



# FAITH IN ACTION



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# FAITH IN ACTION

## HIGHER PURPOSE

In the opening lines of *Evangelii Gaudium* (*The Joy of the Gospel*), His Holiness Pope Francis invites “Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ” (3). The Faith in Action program model extends that same invitation to Knights of Columbus members and their families. It is a renewed personal invitation to live out the calling of their faith, the call to service of their neighbor and to answer the age-old question, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” (Gn 4:9).

Today, a man’s work can follow him home through his smartphone. At the same time, he is picking up a larger share of household responsibilities and striving to meet more intense demands of fatherhood as the pace of kids’ activities has accelerated. Despite this, many men are drawn to opportunities to be hands-on and to express their faith by working alongside peers in service to others. They want to spend precious free time involved with their families while also building bonds of friendship and fraternity that will last a lifetime.

As Supreme Knight Carl Anderson said, “If we can’t meet young Catholic men where they are, they will go somewhere else. And in this era, it is too easy to go somewhere else when we need them to be home. Home in the Catholic Church, home in their parishes, and home with their families.” As leaders and brother Knights who care about the long-term sustainability of the Order, we are excited about men’s desire to serve and the opportunity to consistently adapt to meet the demand of a changing world and the needs of future members. We know that the chance to roll up our sleeves and demonstrate our faith through service is as powerful as it is rewarding. The calling is a fundamental part of the Order’s history and genesis for our new program model, Faith In Action. This mission-driven platform is an excellent way to express our service program, as it speaks to our own efforts and to the interests of prospective Knights.

The Faith in Action model is a realization of the changing needs of men in the twenty-first century. It seeks to balance all of our key priorities with theirs — Faith, Family, Community and Life — and present them in a

way that is clear to our leaders, members and prospective Knights. The simplicity of Faith in Action is that it fully integrates Building the Domestic Church programs as a foundational part of the model, limits the number of required programs to earn the Columbian Award and, most importantly, allows councils to concentrate on implementing quality faith-filled family programs. Our goal is for men to lead their family in service — not leave their family for service. The focus of this streamlined program is quality, not quantity.



## FAITH IN ACTION

This Faith in Action manual provides you and your council with information to both implement Supreme-recommended programs and create unique programs that help men to live out their commitment to the Catholic faith and their desire to serve family, parish and community.

Woven within these four categories is the opportunity to share something that all generations and cultures within our organization seek in their membership in the Knights of Columbus. The Faith in Action model allows us to come together to share our faith, celebrate fraternity with our families, and do what we do best — stand shoulder to shoulder in service to our community and to defend life at all stages and in every condition.

# FAITH IN ACTION

This manual fully explains the Faith in Action program model, its four categories, and associated Supreme-recommended programs for each. Additional service program resources and recommendations can be found at [kofc.org](http://kofc.org).

The resources included in this guide and online are meant to serve as guidelines and not intended to be prescriptive or exacting. Your council should adapt the information for each program to meet the needs and resources of your local parish and community. By conducting well-run programs, your council continues the vision of our founder by assisting people in need, strengthening the bonds that unite our members, and continuing the strategy of Building the Domestic Church.

## Planning the Program

Start planning immediately after the election of council officers. At that time, the grand knight should appoint program and membership directors. Remember that programs and membership go hand in hand. A council cannot conduct successful programs without member support, but without quality faith-filled family programs, prospective members will not be interested in joining your council.

After the appointment, the program director works with the grand knight to name committee chairs for each of the four program categories.

## Service Program Personnel Report

Once the directors and committee chairs are appointed, complete and submit the *Service Program Personnel Report* (#365) through the Member Management application — located in the Officers Online section of [kofc.org](http://kofc.org) — no later than Aug. 1. The report is also found at [kofc.org/forms](http://kofc.org/forms).

Submitting this report allows the directors and chairpersons to receive important information from the Supreme Council and the state council.

If there are changes in committee chairs during the fraternal year, you may also use the Member Management application to make updates or submit a new *Service Program Personnel Report* (#365) to the

Supreme Council Department of Fraternal Mission with only the new or changed information.

