



Newsletter – Council 16492



July 1, 2025

The Newsletter is an information vehicle for the members of St. John Paul II Knights of Columbus Council 16492 and Assembly 3771. It is intended to provide Brothers and Sir Knights with the knowledge of what has been and will be happening in their Council and Assembly. For members only.

GRAND KNIGHT'S REPORT

Reflections on the impact of my term as Grand Knight



Gratitude, Growth, and the Road Forward **PGK Pete Falcone**

After serving as Grand Knight of our council, I find myself at a crossroads marked by gratitude, reflection, and a profound sense of accomplishment. As I prepare to pass the torch to John Berry, I am drawn to look back on these two years—not only to celebrate the many achievements and memories we have forged together, but also to contemplate the lessons learned and the spirit that binds us as Knights.



Among the many ways we served our community was through the Citizens With Disabilities Tootsie Pop Drive.

The Call to Serve

When I first accepted the role of Grand Knight, I was deeply conscious of the trust and responsibility bestowed upon me by my fellow Knights. Ours is an organization steeped in tradition and guided by principles of charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism. As Grand Knight, my responsibility was to uphold these principles while fostering a spirit of camaraderie and service within our council. I was both humbled and energized by the opportunity to lead such a dedicated group of individuals.

Strengthening Brotherhood

At the heart of our order lies the bond we share as brother Knights. Fostering unity was a guiding light throughout my term. Whether gathering for council meetings, working side by side at charity events, or simply sharing fellowship over breakfast after Mass, I witnessed firsthand the power of friendship and mutual support. I am proud of how our council has grown—not only in numbers, but in spirit. We have welcomed new members into our fold, each bringing unique talents and enthusiasm. My two areas of regret are our burgeoning list of those who haven't paid their dues, and an outdated web site. John will focus on the dues, and new Knight, Paul Salevski, is upgrading the site. Our mentorship of younger Knights has ensured that our values—and our vision—will endure far into the future.

Expanding Service and Charity

Charity is the first principle of the Knights of Columbus, and over the past two years, our council has reached new heights in serving our parish and local community. We organized food drives that filled the shelves of the Catholic Charities pantry, volunteered at numerous events, and raised funds for organizations supporting families in need.

Gratitude and Acknowledgement

As I prepare to step down, my heart is filled with gratitude. I am thankful for the trust and support of our members, whose dedication and hard work made every success possible. I am indebted to our officers for their support. I thank Father Rafael, and Deacon Tony, for their spiritual leadership and guidance.

I am especially appreciative of the unwavering support of my wife, Marilyn, who encouraged me during challenging times and celebrated every victory with me. She has been compiling a Honey Do list for two years!!!



Service to others:
Our Council helped at this year's Special Olympics' Track and Field competition. We continue to support the athletes with volunteer hours and money contributions as we have done since we began in 2016.

In lieu of that money, we will be dependent on dues and a few small fundraising projects such as Citizens With Disabilities and Keep Christ in Christmas. That will fall far short of what we need to continue funding our current programs. Instead of significantly cutting those contributions, the Council voted to shift \$25,000 from the proceeds of the Spring Golf Outing to the general fund this fiscal year (which begins today, July 1) giving us the same operating income we had last year.

Spring Golf Outing draws \$100,000 donation with match



Through the extremely generous matching donation of an anonymous Knight, a very dedicated team, and the urging of parishioners from Father Rafael, the 2025 Spring Golf Outing raised enough to present a \$100,000 check to the Light To The Nations Capital Campaign.

After Father Rafael's pulpit announcements at the April 5th and 6th masses, the donor approached me and said he would match whatever was raised from that date to the tournament – up to \$50,000!!! That time period produced slightly more than \$52,000, in many cases because people knew they were doubling their money.



The total raised was more than \$150,000 and after expenses we were able not only to provide the church its check, but add to our general operating coffers for the 2025-2026 fiscal year which begins today.

So, congratulations to Director Mike Spigelmire and his team for another successful Golf Outing. The Council has donated more than \$200,000 to the building campaign in its four-year history. Next year's outing is May 15. If you'd like to join the team, we could use the help in marketing, volunteering and playing.

Father Rafael LaVilla arrives

Father Rafael Lavilla was born and raised in Pineda, Pasig City, Metro Manila, Philippines, on September 13, 1976. His journey in the Catholic Priesthood began when he entered the Oblates of St. Joseph Minor Seminary on June 7, 1990, embarking on a 15-year priestly formation process. On November 25, 2005, he was ordained to the Sacred Order of Presbyterate at Santuario De San Jose Church in Manila, Philippines.



Father Rafael

In August 2008, Father Rafael Lavilla arrived at San Francisco International Airport to serve as a missionary priest in California. Five years later, on February 14, 2013, he moved to Jacksonville, Florida, to join the Diocese of St. Augustine. Then, on December 17, 2019, he incardinated to the Diocese of St. Augustine as a priest in good standing.

