

December 16, 2015

Please consider the press release for your Christmas articles. It's informative and timely, touching upon a local and national problem. It should be suitable for a regular news article or as an article in this Sunday's "Along the River" section.

The last two paragraphs may be easily cut. If you would like to use it for the "Along the River" section as a feature article, I have attached four more photos along with the press release for your convenience.

As any press release you may edit and cut as you see fit. Have a joyful Christmas and God bless.



**Knights of Columbus
Council 3335
St. Louis Church
85 State Street
Gallipolis, OH 45631**

PRESS RELEASE

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**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS PROMOTE THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS
Throw a "Keep Christ in Christmas" Party**



Christmas has become so secularized that it has lost its original meaning. It's often improper to say "Merry Christmas". With great advertising frenzy, stores sell "holiday trees" plus decorations and a lot of "stuff" to give to our loved ones for the "holidays". We send "holiday" greetings that celebrate Santa Claus, sleighs, reindeer, penguins, and snowmen. We have parties and really don't know why. Then everything comes to a screeching halt a day or two after Christmas when we take down the decorations, return much of the "stuff" to the stores, and buy the lights and ornaments at half price for next year.

As part of a national campaign, the Knights of Columbus is promoting the real reason for the season, a "holy day". Council 3335 of St. Louis Church in Gallipolis did something unique. It threw a "Keep Christ in Christmas Party" for the kids. The children had the usual sweets and songs. But they also participated in a poster contest on an authentic Christmas theme. For example: a multitude of angels appeared to poor Jewish shepherds with the awesome earth shaking "good news of great joy" that "a savior has been born to you, who is Christ the Lord".....Jesus Christ, the Son of God became one of us as a helpless little baby to later teach us how to live and save us from our sins if we but follow Him! The angels joyfully concluded with the words "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men of good will" (Luke 2:10-14).

The icing on the cake read: "Keep Christ in Christmas". The party tried to be faithful to the Advent season of waiting in joyful anticipation for the Messiah as the Jews did for 4000 years. Today during the four weeks of Advent, we should prepare our hearts and souls for the coming of the Redeemer with prayer, bible and spiritual reading, and church services. Then it all comes to a climax on Christmas Day as we celebrate and relive the joy of the birth of the Redeemer, God Himself becoming man! This is the first of the 12 days of Christmas which concludes with the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6. This time the heavens sent another message to some learned wise men of present day Iran in the form of an unusual star (a conjunction of planets, a comet, a nova, or some combination), indicating that Christ also came to earth for the gentiles, the educated, and the affluent.

Lest we forget, almost all of our Christmas customs, celebration, gift giving, and ideals of peace, love of all, generosity to the poor, family being all together, etc. ultimately come from that first Christmas in which God loved us so much "that He gave (us) His only begotten Son" (John 3:16). That gives every person in the world tremendous dignity. During the Christmas season, let's frequently ask ourselves the question whether we're decorating, buying gifts, or partying: "Why am I doing this?"

As we relive in joyful anticipation the 4000 year wait for the fulfillment of God's promise of a Redeemer as foretold by the Old Testament prophets, may we be prepared for the coming of the Messiah, Christ the King!

The Knights of Columbus is the world's largest Catholic lay organization. It provides members and their families with volunteer opportunities in service to the Church, their communities, and youth. With more than 1.8 million members in over 15,000 councils around the world, the Knights of Columbus annually donates more than \$170 million and 70 million hours of service to charitable causes. The most prominent community activities of the St. Louis Council include the Coats for Kids campaign, Substance Abuse Awareness, and the Basketball Free Throw for developmentally disabled children and adults of the Rehabilitation Center. Please visit kofc.org and kofcoho.org for more information.

All faithful Catholic men of the area are invited to join the Knights of Columbus (call Bruce Davison, the Grand Knight at 256-1427). Members enjoy great fellowship along with family activities and opportunities to serve the parish and the community. A big bonus is the life insurance program to protect families. It ranks at the very top as to financial stability among all insurance organizations and companies. Any profits do not go to stockholders, but rather are returned to the insured in rebates and used for a number of charitable causes.

Deleted: Even the President of the United States has lost it. On “A Charlie Brown Christmas” he said with perfect political correctness: “They teach us that tiny trees just need a little love, and that on this holiday we celebrate peace on Earth and good will toward all”.