## Implementing the Service Program

It is critical that the grand knight have an organizational meeting with the council's appointed directors and chairs in advance of the new fraternal year: before July 1. This meeting sets the groundwork for the entire fraternal year and is essential to the success of the council.

## Council Organizational Meeting

Council officers — including the program and membership directors with their respective committee chairs and your council's financial secretary and chaplain — should attend. Use it to help set the program calendar, membership and insurance goals, budget and social calendar.

## Before the Organizational Meeting

Review the programs that were conducted in the past year and examine the reasons for success or failure of each project. Develop a brief summary on each and be prepared to discuss the analysis during the program portion of the Council Organizational Meeting.

## Parish Pastor, Council Chaplain

Consultation with the pastor and his staff is critical. Well in advance of the Council Organizational Meeting, discuss your council's tentative plans for the new fraternal year on programs that may come out of the meeting. Personally invite him to the Council Organizational





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Meeting with ample time for him to plan his attendance. Obtain his guidance and permission, an important and fundamental aspect of our relationship with our pastors/chaplains and our ability to serve the parish community.

## **Draft News Article**

Assign a public relations chairman to write a draft news article updating the parish and community on the success of the council's activity in the previous year and asking for parish and community support in the coming year.

## **Program Portion of the Council Organizational Meeting**

During the programming portion of the Council Organizational Meeting, your council officers should:

- Review the programs that were conducted in the past year
  - Discuss the summary analysis of each project
  - Review and approve the draft of the news article prepared by the public relations chairman.
- Based on the review, decide which programs should be repeated in the current fraternal year and which new programs should be included
  - Assign directors and chairmen responsible for each program
  - Assign tentative dates for each program and when each program will conclude. Establish a meeting schedule for the program committee chairs.
  - Consider the parish calendar before finalizing these dates and review with the pastor and his parish staff
  - Set a budget for each program
  - Prepare a list of programs to present to your council for approval
  - Communicate the date of each program to the public relations chair to ensure that your council's programs are communicated to the parish and community in a timely fashion using the sample announcements prepared for many of the programs

## **After the Organizational Meeting**

If the pastor or chaplain was not in attendance, the grand knight should arrange to follow up with him on the outcome of the Council Organizational Meeting and obtain final approval of programs (and associated dates) that the council seeks to conduct within the parish. The



council leadership should work with the parish leadership to secure required facilities as needed.

## **Keeping Program Personnel Motivated**

The program director and committee chair are responsible for keeping volunteers motivated. Recognition for a job well done can go a long way to keeping morale high. Here are some suggestions:

- Publish the work the council is doing in the parish and community. Use the various resources available to you to help with this and refer to the *Public Relations and Publicity Guide* (#2235) for assistance.
- Be sure that each Knight gets full credit and recognition for his work. An occasional personal note may mean a great deal to the recipient.
- Consider presenting a *Certificate of Appreciation* (#1462) to the directors, chair and other individuals who were instrumental in the success of the program.

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- Listen to the suggestions of your council members and acknowledge good advice. Tell your brother Knights that you appreciate their interest and will consider their ideas.
- Be prepared to listen when a member has a question or problem. Guide him but allow him to do most of the thinking. This indicates respect for his judgment, giving him confidence and a feeling of importance.
- Accept responsibility for your mistakes. This shows your team that you know you are human and fallible.

## STAR COUNCIL AWARD

The goal of every council is a commitment to obtain the Star Council Award. Councils that conduct well-rounded Faith in Action programs will find that their activities are attractive to men of the parish. Recruitment and retention are far easier when programs invite men and their families to live their faith in service to one another, their parish and the communities in which they live and work.