In the Diocese of St. Augustine, he served as Parochial Vicar at St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Orange Park, St. Paul Catholic Church in Jacksonville Beach, and Blessed Trinity Catholic Church in Jacksonville. From 2019 to 2024, he was the Pastor of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church on Mayport Rd. Atlantic Beach, FL, navigating the difficulties brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Currently, Father Rafael serves as the Pastor at St. John Paul II Catholic Church in Ponte Vedra, Florida. He tirelessly continues his priestly vocation in persona Christi, serving and pastoring the Catholic community of Nocatee, FL. Father Rafael is a 4th Degree Sir Knight.

Our Council has been blessed having three wonderful clergy serving our group during my tenure: Father Richard Pagano, Monsignor Mike Morgan, and Father Rafael. All have been strong supporters of the Knights.

Food Drive expands

Record amounts raised in new format

Father Rafael took on the challenge of revamping our Food Drives for Catholic Charities' Food Pantry. It resulted in massive quantities and better quality of food we bring to CC.

As it stands, the program will be run every other month, and we will continue to collect the food at each mass and bring it to CC on the following Monday.



Monthly Drive History

<u>Date</u>	<u>Pounds</u>	<u>Dollar Eq</u>
July 2 '23	302.75	\$ 581.20
Aug. 7	757.8	\$ 1,454.98
Sept. 3	490.6	\$ 941.95
Oct. 1	404.0	\$ 775.68
Nov. 7	776.0	\$ 1,490.00
Dec. 3	686.6	1,318.27
Jan. 8 24	850.0	1,632.00
Feb. 4	708.5	1,360.38
Mar. 3	594.8	1,142.11
Apr. 7	211.7	\$ 406.39
May. 5	127.2	\$ 244.22
June. 2	798.0	1,533.00
<u>Total-6-2</u>	<u>6708.0</u>	<u>\$ 12,880.18</u>
July. '24	487.9	936.77
Aug.	807	\$1,549.06
Oct.	4,050	\$8,000.00
Nov.	8,000+	\$16,000
March	5,841	\$11,274.00
May	6,000+	\$11,500+
	11185.9	\$49,260.00

In 2023-24 fiscal year, we collected about \$12,880 worth of food. In the last fiscal year, July through June, we collected just under \$50,000 to Catholic Charities Food Bank. In addition, Father uses a list of food to choose from which has meant a huge reduction in foods CC has to discard.

A special thanks to Al Lucenti for delivering the food, to Joe Falcone of Neo Electric for letting us use his truck and to Jeff Sievert and Tim Creagan for unloading the truck each time.



New Slate of Officers:

In May, we elected a new slate of officers to be headed by John Berry as Grand Knight. John, as Deputy Grand Knight, was always involved in every project, event, discussion and implementation of each event we've done in the past year so the transition will be very smooth. He is involved in many parish activities. He has been a Knight for more than 50 years!

Here is your slate of officers for 2025-2026:

<u>Grand Knight</u>	<u>Lcl John C. Berry Jr.</u>
<u>Deputy Grand Knight</u>	<u>John M. Essegian</u>
<u>Chancellor</u>	<u>Steve Miller</u>
<u>Recorder</u>	<u>Michael Glover</u>
<u>Treasurer</u>	<u>Al Lucenti</u>
<u>Financial Secretary</u>	<u>Ken Sutter</u>
<u>Advocate</u>	<u>Steve Wilson</u>
<u>Warden</u>	<u>Gus Carlson</u>
<u>Inside Guard</u>	<u>Dom Palleschi</u>
<u>Outside Guard</u>	<u>Michael Lassonde</u>
<u>One-year Trustee</u>	<u>Ken Gault</u>
<u>Two-year Trustee</u>	<u>Ramon Day</u>
<u>Three-year Trustee</u>	<u>Pete Falcone</u>
<u>Chaplain</u>	<u>Rafael Lavilla O.S.J.</u>
<u>Lecturer</u>	<u>Mike O'Brien</u>



New Live Exemplifications

We began doing Live Exemplifications for new members. When Covid hit, Supreme allowed new members to join online. A downside to that was that men didn't get the full experience of initiation. The K of C is back to live exemplifications.

Our team does a terrific job of presenting the historical, ethical and spiritual aspects of our work of charity to others. We should be having another one soon and it is mandatory for anyone who hasn't gone through it before.



Father Mike Morgan, left, presided at last year's Live Exemplification. Father Mike served as our temporary Chaplain for a few months while here running the church. He recently said he is helping at 5 churches and hasn't time to fulfill his plan to travel but was planning trip soon.

