



The Palmetto State Bulletin



The Newsletter of the South Carolina State Council

Volume 31 Issue 2

August 2019

An Attitude of Stewardship

By Deacon Bob Cox, State Spiritual Director

Greetings my Brother Knights! I would like to discuss a winning attitude and stewardship. To begin with here are two statements on attitude: 1.) A little thing that makes a big difference. 2.) The heart of a fool is in his mouth, but the mouth of a wise man is in his heart.

A reminder of stewardship (and attitude) was in the Gospel of Luke on the 18th. Sunday of Ordinary Time (August 4th), when Jesus renounces wealth and says to follow Him. Jesus said that God desires a return on the gifts He has given us. Jesus proclaims that His followers (us) are obligated to give everything to God, even the things we have earned. You cannot 'take it with you' when you die because you will lose it all in the end. Nothing is forever!

Below are attitudes of stewardship, one could be by a Knight and one could be by a Non-Knight (you can insert various titles, such as, good steward vs bad steward, winner vs loser, etc.)

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| K: Is always part of the answer | N: Is always a part of the problem. |
| K: Always has a program, idea, solution | N: Always has an excuse. |
| K: Says, "let me do it for you." | N: Says, "that's not my job." |
| K: Sees an answer for every problem | N: Sees a problem for every answer. |
| K: Says, "be patient and have a caring attitude." | |

- N: Says, "I do not have time and I give up."
 K: Says, "it may be difficult, but it's possible."
 N: Says, "it may be possible, but too difficult."
 K: Is always loving and forgiving.
 N: Is always hating and never forgetting.
 K: Is always concerned about charity the hungry, the naked, the poor, giving until it hurts.
 N: Is only concerned about himself, not giving excess proceeds to the hungry, naked and poor.
 My Brothers, the Word became flesh, in order to show us what the gift of self means. Jesus wants us to give ourselves to His Divine love and not to worry about receiving a reward. He wants us to GIVE to those in need. Share our good fortunes with others.

Quoting Timothy P. O'Malley, Ph.D., "God did not enter the world to make our lives better or to allow our stocks and bonds to mature. God entered the world because God is love: Love to the end. God is the Father of infinite, total, absolute, eternal love."

We have to live up to the expectations of Fr. Michael McGivney, the Supreme Council, and our Diocese. We have to share more of our time, talent and wealth with our Church, our Organization, and with the poor in our communities. Why? Jesus says to love. Eternal Love.

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SCHEDULE OF STATE WIDE EVENTS

August 2019

- 15 Holy Day of Obligation - Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- 17 Knighthood Degree, Council 8980, Garden City
- 24 Knighthood Degree, Council 9575, Spartanburg

September 2019

- TBD Council Soccer Challenge
- 7 Knighthood Degree, Council 11991, Goose Creek
- 14 Knighthood Degree, Council 6847, NE Columbia, Statewide Spanish
- 27-29 Diocese of Charleston, Catholic Camporee - Batesburg, SC
- 28 Fourth Degree Exemplification - Nativity Catholic Church, James Island, SC



From the State Deputy

Daniel Barton

Brother Knights,

I hope this edition of the Palmetto Bulletin finds you and your family well.

I would like to extend my grateful appreciation to all members and their families who through their actions truly live up to the principal virtues of the Knights of Columbus. I would especially like to thank Thomas M. Monahon, PSD and his wife Kathy for their many years of service to the Order. Recently, we were informed that Tom has been selected as the new Vice Supreme Master of the DeSoto Province overseeing the Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, and South Carolina Jurisdictions. Tom is only the third member from South Carolina to serve in this position. With this change effective on September 1st, a new District Master will be appointed and I ask that you please give him your full support.

In early August, I along with 16 others had the distinct privilege of representing the State at the 137th Supreme Convention held in Minneapolis, Minnesota. It was definitely an amazing convention. Some of the highlights included: Masses with over 80 Priests, 60 Bishops/Archbishops and 6 Cardinals; the Supreme Knights State of the Order address; and, the awards session. During the awards session, Edward M Griffin was recognized as our Immediate Past State Deputy. I hope that you were able to watch some of these highlights on EWTN.