The Star Council Award recognizes the efforts that councils put forth in continuing Venerable Michael McGivney's mission. In order for your council to earn the Star Council Award, it must:

- Earn the Columbian Award for well-rounded council programs
  - Submit the *Columbian Award Application* (#SP-7) — due by June 30
- Earn the Father McGivney Award for membership growth
- Earn the Founders' Award for insurance growth
- Submit the *Service Program Personnel Report* (#365) — due by Aug. 1
- Submit the *Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity* (#1728) — due by Jan. 31
- Be compliant with training and background checks
- Remain current with assessments from the Supreme Council headquarters

There are opportunities for your council to earn additional stars on the Star Council Award. Earn the Star Council Award and attain 200 percent, 300 percent, 400



percent, etc., of your council's membership quota. For additional information on how your council can earn the Star Council Award, visit [kofc.org/star](http://kofc.org/star).

## Columbian Award

Earn the Columbian Award for well-rounded council programs. There is no reason why every council in the Knights of Columbus should not earn the Columbian Award. It recognizes your council's quality faith-filled family programs in each of the four Faith in Action program categories. In order for your council to earn the Columbian Award, it must:

- Conduct at least four major programs in each of the Faith in Action categories of Faith, Family, Community and Life
- Complete the *Columbian Award Application* (#SP-7) — due by June 30
- Submit the *Service Program Personnel Report* (#365) — due by Aug. 1

## Father McGivney Award

The Father McGivney Award recognizes excellence in membership growth. Each year, your council is assigned a membership quota from the Supreme Council. For award purposes, growth is considered net increase over loss through suspension or withdrawal. Deaths do not count against your quota, and transfers in or out of your



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council do not count for or against your quota. Your council quota can be found under the Membership tab in Officers Online, which is updated daily. There is no application for the Father McGivney Award, as the Supreme Council automatically determines eligibility.

Again, conducting well-rounded faith-filled programs will aid in attracting and retaining members. Do not forget that programs play an integral part in earning the Father McGivney Award. To earn the Father McGivney Award for excellence in membership growth, councils must:

- Conduct frequent church drives. Visit [kofc.org/drive](http://kofc.org/drive) for additional information on how to conduct a church drive.
- Recruit at all levels. Everyone can recruit — all members of the council should be part of your recruitment team. Visit [kofc.org/recruit1](http://kofc.org/recruit1) for more resources.
- Schedule monthly First Degree ceremonies. A consistent schedule enables recruiters and future members to know when they can become Knights of Columbus.
- Invite non-members to volunteer in one of your council's programs. After the program, invite the non-member to join your council.
- Members and leaders can learn more about how to recruit, by visiting [kofc.org/trainingmicrosite](http://kofc.org/trainingmicrosite) and taking the Personal Recruiting Skills course.

## Founders' Award

The Founders' Award recognizes excellence in your council's promotion of our insurance products. Each year, your council is assigned an insurance quota from the Supreme Council. For award purposes, growth is considered net gain above loss through suspensions, withdrawals and transfers from insurance to associated membership. Deaths do not count against your quota, and transfers in or out of your council do not count for or against your quota. Your council quota can be found under the Membership tab in Officers Online, which is updated daily. There is no application for the Founders' Award, as the Supreme Council automatically determines eligibility.

To Earn the Founders' Award for excellence in the promotion of our insurance and fraternal benefits:

- Appoint an insurance promotion chairman to work closely with the field agent to help the council obtain the Founders' Award
- Ensure that completed *Membership Documents* (#100) are promptly delivered to your council's insurance agent
- Conduct Fraternal Benefit Nights
- Invite your council's insurance agent to speak at council meetings

## State Council Service Program Awards

Each year during a jurisdiction's convention, the state councils should recognize the best program conducted by the councils in each of the four program categories. A subordinate council must complete and submit the *State Council Service Program Awards Entry Form* (#STSP) — one form per entry per program, along with supporting documentation for each entry — directly to the designated state council program chair. Any entries received by the Supreme Council from a subordinate local council are not sent to the jurisdiction.

Entries are judged first and foremost on program effectiveness. Award application content is also extremely important in conveying the effectiveness of the program. Submitting a quality entry will improve your council's chances of being selected as a state or international winner.

To assist your council in preparing its entry for the State Council Service Program Awards, please refer to the *Service Program Awards Booklet* (#10173). The booklet contains helpful suggestions and examples of how your council should submit its entry.