Spouse Dinner

This year's Spouse Dinner was upgraded to a more formal event, and we moved the venue to the Palencia Club dining room. The overall review by participants was very positive. While our income has never covered the cost of the event, we decided to budget more next year to stay within the budgeted amount and offer our significant others enhanced recognition.

The spouse dinner has evolved from a quick buffet after our February meeting to a dress-up event at an outside facility with a short meeting to start. The plan seemed well received.

The 4th Degree Officers for the next fraternal year:



Under Faithful Navigator Michael Worthey, the 4th Degree, Mother of Mercy Assembly 3771, expanded its patriotic work while continuing to raise funds through the Football Mania contest.

Sir Michael said in his last email said: “It has been an honor to serve the past two years as the Assembly's Faithful Navigator. This message will be my final official email as you FN. Tomorrow (July 1) Sir Knight Miller will assume the duties as Faithful Navigator and I have full confidence in his ability to lead our Assembly going forward. I will fully support and assist him for a smooth transition as he takes this lead role.”

Next year, under FN Sir Steve Miller, the Assembly plans to expand its programs of charity and volunteerism to several more military and civilian first responder agencies. To join the 4th Degree, you must be in good standing as a 3rd degree Knight. Contact Steve Miller at dalejr_fan_eight@yahoo.com for information

Last year's work:

- Patriotic Rosary: monthly at Assembly meeting and quarterly at the church
- Football Charity Mania generated a \$4,000 donation to the Capital Campaign
- Color Corps represented the Assembly at many religious and patriotic events, including several Diocesan events
- Honored First responders with a presentation of a proclamation and cash reward to a heroic St Johns County deputy
- Lassen Veteran's home- participated in Veterans' Day activities and provided a meal to the residents and staff
- US flag retirement, see below

Plans for 2025/2026 fiscal year:

- Continue to connect patriotism and our Catholic faith to grow as faithful Americans
- Expand our patriotic projects into any new or different areas identified by the Assembly. To do this we will need Sir Knights who are willing to generate ideas and lead them to completion
- Continue to grow the Assembly by providing information on our activities to the Council
- Continue to grow and improve the Color Corps

Officers for 2025-2026 Assembly 3771

Faithful Navigator: Steve Miller

Faithful Admiral: Michael Worthey

Faithful Captain: Bob Pepper

Faithful Pilot & Faithful Comptroller: Al Schultz

Faithful Purser: Bill Kneisly

Faithful Scribe: Mike Haas

Faithful Inner Sen: Dominick Palleschi

Faithful Outer Sen: Robert Mollica

Trustee, 1 year: Vince Dlugos

Trustee, 2 year: Ramon Day

Trustee, 3 year: Tom Ballweg

Flag Program a Success

The American Flag must be properly “decommissioned” and retired 3-Star General, Sir Michael Spigelmire, took on the project of collecting flags and seeing they are properly disposed of.

To date, 370 flags were collected in the special container at church.

HELP US HONOR THE AMERICAN FLAG

American Flag Rescue and the Knights of Columbus are partnering in an effort to properly collect and decommission used, damaged and unwanted American flags.

A flag collection container will be placed in the church foyer. It will look like the one on the right ...

Simply bring your flags and deposit them in the box and the Knights will see that they are disposed of accordingly as part of our patriotic mission.

For questions, contact Mike Spigelmire at JayHawk006@comcast.net

4th Degree Pictures

The 4th Degree is well over 100 members now including Mike Haas and Dennis Alderson who joined last Fall (below).

The Color Corps continues to take part in enhancing events including funerals and church Holy days and festivals.



Miscellaneous pictures from the past year:



Brother Greg Montana's suggestion that we donate \$2,000 to the Women's Help Center to fight abortion resulted in the presentation of the check from surplus funds last year.



For the seventh year in a row, Council 16492 has attained Star Council, every year we've been in existence. Celebrating the presentation were, from left, Steve Miller, Program Director; Michael Witaszek, Membership Director; me; and District Deputy Robert Billoni.



Bit of Faith Ranch has been receiving funds from us for years through the Citizens With Disabilities Tootsie Pop campaign. Others receiving funds were Camp I am Special and L'Arch. Each agency received \$2,000. In addition, we donate \$2,400 to the Knights of Columbus wheelchair program.



Our adopted Seminarian George Gilbert receives a check for \$2,000 from Program Director Steve Miller. George has been the recipient of the grant for several years and we have obligated funding him for the tenure of his preparation for the priesthood. A second seminarian is planned this year.

Helpful Links

Knights of Columbus

<https://www.kofc.org/en/index.html>

Florida State K of C

<https://www.floridakofc.org/>

Knights of Columbus Insurance Information

<https://www.kofc.org/uns/en/insurance/index.html>

St. John Paul II home page

<https://www.nocateecatholic.com/>