In his address to the convention, Supreme Knight Carl Anderson gave an overview of the pioneering spirit of several Catholic Priests who helped to explore our great country. Like Fr Louis Hennepin and Fr Lucien Galtier, another pioneer was Fr Michael J McGivney. His vision in 1882 led the Knights of Columbus from a small handful of men in the basement of St Mary's Catholic Church to an Order comprised of 1,989,016 members worldwide that last year made charitable contributions in excess of \$185 million in addition to more than 76 million hours of volunteer service. As Carl Anderson aptly stated, "we are their descendants. Yet unlike the pioneers of old, we are not defined by our individual accomplishments.

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From the Vocations Director

James P. Weiskircher, Vocations Director

I had the privilege of representing the National Catholic Committee on Scouting as National Chair at the 24th World Scout Jamboree. I saw Knights of Columbus putting their faith in action from our state as well as WV. Chaplains from around the world came together for one night for a dinner hosted by Knights of Columbus Council 5657, Grand Knight Joe Voloski of Beckley WV in their parish hall. This allowed priests from around the world to meet off site to enjoy each others company.

On Sunday, July 28, the Papal Nuncio, His Excellency Archbishop Christophe Pierre, Bishop Guglielmone, Bishop Conlon, Diocese of Joliet, Auxiliary Bishop Spencer from the Archdiocese of the Military, along with 50 other priests from around the world came together to celebrate Mass for 7,000 scouts. Below is his message to the scouts.

**HOMILY OF HIS EXCELLENCY ARCHBISHOP
CHRISTOPHE PIERRE
APOSTOLIC NUNCIO TO THE UNITED STATES
17TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, JULY 28, 2019
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA NATIONAL JAMBOREE
THE SUMMIT: BETCHEL FAMILY NATIONAL SCOUT
RESERVE
GLEN JEAN, WEST VIRGINIA**

My Dear Friends,

As I begin, I wish to share the following message:

His Holiness Pope Francis sends warm greetings and the assurance of his prayers to all the members of the Scout associations gathered from various parts of the world for the celebration of the World Scout Jamboree. The Holy Father encourages all scouts and leaders to grow in their spiritual and religious commitment to God, respect for other persons and the bonds of friendship that they share. In this way, scouts will be able to offer a witness of faith and service to their local communities through the promotion of the ideals and activities of scouting. Pope Francis prays especially that scouts may continue to care for all of God's creation and help others appreciate the beauty of our common home. With these sentiments, the Holy Father gladly imparts to all who take part in this celebration of the Holy Mass his Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of peace and joy in the Lord.

*Cardinal Pietro Parolin
Secretary of State*

Vocations continued on page 7



**Patriot's
Corner**
Tom Monahon, PSD
Master, South Carolina
District, DeSoto Province



Brother Sir Knights,

All 2019 Installations are complete. Kathy and I enjoyed meeting so many of you.

80th Exemplification: The 80th Exemplification of the Patriotic Degree will be Saturday, September 28, 2019, at Nativity Catholic Church on James Island, SC. Start recruiting now. I am pleased to announce that SK Richard Gabriel, PSD will be the honoree for this exemplification.


Change in Master: As of September 1, 2019, there will be a new Master of the South Carolina District. The name of PSD Michael A. Allen has been submitted to replace me. I am appreciative of all the support I have received from the Sir Knights of South Carolina. I trust you will give Mike the same support. As for me, I have been given the honor to represent South Carolina as the new Vice Supreme Master of the DeSoto Province (NC, SC, GA, FL, and PR) replacing Robert Anderson whose term expires August 31, 2019. I am very proud to have served you as the District Master for the past 3 years.

Let us pray for our country and Church:

Holy Family pray for us.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas and the unborn, pray for us.

St. Joseph, patron saint of the Universal Church, pray for us.

