



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

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

APRIL 2018

This is Council 9997's first 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 I OF 2018

Annual Lenten Fish Fry and Scholarships

We are again sponsoring our Knights of Columbus parish Scholarship Program for

College and Vocational Training. Graduating high school seniors who are registered, confirmed, and active members of the parish can apply.

The application, an interactive form, is available on STMKnights.org. The basis for the awards will be on service (not academics), and an essay regarding service will be the fundamental basis of the form. The deadline is midnight, Monday April 16. The committee will conduct their review and determine the awardees.

The Knights thank the generous support of parishioners during our Lenten Fish Fry dinners. This year we held six Friday Fish Fries. Highlights included live entertainment (Groove Monkey, Hawaiian Dancers, Irish Dancers) and also featured Dr. Bob Hardy's Home Brewed Craft Beers available for a donation.



Irish Dancers Entertain at March 16 Fish Fry

Thanks go to an incredible crew who gave an enormous number of hours preparing and





...serving the food, to the volunteers who provided desserts, and to an amazing clean-up crew who stayed late every Fish Fry to keep our PAC in great shape. Through their outstanding efforts we raised over \$1,700 toward our scholarship fund.

Meals at Our Business Meetings

At our March Business Meeting, Al Perez treated the group of hungry brothers to an fantastic Fajita dinner. His expertly grilled beef fajitas were complete with rice and beans and all our favorite toppings. Many thanks to Al for providing this fine meal.

At the April Business Meeting, twenty two attendees feasted on superb pulled pork sliders prepared by brother Gabe Guardiola. They were so good that seconds were the order of the day for most members. Many thanks are due to Gabe for providing this excellent meal.

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, and we are almost always finished by 8:30 p.m. or shortly thereafter.

Easter Activities

Luminaries – Our Council again decorated the Parish campus with Luminaries lining the sidewalk between Brennan and the church for the procession of the Holy Sacrament following Holy Thursday Mass. This added a beautiful

touch to the solemn ceremony. Nine brothers turned out to set up the Luminaries and to put them away the day after. Thanks to Walter Brocato, Ray Minjarez, Jeff Mikolajek, David McLennan, Tony Lioi, David Sanchez, Kevin Brinkman and of course our Grand Knight Dennis Robinson for giving their time.

Holy Thursday Fourth Degree Honor Guard - At Fr. Michael's request, our Fourth Degree members provided the Honor Guard during the Holy Thursday Mass. They escorted the priests and deacons, as well as providing an escort for the presentation of the Holy Oils. The dignity added to the solemnity of the celebration was readily apparent, and many have commented on how special it was to see the Knights there. Many thanks to our Fourth Degree members for their exceptional service to the Parish.



Sir Knights Larry Carpentier, Dennis Robinson, David Sanchez, Kevin Brinkman, Stan Urban & Jim Ferguson assisted at Holy Thursday Mass.





Additional Photo of Fourth Degree Escorts During Holy Thursday Mass.

Diocesan Chrism Mass – Members of our Fourth Degree also provided escort for the Chrism Mass where the Holy Oils are Blessed for subsequent distribution at the Parishes.



Sir Knight Stan Urban is pictured above at the Chrism Mass, 2nd from the left.

Easter Parking - Council brothers turned out at 5:30 AM Easter morning to guide the huge Easter crowd efficiently in and out of the church grounds for Easter Masses. Many thanks to brothers Rodney Laurent, Pat Larkin, David Sanchez, Larry Carpentier, Ray Minjarez, David McLennan, John Smith, Paul Gelencser, Steve Isaacson, Steve Haecker, Jim Ferguson, and Dennis Robinson, along with parishioner Herman Ruprecht for this outstanding service to the Parish.

Mobile Loaves and Fishes Easter Feast -

On Easter Monday, brother Rodney Laurent led a team of brothers in an all-day preparation of a very special meal for Austin homeless, distributed through STM's Mobile Loaves and Fishes. Brothers David Sanchez, Steve Isaacson, Dennis Robinson, Jim Ferguson, John Smith, Frank Kelly, Tony Lioi, and Rodney Laurent prepared smoked rib roast and sausage, macaroni and cheese, corn, and banana pudding. David Sanchez and Jeff and Linda Mikolajek made the trip to Caritas to serve the food. Food was prepared for near two hundred homeless. The Knights thank J.W. Green for his meat smoking expertise and time spent cooking the meats. We also can't thank Rodney Laurent enough for his selfless efforts and outstanding talents in planning and teaching all of us how to prepare such a huge feast. He was the first one there and the last to leave, and was always cheerful and patient with the crew.



Dennis Robinson stirring the cheese; It takes a lot of cheese for a great Macaroni and Cheese





Frank Kelly takes a well earned break from all of the chopping and mixing



Rodney Laurent, Frank Kelly, and Tony Lioi prep the corn and the macaroni and cheese



Steve Isaacson and J.W. Green smoke the meats



John Smith takes on the tedious task of keeping up with the dish washing.





