

Worthy State Deputy Elect, Worthy District Deputy Designate, Worthy Past Grand Knights, Brothers, Ladies... Vivat Jesus... Welcome to the celebration of John Paul I Council's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

Brothers... many of you have played a huge role in making our council what it is today... because of you and your families, and the support you've given to our council throughout these 40 years, John Paul I council has an enviable reputation for its' service to our church, our Order, our community and our families.

To our charter members... without your vision, hard work and dedication, and the groundwork each of you had a hand in laying, our council has grown and flourished to become one of the busiest councils in the jurisdiction of Virginia, and as some are fond of saying... "the best council in Dale City". Each of you, whether you were an officer, a committee chair, or that extra set of hands helping out at just the right moment... John Paul I council is what it is today because of you. And I thank each of you for your contributions to the success of our council and the mentorship provided to those of us that have followed in your footsteps!

I want to thank the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Planning Committee, Committee Chair Grand Knight Elect Jim Dart; along with PGKs Gray Gagnon, Joe Graham, Bill Gleichsner, Ed Fairbairn, Jim Limbach, Mike Dvoroznak, Art Peacott, and Vic Rivera... You guys did an amazing job in organizing this event. From the concept of the themed celebration; to the idea of the shirts, wine glasses and coffee mugs as fund-raisers; to the historical information provided by the committee members; and the development and production of the commemorative booklet... Thanks to PGK Helmut Brokamp for his assist on the booklet as well. The committee members provided great ideas and worked very hard in bringing this celebration together in a relatively short amount of time. Thank you all!

To the House Committee, House Manager Gray Gagnon, Joe Graham, Art Peacott, Vic Rivera, Jim Dart, Dave Dewald, Tim Bowen, and Matt Hawkes... Thank you all for the work you put into sprucing up the council home, the grounds and parking lot and many of the little touches... You were instrumental in making today happen and making us look so good in the process!

And to the KC Ladies for their part in this... You did a fantastic job on the themed decorations inside, I saw many of you here last night working on making the council look just right, and for the themed desserts that we'll be enjoying a bit later... Thank you!

And from the collective planning and house committees, I want to offer thanks to all of our wives; we truly appreciate your support. And a special thanks to one of those wives who always seems to be here and is always helping out, one way or another... and she does a pretty good job in keeping the House Manager in line as well... Sandy Gagnon!

I also want to publicly thank my wife, Arlene for her constant support and understanding... I wouldn't be where I am without you, Hon!

Ok... you've heard me mention themes a few times... when we finally open the doors here shortly, you'll find that the council home has been decorated using two distinctive and meaningful themes...

The first floor carries an Irish theme dedicated to and honoring our founder the Venerable Fr. Michael J. McGivney. While the second floor has an Italian

theme dedicated to and honoring our patron the great Christopher Columbus. Each floor will be offering appropriately themed food and drink.

When you go inside, you'll also find that through the special coordination of PGKs John Dubelko and Joe Graham, we've managed to arrange for special photo opportunities with our Founder, the Venerable Fr. Michael J. McGivney; our patron the great Christopher Columbus, and our council's namesake, His Holiness Pope John Paul I. You'll understand when you get inside.

As part of our fund-raising efforts for this 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, we still have stemless wine glasses and travel mugs available for sale. And if anyone is interested, we are still taking orders for the commemorative polo shirts. Order forms are available inside.

We also have commemorative anniversary booklets available. If you RSVP'd to the planning committee, a copy will be provided to you. If you did not RSVP, we very likely will have a copy for you as well, but please be patient with us, as we hand them out. And also, one copy per family please.

And lastly... as its been pointed out in our numerous communications about today's celebration, this is a **FREE** event. As you look around, you'll see we have a number of bartenders and wait-staff to tend to your wants and needs throughout evening... Be kind... be patient... be generous... Don't forget to tip them! Let's show them how much we appreciate their support!

I want to thank you all for being here today and for the part each of you has played in making today's celebration; and more importantly the part each of you has played in making John Paul I Council a great success and something we can all be proud of! Have a great time!

Vivat Jesus!