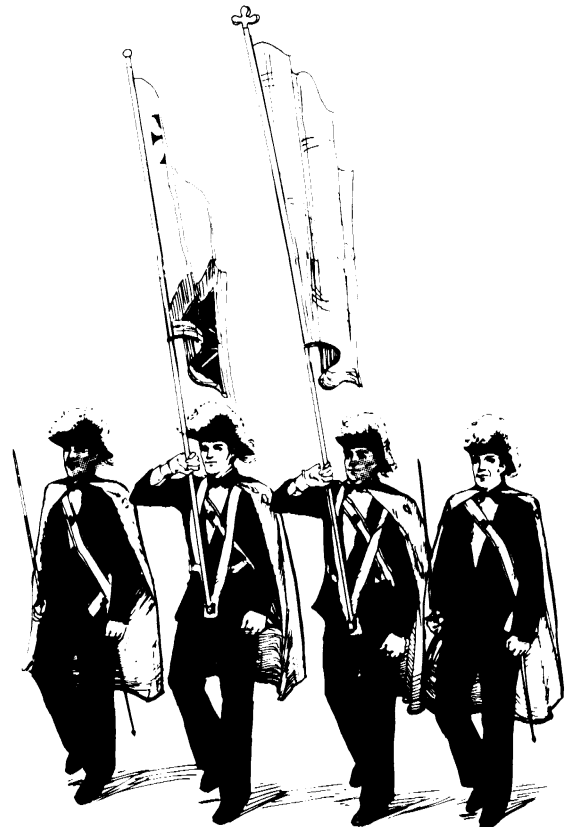
Knights of Columbus
**FOURTH
DEGREE**
Patriotic degree of the Order.

Exemplification
September 28, 2019

**Nativity
Catholic Church**
1061 Folly Rd, Charleston, SC 29412

**Candidate and Banquet
Reservations by 9/13/19**

"Sir Knight" is more than a title — it's an honor!



From the State Ceremonials

Chairman

Michael A. Allen IPSD

Brother Knights,

“Ceremonies may be shadows, but they are the shadows of great truth, and it is essential that they should be carried out with the greatest possible attention”-St. Vincent De Paul

Congratulations to all the Ceremonial Award winners for 2018-2019. Your hard work has paid off for your council. For your review the award winners are posted in this newsletter. Just a reminder that when you have members advance to the 2nd or 3rd Degree, the FS needs to update the member management site or email the Supreme Council.

Thank you so much for a quick start to the new fraternal year, I look forward to working with you all and bringing in many excited new brothers.

Our Third-Degree teams need help. If you would like to join a team and help exemplify the Third Degree to our Brother Knights please contact me (803-397-7803). We need speaking and non-speaking part members.

Vivat Jesus,

Mike

Admissions Degree Standings (FY 18-19)

DISTRICT	COUNCIL	CITY	GOAL	ACTUAL	% of GOAL	
Edward Kamenski	DD #1	17	0	0.0%		
		5026	Beaufort	4	0	0.0%
		7289	Hilton Head	3	0	0.0%
		10668	Hilton Head	5	0	0.0%
		12263	Bluffton	5	0	0.0%
Christopher Hilditch	DD # 2	16	5	31.3%		
		2207	Sumter	4	1	25.0%
		6847	N. E. Columbia	5	2	40.0%
		9672	Camden	3	0	0.0%
		13713	Blythewood	4	2	50.0%
V. Patrick Eagan	DD # 3	16	1	6.3%		
		5086	Myrtle Beach	4	0	0.0%
		7122	N. Myrtle Beach	5	1	20.0%
		7531	Conway	4	0	0.0%
		14892	Loris	3	0	0.0%
Sherrill Wilcox (Ed)	DD # 4	12	1	8.3%		
		3684	Aiken	5	0	0.0%
		7062	N. Augusta	4	1	25.0%
		9161	Barnwell	3	0	0.0%
Joe Friend	DD # 5	16	1	6.3%		
		6629	Summerville	5	0	0.0%
		8502	Walterboro	3	0	0.0%
		8900	N. Charleston	4	0	0.0%
		11910	Summerville	4	1	25.0%