Chaplain's Reports

Although unable to attend the March meeting, Deacon Dan submitted the following via email as the Chaplain's report for March:

In lieu of my presence, I want to offer you some insights about our pope gained after having spent three days with the clergy of our diocese listening to the papal dean of the Vatican tribunal, who promoted the Pope's desire that we clergy (and by our example and guidance, the lay faithful) remember that the salvation of souls is key to God, and that following Canon Law is only effective if it promotes the salvation of souls (Canon 1752: ""the salvation of souls... must always be the supreme law in the Church, [and it] is to be kept before one's eyes."")

The following excerpt sums up what the Pope is all about - it's a commentary about the Pope's infamous comment, "Who am I to judge?"— which many pundits misunderstood as the pope being wishy-washy about upholding Church doctrine (when in fact he was objecting to the propensity to reject the full humanity of a person who has an obvious sin by those whose sins may be more hidden - a hypocrisy Jesus often points out in Scripture):

Francis has never suggested that he advocates for doctrinal change, or a change in the church's formal antipathy toward LGBTQ sexuality. Rather, **his focus has always been on welcoming all would-be worshippers into the fold, focusing less on whether they are "sinners" (after all, according to Catholic doctrine, we're all sinners in some form or another) and more on whether they have access to the**

community of worshippers, and attendant sacraments, necessary for a Christian life. For Francis, focusing on an individual element of a person — whether their sexuality or another perceived sin — is a mistake and detracts from the dignity of the whole person.

If you remember the movie "Dead Man Walking" with Sr. Prejean who worked to help the man on death row to repent of his sins and accept Christ's mercy... she never gave up on his humanity, on his soul. She never judged him as a murderer, his sin; but she saw him as beloved by Christ, made in God's image, a man who made many bad choices, but whose soul (as Jesus taught us in yesterday's gospel) was worth saving.

The pope through his dean who spoke to us urged us to read the controversial [chapter 8 of Amoris Laetitia](#) as a pastoral approach to redeeming those who otherwise our laws might consider to be outcasts, unredeemable, modern lepers (my words); the notion of **gradualness** (bringing lost souls along gradually, moving them closer to church teaching, and to Christ, rather than just rejecting them as unfit for acceptance by the church because they are outside church law), and the ideas of **accompanying** (walking their journey with them back to alignment with church teaching...gradually), **discerning** (listening to their situation with Christ's merciful heart), and **integrating** (doing what we can to be a





bridge from their current situation to the goal situation of realignment with the church).

Accompanying, discerning, and integrating. It's a beautiful summary of what we do with our kids. We walk with them through infancy and childhood, through school and early adulthood, until they are on their own; we help them discern right from wrong, teaching them, explaining things, reminding them, warning them, and rewarding them for good choices and challenging them for errant behaviors and bad choices; and we continue to walk and guide as part of their lives, involving them in our lives and being present and witnessing our ideals and beliefs, while making ourselves available to be included in their lives - an integration (RELATIONSHIP) that results ultimately in their standing tall and walking straight their own journeys of faith in this world.

May we pray for the Pope, whose controversy mirror's Christ's own, when he challenged the Pharisees and Scribes and scholars of the law of his time to reconsider their practices, and their proclivity to denounce Him when He healed on the sabbath, or spoke "blasphemy" when he uttered what His Father gave him to say (see today's Gospel reading).

And maybe we organize a parish showing of this film:

<http://focusfeatures.com/video/pope-francis-a-man-of-his-word-official-trailer>

<http://focusfeatures.com/pope-francis-a-man-of-his-word>

Blessings on meeting the ongoing challenges of your Lenten journey. - Deacon Dan Lupo

Chaplain's Report for April - Deacon Dan Lupo provided the following thoughts. Paraphrasing his report in his words:

This is a bit of a departure from the usual. Recently, I have shared emails with the council on a variety of topics, and unfortunately all too frequently they deal with disturbing issues we face, perhaps exemplified by the euthanasia story out of Denmark. In stark contrast, this is the very real story of the President of France, Emmanuel Macron who stressed the importance of a Catholic voice in the country's political debates, particularly on bioethical issues, in an address to the French bishops April 9. He stated "What I want to call you tonight is to engage politically in our national debate and in our European debate because your faith is part of the commitment that this debate needs." He went on to say "Our contemporaries need, whether they believe or do not believe, to hear from another perspective on man other than the material perspective," he continued, "They need to quench another thirst, which is a thirst for absolute. It is not a question here of conversion, but of a voice which, with others, still dares to **speak of man as a living spirit.**"

Macron's speech comes as bioethical debates continue in France, with parliament preparing to





reform its bioethics laws. The new law will probably try to authorize two main things, against which most of French Catholics are fighting: euthanasia and IVF for single women and lesbian couples, stated Guillaume de Thieulloy, editor of the French Catholic blog *Le Salong Beige*.

