

## 2021 State Deputy's Report

Father Joe, Supreme Warden Mike Benson, Delegates, State Officers, District Deputies, Past State Deputies, Membership and Programs Chairman, Brothers All,

I find it hard to believe we are at the end of this Columbian Year, 2020-2021. To say that we were faced with some challenges this year ... well...that would be an understatement.

We began the year in the clutches of this terrible pandemic, the loss of our loved ones and friends, people staying home, afraid to go out; businesses closing, people either out of work or working from home; and kids going to school via the family computer. Temporary hospitals were set up in convention centers, vacant stores anyplace large enough to hold all the sick family members and friends the hospitals could not. Every night the news introduced us to our heroes, the exhausted doctors, nurses, first responders, everyone who worked tirelessly to keep us safe.

The pews in our churches were roped off, they became a 'do not sit zone' so pastors could comply with the reduced gathering restrictions. Mass was available online, but we could not enjoy the fellowship of seeing and talking to our friends at church. Our pastors had to 'chase' us out of church so the pews could be sanitized...and I am proud to say that many our brother knights were on the front lines right after Mass, spray bottles in hand getting this done for our pastors. 'Yes, Father, we can get that done, one less thing you need to worry about.'

So, what else did we, the Knights here in Rhode Island, do to help our communities cope with this terrible disruption of our 'usual'? Where did we... what did we... do to help ease the burdens, lend the helping hands, provide some hope to our neighbors in need? We were facing the same disruptions, councils not meeting, not communicating, trying hard to find ways to not only help ease our neighbor's burdens, but trying hard to get some of our own 'usual' back... we knew it was not going to be an easy task.

There is an old expression...'when things get tough...the tough get going'. Our new Supreme Knight, Patrick Kelly, put a new spin on that old expression; 'Where there is a need... there is a Knight'.

We Knights here in Rhode Island, well, we're a dedicated bunch of guys and their families... you could say that we are 'tough' for all the right reasons, and we certainly saw the need... right here in our community.

And we got to work. We found ways to work around the limitations and organized food drives to make sure families would not go without, organized blood drives to provide our hospitals with this life saver, delivered meals to those who could not prepare them for themselves, delivered hams to the Little Sisters, a truck load of supplies to our veterans at the Veterans home, and Valentine's Day cards and gift cards from a local Catholic school to the vets at the VA Hospital.

We brought new coats to inner city schools in Providence and Woonsocket, and as always, supported our Special Olympians and Seminarians. We even raised the money for a new ultrasound machine for the Mother of Life Center.

And I know, there are councils here in Rhode Island that silently step up to help ease the burden and provide hope for neighbors. And when I am told what they accomplished, I ask why you didn't tell us? The answer is always the same. 'We are Knights, and that's what we do'.

And when our neighbors see us in the community, helping where we can... we are rewarded with men joining our councils because they want to be part of what we do. Rhode Island has had an excellent year for membership...yes, even with the pandemic all around us, men and their families joined us to help our neighbors. Free online membership added to the hard work of our Membership Chairman Jeff Gaulin has put Rhode Island 46 members away from reaching our Circle of Honor Goal! We cannot stop now; brothers let's make this goal!

Jeff, along with Bob Lynch's Faith in Action Team and the other programs he has managed during the year, the hard work of our State Officers, District Deputies, Council Officers. and of course, the guys with the spray bottles; make me proud to report that the Rhode Island State Council has done all right in 2020-2021; and will use the momentum we built through your hard work... to have a better 2021-2022.

God Bless Us, Everyone!

Dave Quinn, Rhode Island State Deputy