DISTRICT	COUNCIL	CITY	GOAL	ACTUAL	% of GOAL	
Donald Thurlow, Jr.	DD # 6	13	0	0.0%		
		6884	Seneca	5	0	0.0%
		8295	Anderson	4	0	0.0%
		9576	Pickens	4	0	0.0%
Peter LaPierre	DD # 7	14	1	7.1%		
		6891	Orangeburg	3	0	0.0%
		11325	Lexington	4	1	250%
		12554	Columbia	4	0	0.0%
		15223	Manning/Santee	3	0	0.0%
James O. Alford	DD # 8	21	0	0.0%		
		1668	Greenville	5	0	0.0%
		8182	Mauldin	4	0	0.0%
		10819	Simpsonville	5	0	0.0%
		13112	Greenville	4	0	0.0%
		**	15960	Newberry (NJL)	3	0
James Daugomah	DD # 9	21	0	0.0%		
		704	Charleston	5	0	0.0%
		6250	James Island	4	0	0.0%
		9475	Mt. Pleasant	5	0	0.0%
		10334	Charleston	3	0	0.0%
		12472	Charleston	4	0	0.0%
Claire N. Buckley, Jr.	DD # 10	14	0	0.0%		
		6756	Rock Hill	5	0	0.0%
		10066	Lancaster	3	0	0.0%
		12268	York	3	0	0.0%
		**	15611	Rock Hill	3	0
Ronald E. Gilbert	DD # 11	13	1	7.7%		
		3067	Georgetown	3	0	0.0%
		8980	Garden City	5	1	20.0%
		11028	Pawleys Island	5	0	0.0%
		Frank Love	DD # 12	13	0	0.0%
Mike Cousino	DD # 13	16	3	18.8%		
		6726	Hanahan/Goose Creek	4	1	25.0%
		6900	Citadel	4	0	0.0%
		11471	Moncks Corner	3	1	33.3%
		11991	Goose Creek	5	1	20.0%
Jim Steffey	DD # 14	23	0	0.0%		
		6076	Spartanburg	5	0	0.0%
		9184	Taylors	4	0	0.0%
		9575	Spartanburg	5	0	0.0%
		12274	Greer	3	0	0.0%
		12995	Gaffney	3	0	0.0%
		**	15519	Greer	3	0
James D. Walters	DD # 15	14	0	0.0%		
		12366	Fort Mill	5	0	0.0%
		14475	Lake Wylie	5	0	0.0%
		14765	Indian Land	4	0	0.0%
		Thomas Armel	DD # 16	16	2	12.5%
Totals		724	Columbia	5	0	0.0%
		6892	Irmo	4	1	25.0%
		7129	Greenwood	4	0	0.0%
		16903	Chapin	3	1	33.3%
		255	15	5.9%		

First Degree Standings Notes

NOTE: Councils Indicated with an *, Team Has Been Re-certified

** Indicates Team Has Not Been Certified

Goal for FY 18-19

Degrees Per Council

Div I -1-99 - 3 Div II -100-199 - 4

DEGREE CEREMONIAL AWARDS FY2018-2019

Michael A. Allen, PSD, State Ceremonials Chairman

The following Councils were recognized for their promotion of membership through the conduct of First Degrees and achieving 100 percent or more of goal.

COUNCIL 10668 HILTON HEAD	100%
COUNCIL 6847 N.E. COLUMBIA	100%
COUNCIL 5086 MYRTLE BEACH	100%
COUNCIL 6884 SENECA	100%
COUNCIL 10066 LANCASTER	100%
COUNCIL 724 COLUMBIA	100%
COUNCIL 13713 BLYTHEWOOD	125%
COUNCIL 11325 LEXINGTON	150%
COUNCIL 6892 IRMO	150%
COUNCIL 16903 CHAPIN	167%
COUNCIL 11991 GOOSE CREEK	180%
COUNCIL 6726 HANNAHAN	200%

The following Districts were recognized for their promotion of membership through the conduct of First Degrees and achieving 100 percent or more of goal within their District.

District 13	PATRICK DAVIS, DD # 13	118.8%
District 16	MICHAEL MANCARI #16	112.5%

The following Second-Degree Teams were recognized for their promotion of membership through the conduct of Second Degrees and achieving 100 percent or more of goal.

Aiken Team	Bill Collins Team Captain	100%
Greater Greenville Team	Ron Stanley Team Captain	100%
Fr. Frederick H. Suggs Team	Mike Mancari Team Captain	100%
Grand Strand Team	Charles Van Demark Team Captain	120%



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As Father McGivney knew, we are strongest when we stand together. As Knights of Columbus, we are Knights of Unity.”

