back end there are some programs to deal with the aftermath, but very little is being done to stop the vast numbers of children being drawn into this horrific situation. PACT tries to raise awareness that there are people constantly out there luring and abusing these young people. Criminal gangs need no longer obtain profits from guns and drugs when they can sell a young child 20 times a night.

At this point we will start by getting this information to our Religious Education folks and work toward getting the teachers and parents informed per the information available from PACT, but Dana is putting forth a plea for additional ideas. The Grand Knight has already forwarded this information to our new District Deputy. How can we make this an even more focused and impactful information campaign and get other councils and perhaps the State Knights of Columbus and even Supreme involved? We have to stop this. The phone and website for PACT is: 512.410.8080 and www.PACT.CITY. To report a suspicious situation call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1.888.373.7888. If you see someone in immediate danger, call 911.





FOCUS

FOCUS is Fellowship of Catholic University Students. We were fortunate to have a presentation from Matthew Schmerber on the activities of FOCUS. Matthew and his wife are members of STM and are ready to begin another year bringing Christ to youth on college campuses. The approach of this Ministry is to “win the hearts of college students, build them in the faith and send them to the world”. Only 30% of americans raised as catholics are still practicing. Almost 80% who leave the catholic faith do so by age 23.

The first tenet is to Know, Love and Serve God; the ministry works to help youth encounter God in an intimate relationship through daily prayer, the sacraments and the Scriptures. The second is to Build Virtuous Friendships; by building genuine friendships, they meet students on a deeper level. And third, Teach Others to Share Christ; they teach students how to share the gospel, who in turn teach other students how to pass it on.

Matthew shared his own experience as a college student very lost and fallen away from his Catholic faith and how his encounter with a member of FOCUS changed his life. He and his wife are on their way to Auburn University to carry on this ministry. They must secure their own funding. If you want to help this extremely important ministry, contact Matthew at: 512-799-7332, matthew.schmerber@focus.org. Check out the website at <https://www.focus.org/>. We will also take this up at the assembly and see if a cooperative effort can be launched to help with funding.

Meals at Our Business Meetings

At our August Business Meeting, brothers John Smith and Jim Ferguson treated the brothers to a great taco salad dinner. Many thanks to John and Jim for giving us this opportunity to break bread together.

At the September Business Meeting, attendees feasted on brother Rodney Laurent's Louisiana Jambalaya. Brother Rodney led a team of our cooks the previous weekend to prep this meal also for the major degree ceremony we hosted.

At the October meeting Rick Pekkala treated the members to a fabulous chili with cornbread and chips. Many thanks Rick!

If you have not been able to make it to a meeting, consider coming out and enjoying a meal and fraternity with your Brother Knights. Meetings are on the 2nd Wednesday of the month and start with the rosary at 6:30 p.m., dinner follows, and the meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. promptly. We are usually treated to an inspirational homily by Deacon Dan Lupo, a fascinating lecture by brother Patrick Larkin, and we are almost always finished by 8:30 p.m. or shortly thereafter.

Hero's Night Out

This event was held August 3rd and was a 4th degree event for veterans and their families. Brother Rodney Laurent coordinated preparation of Jambalaya and banana pudding dessert for approximately 150 people consisting of veterans and their families. Our Council participants in preparing and/or





serving were: David Sanchez, Dennis Robinson, Rodney Laurent, Steve Isaacson, Kevin Brinkman, Patrick Larking, Stan Urban, Larry Carpentier, David McLennan, Jim Ferguson, Tony Lioi and Ramiro Balli.

Hosting Chapter Mtg. Aug 27

We hosted the Chapter meeting on Monday, August 27 in Brennan Auditorium. Thanks to Brothers John Smith, Jim Ferguson, David Sanchez, Dennis Robinson and Fred Negrete for all of their work to make the Chapter Meeting a success.

Hosting Major Degree Sept 8

We had 19 newly welcomed to the 3rd Degree Brothers, including our own Brothers: Brian Mego, Rob Marek, Louie Romero, Frank Kelly, Larry Payne and Father Andrew. Fr. Berry from St Margaret Mary was also welcomed. We heard nothing but great things from those that attended as candidates and spectators. They appreciated the hospitality they were shown. Thanks go to: PGK Stan Urban, PGK David Sanchez, PGK Larry Carpentier, PGK ,Former DD Kevin Brinkman, PGK Bob Stokes, Michael Yarberr, David McLennan, Ray Minjarez, Brian Stranczek, Jim Ferguson, Pat Larkin, Gerry Harmon, Al Perez, Jeff Mikolajek, John Smith, and Steve Isaacson. Special Thanks To Brother Rodney Laurent for all of his work on the menu planning and preparation of the meal.

STM Women's Club Dinner – Sept 13

On September 13, brothers Rodney Laurent and Dennis Robinson led a team of great cooks to prepare a mean for the STM Women's Club

Dinner. Members of the club enjoyed a smoked meat dinner, and we believe everyone had a great time.

