

## A Letter to the Men of 2058 From One of the Knights of Columbus of St. Louis Church

February 18, 2009

My Dear Brothers:

Our Knights of Columbus Council 3335 has a history of ups and downs, founded I believe in the 1950s, suspended for twenty years, and then revived in 1989. Today we are one of the top chapters, receiving awards from the Ohio Knights of Columbus. You have a legacy to follow.

We have served the parish and the community well. To raise funds we hold lenten fish fries, pancake breakfasts for the Parish and for a wrestling tournament, raffles (including donated Ohio State football tickets as a prize), etc. This makes it possible to give \$1000 scholarships to recent high school graduates.

Our Coats for Kids campaign with barrels situated at different spots in the city clothes poor kids for the winter. Duke's Cleaners cleans them free of charge. Each year we host a simple basketball skills competition for handicapped kids. Our Keep Christ in Christmas campaign includes bumper stickers and in 2006 two billboards. We have participated in parades and the annual Right to Life silent prayerful protest along the boulevard in front of the Ohio River Plaza.

We also do maintenance work in the cemetery and in the parish. Once we put siding on the house of a lay woman and a nun who serve the poor. We participate in putting up and taking down the Christmas decorations inside and outside.

The Knights have their dinner meetings on the fourth Monday evening of the month both for fellowship and for business to discuss committee reports and pending projects. At each meeting the Knights have been generous in supporting religious vocations as part of the "Pennies For Heaven" campaign. Furthermore we promote vocations, especially in our Confirmation classes. Included in the time capsule are the notes for one of these talks. Attached are the minutes of one of our meetings.

We participate in the National Knights of Columbus work through their national football raffle and our dues. Their life insurance program contributes to the security to our families at very reasonable premiums and the profits do not go to the shareholders, but to K of C charities, especially in promoting life and family values, and giving donations to the Holy Father.

Individual members deserve mention. There are many who gave their share and more to the parish community to make it vibrant. To name only a few that come to mind we have:

\***Bruce Davison**, a Viet Nam combat veteran, found the Lord in a deep way and persuaded the pastor to have monthly Sunday afternoon Eucharistic Adoration for over five hours. He would stay for the entire all night Eucharistic Vigil for Life every December 8. Father Bill could always count on him for flowers and handyman work. He took every opportunity to evangelize and bring people into the Church or recruit for new members of the Knights of Columbus.

\***Dick Cornett**, a retired Dentist, discovered a hobby and has contributed his hand made stained glass window in the Parish Hall.

\***Dr. Mel Simon** organized annual medical missions over a period exceeding twenty years. It consisted of some 30 doctors and other medical personnel to perform surgery for the poor in his native Philippine Islands.

\***Mike Ours** tragically ran over his toddler son, but heroical ly maintained his faith in a deeper way than ever, becoming a pillar of the parish as he taught CCD and took charge of the Giving Tree before Christmas for poor families.

\***Matt Bokovitz** resigned his position of head football coach of Gallia Academy to organize many dinners, breakfasts, parties, and other activities in the Parish Center.

\***Mike Merry** started our youth group, the YACHT Club. They would meet two Sundays a month and

have such activities as caroling at a nursing home, doing a park cleanup in Vinton, bowling, going through the Halloween maize, annual all night hangouts at the Merry home, etc. In addition, he headed Gallia County Right to Life and attended over 20 Right to Life Marches in Washington.

\***Tom Goetz** could always be counted on to sell raffle tickets after mass and promote Republican candidates in the community.

\***Odie O'Donnell** was a faithful secretary of the Council for years with his meticulously taken minutes.

**Msgr. William Meyers** revived the Knights in 1989 and gave our Council spiritual direction. Notice the attached nomination for Chaplain of the Year for the state of Ohio.

\***Mike Edleman** did solos for his mother's choir and coached kids sports teams. His father left a legacy for the Knights in requesting at his death bed that they lead the rosary before Mass.

\***The many other guys**, some who didn't like meetings, but contributed wherever they could, especially when asked.

We do a lot, but we can be better. Father McGibny, a future saint, founded the Knights of Columbus to solidify and strengthen families. Thus we need to do more in the area of family activities as family picnics and outings with our sons as hunting and fishing tips, sports, etc. We have had a swimming party, a New Year's party in the new Parish Hall, and women's appreciation nights.

We need to do much more in the spiritual area. Attached is a summary of things we tried to do when I was the Church Committee Chair. Some were successful and some were not. It is my dream that some day our parish will be big enough to support more frequent Eucharistic Adorations (if not perpetual adoration) with an honor guard of two knights each hour like the knights of old. May we be ready to give our lives if need be to protect Christ the King against dishonor and desecration. When a knight dies two knights in uniform form an honor guard at attention beside his remains at the wake as the rest of the council pray the rosary. I hope that each new candidate will be required to spend an hour in adoration before being inducted into the Knights of Columbus.

Urgent is an annual Men's Lenten Retreat in addition to the annual Parish Mission. We have spun our wheels both for weekend retreats outside of town and for Days of Recollection at our Parish Hall. The women have been successful in that regard. The men need something specific to their needs.....to develop virtues for being better fathers, husbands, and leaders in the community; help in avoiding the vices and handling problems common to men. According to research, if the mother takes the lead, there is something like a 35% probability that the children will be faithful to the Church as adults. When the father takes the lead, that probability doubles. Too often the women are the pillars of the parish. It is crucial that men take the lead for Christ instead of being passive or doing nothing.....to put Christ in the home, in the parish, in the community, and in the workplace.....to be Christ bearers as the legendary St. Christopher who carried a babe burdened by the weight of the sins of the world across a river. .

It is our prayer that in 2058 the Knights are still actively serving the parish and the community. If for some reason, the Knights of Columbus St. Louis Council is no longer active, please consider reviving it. If you are not a member, please consider becoming a knight. We hope that you will have continued the projects in which we have been successful and will have been creative in improving on what we did and coming up with new and better projects. Please consider the projects where we have failed. Maybe the time was not right for us but it is for you. May you succeed with your energy and creativity where we have failed. Perhaps we can give you ideas and inspiration from our graves through what we left in the time capsule. We are looking forward to meeting you in heaven. Make sure you get there. Being more active socially and more so spiritually can only enhance a joyful council meeting together in eternity. As St. Ignatius Loyola said: "Ad gloriam mayorem Dei" or "For the greater glory of God".

With fondest regards and best wishes,

Paul R. Sebastian