The theme of <Knights of Columbus, Knights of Unity> is so fitting especially today with the challenges the Church is facing. While at times these challenges appear to be hard and bleak, we must always remember that as Knights of Unity, we can spread the love of Christ by continuing the good works the Order is known for. This can be achieved through our Faith In Action model which allows us to continue to grow deeper in our own faith, to serve those in our local and greater communities, to strengthen our own domestic church, as well as to continue building a culture of life. As leaders of your local council, I ask that you ensure that the Faith In Action model is fully implemented. Additionally, if your council has not yet met with your local Pastor/Administrator that you please schedule a meeting and ask him how as <Knights of Columbus, Knights of Unity> you can aid him with his vocation and mission.

Lastly, I ask that you continue to pray for our Holy Father Pope Francis, Bishop Guglielmone and his brother Bishops, our Priests, Deacons, religious and seminarians.

Fraternally Yours,
Daniel Barton





Dear Brother Knights,

I am vacationing out West, off the grid, no cell phones, television and we are in the mountains of Wyoming very isolated from the daily news. Occasionally we've made a trip to town for supplies and the outside world creeps in and I find myself remarking, "Fr. Higgins is right! The world is going mad." Americans are at war with each other, I hear of proposals to re-structure America into a Socialist format, innocent people are being shot and killed at the shopping centers, and I just want to stay out here and count elk, moose, and bear. What better example do I have than the above to solidify my conviction that the Knights of Columbus Faith in Action is needed now more than ever? We cannot cure the world, but we can work on building up God's world around our faith communities and within our families, one step at a time. Failure to respond to this challenge will allow the world to invade our personal domain and then Katy bar the door. Brothers! Let's get serious this year about accomplishing our Programs and building a faith life that is rock solid.

To help each Council solve any problems with their Programs, we have appointed four Directors to advise you on the Faith in Action Programs. Faith – Michael Mancari; Community – Ed Wilcox; Life – Bill & Dee Hooks; Family – Bob Poyer. Use these specialists to tackle any questions you may have with your Council's program.

Good news! A few months ago, one of our Councils asked for a solution to accomplishing the Wheel Chair (Community) Program. The amount of money needed to be raised is very high and they are a small Council. I've worked with Supreme on this and they are very amenable to two or three Councils getting together and working on the same project. They can combine their fund raising efforts to buy wheelchairs and all councils involved get credit for the project. Buddy up, guys, and you'll have another one knocked off.

Fraternally,

Jim St. Clair

Director, Faith in Action Program

State Council

stclair33@bellsouth.net



From the State Protocol Chairman

Ronald G. Povero, PSD, FM

Worthy Grand Knights, Faithful Navigators and Members of the State Council:

INVITATIONS

Guests should be sent proper invitations in writing well in advance. Invitations should be mailed at least six weeks before an event. This will afford ample time to respond to the invitation.

All invitations should be sent in the name of and signed by the Grand Knight or Faithful Navigator, although he may request that replies be directed to a chairman or committee member. The District Deputy, as the special representative of the Supreme Knight and the State Deputy, should be invited to special Council or Assembly functions. It should be understood that his schedule may not permit him to attend every affair, in which case he would respond in ample time. Never give a blanket invitation to anyone. Always send each guest a personal invitation. If tickets are being used for a function, they should be forwarded, suitably marked, along with the invitation.

Invitations should be in the form of a letter when addressed to a specific person. Printed cards or general invitation notices may be used if the occasion warrants. A bulletin or flyer may be enclosed with the invitation if it gives more detailed information. It should not be used in lieu of an invitation. Such bulletins should never show the name of the person invited unless he has agreed to be present.

When an invitation is extended to anyone it should contain all details such as dress, extent of participation, etc. It is embarrassing for a guest to appear and find that he is the only one at the head table not in a tuxedo, or the only one present wearing one.