Macron's speech is one particular area indicating that there is hope...that God is "tweaking" things. Jesus said to the Pharisees, you are on the wrong path following rules, taking you farther away from God. We need to speak up when the occasion calls for it, and with words and actions.

Deacon Dan cited a recent personal situation in which he was personally challenged. There was a homeless individual outside the church during the recent cold snap, asking for help with shelter for the cold night. The Deacon was able to provide \$60 for a hotel room for the night for this person. Shortly thereafter, following a baptism he was presented with an envelope with a donation. "Is that \$60?" he asked. The astonished father said "yes, how could you know that?" God had quickly validated that the right thing was done. Deacon Dan said that he also wondered whether he had done enough . . . should he have done more? We can all experience these moments when suddenly we are challenged to do something and must quickly make a decision, trusting in God. Even if no one gives you a thumb's up, or reimburses you financially, God is there affirming us. He will continue to bless us somehow so we can continue to help. Our Pope is trying to guide us to stand against the swirl toward hedonism and secularism and it starts with us . . . we need to reject the pull of the world and stay with our spiritual life. We need to train ourselves to see the opportunities to stop and help.

Upcoming Events -

4th Degree Fallout for Confirmation – Fr. Michael has asked for the 4th degree to fallout for the Confirmation, Tuesday April 17. Vesting will be at 6:15 PM in the library.

Corporate Communion - We will have a Corporate Communion at the 9 am mass on April 29.

Removing the Temporary Shelter – The temporary shelter outside the PAC will be dismantled tentatively on April 26. If the crew that put it up is available with cordless power drills to disassemble, the job can be easily accomplished as it was put together with screws in anticipation of disassembling. Look for an update either confirming the April 26 date, or identifying the final decision on the date.

Mulching the Campus Grounds – In May we will help provide the labor for spreading mulch in the flower beds and around trees. Consider turning out and helping us save the parish a significant amount of money by eliminating hiring an outside firm.

Annunciation Maternity Home Gala – The event will be on Thursday, May 10 with check in at 6:30 PM. Cost is \$75 per person, \$140 per couple. Location is Sheraton in Georgetown on Woodland Ave. Table cost of \$600 is covered by Diocesan Deputy Kevin Brinkman. Contact G.K. Dennis Robinson if interested.

Religious Education Appreciation Dinner – Our Council has traditionally cooked and served this celebratory meal. The date is to be determined, but look for this volunteer opportunity around mid-May.





Next Major Degree- The next opportunity is on May 19 at St Louis parish.

Elections of Officers – We are in the process of obtaining nominees at our business meetings for the election of officers for the next fraternal year. If you are interested, please contact Trustee David McLennan or G.K. Dennis Robinson. The meetings for two months prior to a vote will ask for nominees.

Additional Summer Fundraiser – We are considering an additional fundraiser, possibly a Pancake Breakfast for Father's Day. Officers will be discussing possible beneficiaries of the fundraiser with Fr. Michael for his approval in the coming weeks. Please keep this in mind and look for announcements seeking volunteers to help.

Hosting the Austin Chapter Meeting – Our Council will host the Chapter Meeting August 27. We will need volunteers for meal prep for sure.

Hosting Major Degree – Council 9997 will host a major degree in the Fall of the year. Stay tuned for updates as it approaches. We will definitely need volunteers to check in the participants, and to prepare/serve a meal.

Parish Funfest – Parish Funfest will be October 20. Knights will do food prep again. There will also be a live auction associated with this to be held September 28, and food prep for about 200 people will be involved. Please watch for further information.

Golf Tournament – Our annual Columbus day Golf Tournament to raise funds for STM's

Mobile Loaves and Fishes is beginning its planning phase. At this point, several officers will be meeting with each of two possible venues to see what each can offer. The tough work of securing sponsors is always key, so if anyone has contacts in mind, please contact G.K. Dennis Robinson.

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. Unfortunately, there are not very many of our members who are up to date on this 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.

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.

Filling Open Positions (Lecturer, Pro-Life, Special Olympics) – Brother Andy Mikla has been our Lecturer and Pro-Life Coordinator for over 10 years and recently decided to step aside to provide opportunity for others to fill these positions. Brother Ed Konop has recently stepped aside as Special Olympics coordinator. Both Brothers have done an outstanding job and should be commended for their service.

We are fortunate and pleased to announce that Brother Pat Larkin has volunteered to take on the Lecturer position, and Brother Paul





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Gelencser has stepped up to fill the Special Olympics Coordinator position. Paul is already keeping us up to date on upcoming activities (see his March 18 email detailing multiple upcoming activities). Many thanks to these brothers for taking on these worthy activities and serving the Council with their time and skills.

We still need a Pro-Life Coordinator. This primarily consists of keeping up with organized activities and alerting the council, i.e. a communications effort. If you are interested, please contact G.K. Dennis Robinson.