Winning entries — with the endorsement of the state deputy — are submitted to the Supreme Council for consideration as an International Service Program Award winner.

## International Service Program Awards

Once the jurisdiction has chosen its winners for each category, they should promptly forward the submission to the Supreme Council Department of Fraternal Mission. Please note: there is only one entry per category. The entry must include:

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- *State Council Service Program Award Entry Form* (#STSP)
- Executive summary of the winning program prepared by the state council, highlighting why it was chosen as the winner
- Original submission from the winning subordinate council
- Supporting documentation of the winning program

Winning programs at the international level are recognized at the annual Supreme Convention in August. The grand knights of the winning councils, along with their wives, are invited to the convention as guests of the Supreme Council. Any council that is in good standing is eligible and encouraged to compete for this distinguished honor.

## Safe Environment — Office of Youth Protection

Under Faith in Action, certain state and council officers/chairmen are required to take safe environment training and may also be required to provide authorization for a background check. Some positions also have access to Praesidium's ARMATUS Administration dashboard to view member compliance within their council or jurisdiction.

If members in certain positions are not compliant within 30 days of notification, they are subject to removal from those positions.

As the *Service Program Personnel Report* (#365) is being completed, ensure that all member email addresses are accurate. Praesidium, the Order's safe environment partner, will use these email addresses to send email notifications to the program directors and chairs who are required to complete safe environment training and to provide authorization for a background check. Directors and chairs should look for email notifications from Praesidium in their inbox or spam folder. These will provide assigned username and password to complete the required training and the link necessary to provide background check authorization. The Knights of Columbus covers all costs associated with these requirements.

Email notifications are unique to each recipient and cannot be forwarded or used by another director or chair. The time-sensitive notifications require the recipient to complete training and background check authorization within 30 days of receipt.

ROLES	TRAINING	BACKGROUND CHECK	ARMATUS ADMINISTRATION
<b>State Council</b>			
State Deputy	✓		✓
State Advocate	✓		✓
State Program Director	✓		✓
State Youth Director	✓	✓	✓
State Family Director	✓	✓	✓
State Community Director	✓	✓	✓
State Squire Chairman	✓	✓	✓
<b>Subordinate Council</b>			
Grand Knight	✓		✓
Faithful Navigator	✓		
Program Director	✓		✓
Family Director	✓	✓	
Community Director	✓	✓	
Chief Counselor	✓	✓	
Adult Counselor	✓	✓	

*Safe Environment Program Training and Background Check Requirements — Table 1*



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For more information, please visit [kofc.org/safe](http://kofc.org/safe) or the Officer Desk Reference in Officers Online.

## Ordering Supplies

The Supreme Council has many materials available to help your council promote and conduct Supreme-recommended programs. Programming and print supplies can be ordered through Supplies Online, the supply-ordering portal available on Officers Online. All Knights of Columbus-related gift and clothing needs, including Knights of Columbus apparel, accessories, books, religious supplies and liturgical items, can be ordered through KnightsGear. Included below are tips to ensure that your order is processed and shipped in time for your programs:

- All council supplies must be ordered through your council's grand knight or financial secretary. To charge orders against your council's account, each grand knight and financial secretary must first log in to Officers Online. Once logged in, officers may access the link to Supplies Online and KnightsGear.
- Fraternal Mission will no longer place orders for district deputies or council officers, except in rare circumstances.
- There is no longer a need to complete a *Requisition* (#1) when ordering council supplies through Supplies Online or KnightsGear.
- Order materials at least four to six weeks in advance of your program date. Materials that are needed sooner will be shipped in an expedited manner; however, extra shipping charges will be applied to the order.