KNIGHTHOOD DEGREE SCHEDULE FOR 2019 – 2020

Aug 17	10:30 am	Council 8980, St. Michaels Church, Murrells Inlet
Aug 24	12:30 pm	Council 9575, Spartanburg
Sep 7		Council 11991 - Goose Creek
Sept 14	Morning	Council 6847, NE Columbia Statewide Spanish
Oct 19		Council 2207, Sumter
Oct 26		Council 6892, Irmo

Jan 18		Council 12203, Bluffton
Jan-Feb		Council 7122, N Myrtle Beach
Apr 18	12:30 pm	Council 11028, Pawley's Island



Watch for dates on projected degrees as they are received by the State council. If you think your Council can hold a Third Degree without conflicting with degrees scheduled in your area, contact the Ceremonial Chairman. If you would like a copy of the requirements to hold a Knighthood Degree, email me and I will send you a copy.

Formation Degree Status 2019-2020

TBD

DIST	DISTRICT DEPUTY	TEAM Captain	Team Name (Dist Served)	GOAL	ACTUAL	% GOAL
1	Edward Kamenski	Edward Kamenski	Low Country (1)	4	0	0.0%
2	Christopher Hilditch	Ralph Rossoni	Capital City (2, 7 & 12)	5	0	0.0%
3	V. Patrick Eagan	Charles Van Demark	Grand Strand Team (3 & 11)	5	0	0.0%
4	Sherrill (Ed) Wilcox	Bill Collins, PGK	Aiken Team (4)	4	0	0.0%
5	Joseph W. Friend	Roy Massey	Flowertown (5)	4	0	0.0%
7	Peter LaPierre	Peter LaPierre	Corpus Christi (6 & 7)	5	0	0.0%
8	James O. Alford	Ron Stanley	Greater Greenville (8 & 14)	5	0	0.0%
9	James Daugomah	Daniel Barton	Greater Charleston (9)	4	0	0.0%
10	Claire N. Buckley, Jr.	Geary Bradley	Up State ((10 & 15)	5	0	0.0%
13	Michael Cousino	Pat Davis	Creekside (13)	4	0	0.0%
16	Thomas Armel	Mike Mancari	Fr. Frederick H. Suggs (6 & 16)	5	0	0.0%
Totals				50	0	0.0%

Vocations continued from page 2

I too come as Pope Francis' representative to the United States to assure you of his prayers and support. Two years ago, I was here for the Jamboree, and I am grateful to Archbishop Lori and to Bishop Conlon of Joliet, the Episcopal Liaison for the National Catholic Committee on Scouting, for their invitation. I also greet my brother bishops and the scout chaplains. I was a scout for five years before I entered the seminary. Having traveled all over the world as a diplomat, I have seen its fruits in my life and in the lives of my nephews and nieces. By fostering the values of generosity, service, and fraternity, scouting helps create a better world. These values are the antidote to the selfishness that rules our society. Scouting encourages teamwork, a zeal for adventure and discovery, and gives us a new perspective on life and creation.

This vision is widened when we begin to see things as God sees them. This happens only through a life of prayer. Today's readings deal with the need for prayer and perseverance. As the Gospel begins, Jesus is alone at prayer. We know as scouts how busy we can get with activities, but Jesus takes time away to converse with His Heavenly Father. His disciples, attracted by His prayer, asked: *Teach us to pray as John taught his disciples to pray.*

Jesus then teaches them the *Lord's Prayer*. Today we have Saint Luke's version. Jesus begins by teaching them to call God *Father: Abba*, that is, Father suggests Divine Intimacy. God is not far away; he is close. He has a special bond with us, one first formed in baptism by which we become His children. As we grow in virtue and share in Jesus' life, we become ever-more "sons in the Son." Yes, God is our Father. He never ceases to hear the prayers of His children. If we are God's children, then we should approach Him with childlike simplicity and trust.

But what type of Father is God? The First Reading provides some answers. The people of Sodom and Gomorrah had sinned against God and had become corrupt. Abraham refused to just go along with them. He remained faithful to God; in that sense, he is a good model for us as Scouts. He resisted sin with courage and discipline. As for God, He is a just. He cannot let sin go unpunished.

Nevertheless, when God is going to destroy the city, Abraham intercedes before the face of God on behalf of the few innocent people there, whether are fifty, forty, twenty, or even ten. Abraham persists in pleading for the innocent. In this way, he reveals that God is merciful. God will spare the city for the sake of even a few innocent people. It is true that God is just, but He is also merciful. His mercy triumphs over raw justice. Abraham serves as a model for us to pray and to persevere in prayer; at the same time, he reveals to us that God is the Father of Mercy.