Parish Live Auction – Sept 28

The parish held a very successful Live Auction on Sept 28. Our council was very pleased to help out as Brother Rodney Laurent provided the appetizers.

Chaplain's Reports

August Report - Deacon Dan Lupo commenced his comments with a plea to identify those we know who might be candidates for the Deaconate. As Director of Deaconate Formation, Deacon Dan is calling on us and suggesting that we may know those who we consider might make a good Deacon. Direct prospective applicants to the diocese, watch for information in the Catholic Spirit or see Deacon Dan directly.

Deacon Dan spoke to us about the importance of Eucharistic adoration. Keep in mind Eucharistic Adoration is prayer that really works. Our time is being extended to 10 PM weekdays. We are challenged to spend an hour a week with the Lord. Christ's body is true food and He gave us the Eucharist as the memorial of His suffering and death. In the Eucharist, Good Friday and the Resurrection are linked. Christ forgives sin and through his death conquers death and opens a portal to the other side.

Deacon Dan continued by relating events of last weekend at a Deaconate Function that was an inspiration to all in attendance. One man





has become very ill and the Bishop, being the Shepherd said we need to ordain him now and in that ordination “death will not interrupt his path to ordination”. He said “I will confer holy orders and give an assignment to him, the responsibility to pray for his brothers, to give what he has left to enlighten them and align his suffering to Christ's who defeated death.” “Through your suffering and prayers your fellow candidates for Deaconate will have the strength and faith to make it through March next year”. There was incredible alignment in that group. This challenges us to spend time in Eucharist adoration remembering that Eucharist means “thanksgiving”. It is through Christ that death is overcome and sins forgiven. Why not take advantage of the time to say thank you Lord for your love and mercy and for turning death on its head.



Prayers for Candidate for the Deaconate

September Report - Deacon Dan turned his attention to a most serious matter, the current crisis in the church. As Catholics, we are all understandably angry and many are venting their anger over the apparently extensive scandal and allegations of cover up. We need to focus on the spiritual aspect and ask what is the violation of Love of God that is causing this.

We also need to ask how our own sin contributes to the sin out there and what can I do in my own journey.

Evil swirls and sins undermine the need to engage in the spiritual battle around us. There is a need to push back against our own sin. Pope Francis asks each to make a personal and communal conversion and see things as the Lord does. It is easy to point and hard to recognize our own sinfulness. The same devil drives me to my sin. Go into battle and put on the armor of Christ, through prayer, penance and fasting may we be one with the victims and may Fr. McGivney intercede for us.

The new “Faith and Action Program” can help stimulate our spiritual nourishment. The first of the subprograms for this is Eucharistic Adoration. This can be our prayer. Adoration at STM is now daily from 9 AM to 10 PM.

The second subprogram in the “Faith and Action Program” is Spiritual Reflection. This can be a retreat for rejuvenation. Deacon Dan offered to do this for the Council or the Parish.

Yet another subprogram in the “Faith and Action Program” is making use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Recognize that our sin is a portal for the enemy. The only place that the Eucharist is present is in the Catholic Church.

Finally, Fasting is part of the spiritual approach. A meal a day, a couple of snacks.

For more information on this issue, please see the addendum to the September minutes titled “Fighting for our Faith”.





Fr. McGivney Corporate Communion -

Fr. Michael asked us to hold a Corporate Communion at the 9 AM mass on August 12 in honor of the anniversary of the death of our founder, Fr. Michael McGivney. Many thanks to all who turned out.

Fr. McGivney is officially noted as “Blessed” meaning he is on his way toward sainthood, and this was in part an opportunity for parishioners to learn about our founder.

Grand Knight Dennis Robinson noted that we all should try very hard to make it to Corporate Communion. This is a sacrifice you can make.

Fr. Michael suggested we rotate this to other masses in addition to the 9 AM for hopefully more involvement, and would like more than just 4 per year. If it is not held at your usual mass, please make a sacrifice to be there and bring your family to sit with you. Of course, always wear your council shirt or at least your name badge. This is one way to say to the parish that their Knights are active. The next Corporate Communion will be at a 5 PM Saturday mass, with a social to follow. Watch for more announcements.

Council Communications -

G.K. Dennis Robinson's Clarification – First of all, email communication uses a comprehensive list of members identified as our “Google Group”. It is the only list we have, and thus you are not being left out. Most emails are from the Grand Knight and he tries not to waste time

and energy on worthless things. No one will be offended if you feel you are too swamped with emails and feel you must delete a communication.

The intention of any communication is sharing council business. A brother shared a political story that upon further research by the G.K. was not true. We do not want to share such information. Political discussion is not to be sent out using the “Google Group”; this is inappropriate. As the mid-term elections get closer, this will amp up but please do not use the Google Group email list for political communications.