## Online Fraternal Training

Incoming fraternal leaders and all brother Knights are welcome to the Open Enrollment microsite! Part of the Fraternal Training Portal, this website gives you the opportunity to take customized training courses for these exciting and important roles. Once you start, you can proceed at your own pace. Please remember that the content is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Through this training site anyone can take the following:

- District Deputy Course
- Grand Knight Course
- Financial Secretary Course
- Deputy Grand Knight Course
- Council Officer Training
- Personal Recruitment Skills

Visit: [Kofc.org/trainingmicrosite](http://Kofc.org/trainingmicrosite)

## Webinars

Join the staff of the Fraternal Mission Department live, as we discuss relevant topics for effective council operation, membership recruitment, and charitable outreach programs that engage council members and build a stronger council. All Knights of Columbus members are welcome to join us for these fun, engaging and informative webinars.

Offered approximately once a month on an ongoing basis, these interactive webinars allow participants to view, ask questions and receive answers related to the topic being discussed in real time. You can register even if you are unavailable for the live presentation. Each webinar is recorded and archived, so fraternal leaders can participate at a time and place convenient to them.

For further assistance, please contact the Fraternal Mission department. Phone: (203) 752-4270 or email: [fraternaltraining@kofc.org](mailto:fraternaltraining@kofc.org)

To sign-up and see the upcoming webinar or view the archived webinars, visit [kofc.org/webinar](http://kofc.org/webinar).

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## PROGRAM CATEGORIES

A well-rounded council program will have activities in each of the following categories: Faith, Family, Community and Life.

This manual highlights the 32 Supreme Council-recommended programs, inclusive of existing and new programs. Your council is encouraged to implement any program(s) that will help make a difference in your parish and community. Obtaining a maximum of 16 program credits qualifies the council to earn the Columbian Award. For additional information on the Columbian Award, visit [kofc.org/star](http://kofc.org/star).

The programs highlighted here are meant to inspire your council to put their faith into action. Your council may choose to conduct one or more of the programs in this manual, or it may develop programs unique to the parish or community. The goal is for the council to be active and conduct programs that draw men closer to their faith, families and communities — and defend life in all stages and in all conditions.



## Supreme-Recommended Program Category Matrix

FAITH	COMMUNITY
<b>RSVP</b> Into the Breach Marian Icon Prayer Program Building the Domestic Church Kiosk Rosary Program Spiritual Reflection Program <b>New</b> Holy Hour <b>New</b> Sacramental Gifts <b>New</b>	<b>Coats for Kids</b> <b>Global Wheelchair Mission</b> <b>Habitat for Humanity</b> Disaster Preparedness Free Throw Championship Catholic Citizenship Essay Contest Soccer Challenge Helping Hands <b>New</b>
FAMILY	LIFE
<b>Food for Families</b> Family of the Month/Year Keep Christ in Christmas Family Fully Alive Family Week Consecration to the Holy Family Family Prayer Night <b>New</b> Good Friday Family Promotion <b>New</b>	<b>Marches for Life</b> <b>Special Olympics</b> <b>Ultrasound Program</b> Christian Refugee Relief Silver Rose Mass for People with Special Needs <b>New</b> Pregnancy Center Support <b>New</b> Novena for Life <b>New</b>

***Bold** denotes Featured Programs*

*Faith in Action Programs — Table 2*



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## FEATURED PROGRAMS

The Supreme Council has designated select programs as featured programs in each of the program categories. When your council conducts a featured program and satisfies the associated requirements, it will receive two credits toward that program category.

FAITH	COMMUNITY
RSVP	Coats for Kids Global Wheelchair Mission Habitat for Humanity
FAMILY	LIFE
Food for Families	Marches for Life Special Olympics Ultrasound Program

*Featured Programs — Table 3*

## REQUIRED PROGRAMS

Additionally, a council must conduct one required program in each category to be eligible for the Columbian Award. The vast majority of councils are already doing one or more of these programs, which are designed to enrich the spiritual life of the council, family and community. Required programs are incredibly simple to implement, often complementing other activities the council is already doing.