Jesus, in teaching His disciples how to pray, asks them to call God Father. He continues with *hallowed be your Name*. God is just. He is merciful. He is holy. Jesus teaches his disciples to honor God with their lips, to not take his name in vain. This simple petition is a reminder that we are called to be holy. Elsewhere, it is written: *Be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy.* (Lev 19:2)

Your kingdom come. We must pray fervently for the coming of the Kingdom. It is here but has not come in its fullness. Implicitly, this petition asks that the Kingdom of God, rooted in justice, truth, and love, would be planted in our hearts rather than the Kingdom of the Evil One. It also invites us to reflect on whether we are working to help advance God's Kingdom by working for justice, by witnessing to the truth, and by loving our neighbor. These are some of the timeless values of scouting – being faithful to our commitments and working hard to build something that helps others. Of course, *if God does not build the house, in vain do the builders labor.* Still, each of us must do our part in cooperating with God in advancing the Kingdom, by our deeds and by our prayers, mindful that it is *His Kingdom*. We want to create a better world, but it is only better if God is a part of it. It's *His Kingdom*.

The next three petitions focus on what we need: our daily bread, forgiveness, and protection from temptation. As scouts you know that for a long journey, you need to prepare properly and bring enough food (or be able to catch your food). To survive and have strength to journey on, we must eat. St. Luke's use of the term *daily bread* is unique; he uses a word *epiousios*, which means "special" or "super-substantial" bread. It is a clear allusion to the Eucharist, the Bread of Life, which we need for our spiritual journey. Elsewhere, the Scriptures tell us that *man does not live on bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.* The Scriptures and the Eucharist give us strength each day for our journey in this life, so that we may reach our goal, which is heaven. Ask for this Bread always.

Along the journey, we also need to ask God for pardon. *Forgive us our sins as we forgive everyone in debt to us.* As scouts, you also know how heavy your backpack can feel on a long journey. Sometimes we carry extra weight which slows us down and gradually wears us down. In the spiritual life, that "burden" or "extra weight" is our sinfulness. Only God can forgive sin and lighten our load, but we must ask Him: *Forgive us.* He is the Father of Mercy. He is ready to forgive. When we receive His Mercy, he does ask something of us – to forgive others. Holding grudges can also paralyze us and keep us from moving forward on our journey together. Finally, Jesus concludes with *Do not subject us to the final test*, namely temptation. Again, as scouts you are aware of the

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dangers of the wilderness, of bad weather, of certain types of plants, and even of dangerous paths and streams. You are trained to always be attentive and vigilant. Still, sometimes we aren't watchful. Injuries that could have been avoided aren't due to our own foolishness or carelessness. The same is true in the spiritual life. There are obvious sins that we should avoid, but sometimes we become spiritually inattentive. We want to do things our own or we think that something is not a big deal, and then we find ourselves in spiritual danger. The devil too lays hidden traps for us. This petition asks for God's help and protection – to not lead us into temptation but to guide us along the way.

The journey is never an easy one. In the face of setbacks, we need to persevere. Jesus teaches his disciples to persevere in prayer, just like Abraham did in our First Reading. Jesus gives the example of the friend who goes and asks for three loaves of bread at midnight. He persists in his request until it is granted. We need to be the same way with God in prayer. Once more, Jesus says, *Ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.*