Supreme sends things to everyone about issues but generally not about candidates. At that level, they have vetted information and determined it is appropriate for a 501(c) organization status. It is religious in nature and not purely political. We try to send out things we deem important. We send out calendar of events and identify when and where we need help, e.g. the Golf Tournament to raise funds for STM Mobile Loaves and Fishes. Afterwards, you will see “thank you” identifying those who helped. If this is annoying, please feel free to delete. We have nothing to give you for your help except gratitude for giving of your time and talent and the G.K. indicated it is his privilege to thank those for helping. He is not trying to make anyone feel bad; if you can help please come out.

Council Socials -

The Council endeavors to hold socials, typically pot luck, on the fourth Wednesday of the month. In July, the theme was “Steak Night”.





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The Council provided Baked Potatoes with toppings and salad, and participants brought their steak or other items for grilling. In August, we held a “No Theme” pot luck to allow for participants to be creative. Finally, in September we held a “Tail Gate” theme with everyone's favorite item and wearing their team colors. Come on out and enjoy good food and great company.

The next social is Wednesday, October 24 with a Halloween theme. Come in costume if you want to. The pot luck will be “Breakfast at Dinner”.

Annual Golf Tournament-We Take a Mulligan

The annual Golf Tournament was scheduled for Monday, October 8. A torrential downpour changed everyone's plans by arriving right at the start, forcing us to take a Mulligan and reschedule for Monday, November 5. The money has been collected, and Goody bags distributed. Prize drawings have already been conducted. Come on out and support this event, we will definitely need volunteers. Watch for emails. Registration starts at 11:00 AM and tournament starts at 12:30 PM



Ready to Go . . . Until the Rain Came!

Upcoming Events -

Special Olympics - Paul Gelencser has volunteered to be our new Special Olympics coordinator. Paul is doing a great job keeping us informed. Please see his emails as upcoming events and opportunities to volunteer become available. In October we have a 5K run at Camp Mabrey with the Austin Police Department Sunday Oct 14, Oct 18-21 the Fall Classic (volunteers needed), and the Beauty Pageant on Oct 27.

Habitat for Humanity; a Faith in Action Activity – The G.K. contacted STM folks involved in Habitat for Humanity. Our plan is to provide lunch for a crew of 30-35 on Oct 27. We will get back to the council via email with details.





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Harper Park Public Rosary, Oct 13 – Thanks to Rick Pekkala's efforts the Council will host a public rosary on Saturday Oct 13 (anniversary of our Lady's appearance at Fatima) at the pavilion at Harper Park on Lake Creek Parkway. We have the pavilion reserved from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM, and will start the rosary at noon after setting up at 11:30 AM. Rick will chair this event. He has banners ready and made the reservation. Please consider attending, and if you can do so please wear your council shirts.

Parish Funfest – Parish Funfest will be October 20th. Knights will assist J.W. with food prep again, and will be responsible for the Bingo. If you can help with food prep on Friday, plan on sometime between 3 and 9 PM. J.W. will be smoking brisket, sausage, and turkey legs. Exact time for volunteers is somewhat determined “as we go” so please come on over and check in with J.W. and Rodney to see just where you can help. On Saturday, we'll cook burgers and hot dogs. Volunteer shifts are 11-2, 2-5, and 5-8 PM. See Rodney Laurent, Steve Isaacson, or Dennis Robinson and please watch for further information.

Gabe Guardiola is coordinating the Bingo. Watch for emails for the timing (total is around 3-4 hours). Gabe could use a helper on Friday to set up and check the equipment. Then as much help as you can provide to monitor the Bingo on Saturday.

Ethics and Integrity in Ministry – It is a requirement that any Knight working with children (including teens) or the elderly have completed a background check and safety and environment training. Please see the diocesan website (<https://austindiocese.org/eim>) for more

information and to sign up for training. Brother Jim Ferguson is our contact if you need to discuss this, and he is keeping us up to date on the times and locations for training via emails.

Volunteer Hours Posted – Any volunteer hours, including travel to and from the event, as well as any volunteering for any church activity should be posted. Log onto stmknights.org and log your hours on the website. If you need help, Jim Ferguson has kindly offered his help in posting.

Updating By-Laws - Under the guidance of G.K. Dennis Robinson the Officers are engaged in reviewing and updated the Council By-Laws including aligning them with “Supreme”. This effort will culminate with presentation to the membership in the coming months.

Christmas Party – The Christmas Party will be held on Wednesday, December 12, and will be held at the Oasis on Lake Travis again. Cost is \$40 per person (\$41.50 through our website, with the additional \$1.50 to cover credit card fees). We had 72 people last year, and it was a great venue, meal and overall atmosphere. We will have a 50/50. The event is from 5-9 PM, with sunset at 5:30 PM. Go online anytime to our website and secure your place. Dress code is “Christmas Party Casual”.