We must have a confident trust and ask God for what we truly need. Sometimes it seems that our prayers are not heard. It is not that God doesn't hear us; rather, God knows what is best for us. Humbly, we ask God, and humbly we receive whatever comes from His hand, knowing that He loves us. We must also seek. As scouts, you are modern day explorers – seeking out new adventures, discovering new ways of doing things. In the spiritual life, we must also seek the face of God and search for the Truth. Eventually, we will find Him, and when we do, it will change our lives. When we meet God, He gives our life a decisive direction and helps us to know about our vocation and how we can best serve Him. Finally, we must also knock for the door to be opened. God already does this with us. He knocks at the doors of our hearts, waiting to enter. We must unlock our hearts and be open to Him. We also must knock at the door of the Heart of God to know His Mercy and Love. Jesus uses the threefold progression - asking, seeking, and knocking – to teach his disciples of the need to not give up. We also need to help each other not to quit. Consider an example from scouting. When scouts are hiking or climbing a mountain, the most important thing is not who gets to the top of the mountain first or most quickly, rather it is that all arrive at the destination safely, all reach the goal, and all remain together as a troop. Sometimes, the slower members need encouragement to persevere and to arrive at the goal. Each person walks according to his abilities, but with encouragement of others. The journey allows each person to gain perspective, reach the goal with others, and to enjoy the view from the summit. The same is true in prayer; as scouts, you can encourage each other not only in life, but also in prayer,

devotion and coming to Mass each Sunday.

Finally, today's Gospel concludes with Jesus promising that *His Father in heaven will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him.* Just as Jesus taught us to call God our Father and revealed Himself to be the Son, He reminds His disciples to pray for the Holy Spirit. Think about how the Holy Spirit transformed the Apostles at Pentecost! He gave them wisdom, courage, and understanding! You received that Spirit in baptism and were sealed with Him in confirmation. Do you ask the Father to continually give you that Spirit with his gifts? Do you let the Spirit guide you?

Blessed Marie-Eugene of the Child Jesus writes that "The Holy Spirit is the life of the Church. He is the vital principle, not only in giving it life, but also as its vital principle of action." We must constantly ask the Father for an outpouring of the Spirit to be renewed, purified, strengthened, and guided as we discern the path to go in life. It is the Spirit who helps us to be courageous and bold in our witness to Christ and in our service of our neighbor and our country. In the Spirit, we share our faith.

My friends, I have spoken long enough. In the end, I could sum it up with the words of Saint Paul: *Pray unceasingly.* But just as we each must pray to God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – so too each of us – as men – need a woman in our lives: a Mother. At Calvary, Jesus gave each of us Mary as our Mother. She too hears our prayers and intercedes for us, watching over us with her maternal tenderness.



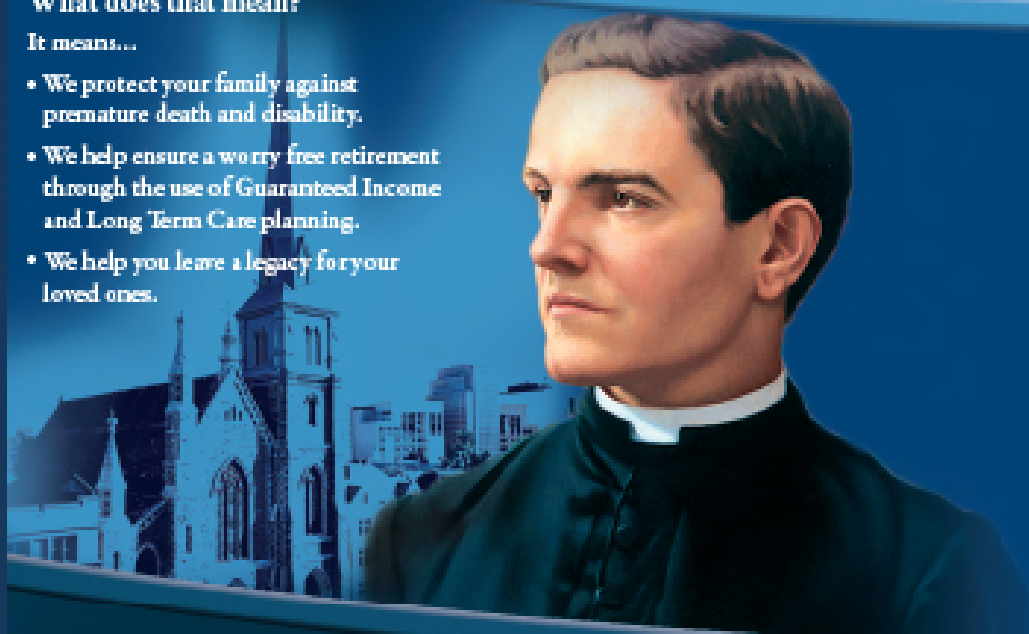
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