FAITH	COMMUNITY
Spiritual Reflection Program	Helping Hands
FAMILY	LIFE
Consecration to the Holy Family	Novena for Life

*Required Programs — Table 4*



# FAITH



Our goal is to strengthen our men and their families in the faith. When we entered the Order, we were reminded to constantly inform ourselves in the Catholic faith. This formation goes beyond mere facts or religious practice to an authentic connection with a loving God and his son Jesus Christ. Programs in this category are designed to draw us closer to God and the Church in a tangible and meaningful way — whether through helping the future shepherds of the Mother Church, quiet contemplation in a spiritual reflection program, or honoring Mary, Mother of God. These programs should strive to arm us for the spiritual battle that our men and families face daily.

## Refund Support Vocation Program (RSVP)

Keep the faith alive by supporting our seminarians and postulants.

As the strong right arm of the church, Knights of Columbus are committed to providing moral, financial and spiritual support to our future priests and religious at all stages of their formation. A featured program, RSVP counts for two credits toward the Columbian Award.

Through this program, council and parish families will raise funds to support seminarians or religious in formation, in their area. For every \$500 donated to an individual, the Supreme Council will refund \$100 back to the council — up to a maximum of \$400 (four individuals) per council per fraternal year. Though financial support is vitally important, it is not the only aspect of the RSVP program. Councils are also called to provide their “adopted” seminarian or religious with moral support and prayers for their success.



## Into the Breach

Deepen member spirituality and formation to combat crisis of religious faith in our world.

In his Apostolic Exhortation, *Into the Breach*, Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted outlines the challenges faced by men of faith in the world today. *Into the Breach* is a call to battle for Catholic men which urges them to wholeheartedly embrace masculine virtues in a world at crisis. Councils will institute men's study groups to read the Apostolic Exhortation *Into the Breach* and use copies of the *Into the Breach Booklet and Study Guide* as a resource. By reading and discussing Bishop Olmsted's inspirational words and the accompanying study guide with like-minded men of faith, councils will prayerfully examine the enormous breach in the battle line that lies before them. In doing so, they will begin to devise a personal plan of spiritual battle.

## Marian Icon Prayer Program

Spread devotion to Our Lady through the Marian Icon Prayer Program.

As the new Marian Icon pilgrimages through the jurisdiction, councils will host a prayer service at their parish. Like its predecessors, the program features a unique Marian image that is renewed with a new Icon approximately every two years. Each Knights of Columbus jurisdiction receives several Marian images, which serve as the centerpieces for prayer services conducted in churches and council meeting places throughout the Order for the duration of the initiative. Previous Orderwide Marian Prayer Programs have gathered more than 16 million people together at 140,000 prayer services.

## Building the Domestic Church Kiosk

Help strengthen the domestic church (our families) by providing exceptional religious education materials to all Catholics.

*Building the Domestic Church Kiosks* (#BDC-K) contain engaging, faith-based literature and are available for councils to distribute to members, parishioners, and the general public. By organizing activities in their parishes, councils will educate and evangelize using the rich resources found in the Catholic Information Service (CIS) *Building the Domestic Church* series of booklets.



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Since 1948, CIS has been the major evangelical arm of the Knights of Columbus. Through multiple booklet series and various media formats, CIS makes our Catholic faith accessible and continually provides tools for catechesis and faith formation. For \$150, councils will receive a *Building the Domestic Church Kiosk* (#BDC-K) and the first set of 225 booklets of the most popular CIS resources, aimed at helping Catholics to live out the Church's vision for our families.

## Rosary Program

Build faithful families and communities by praying the rosary.

This program encourages devotion to Mary, the patroness of our Order, and emphasizes the importance of prayer in community and as a family. The Rosary Program encourages councils to schedule regular rosary prayer services on any day of the week, at any time of the year, with the guidance of their pastor. Councils should personally invite each family of the parish and offer attending families a copy of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Information Service's *A Scriptural Rosary for the Family* (#319). Encourage families to read this booklet and learn how their faith can be strengthened through a devotion to Our Lady, while praying the rosary at home together regularly. Kits with rosary rings, rosary prayer guides, and leader books are available for councils to order by visiting Supplies Online through the Officers Online Portal.

## Spiritual Reflection Program

Create annual opportunities for prayer and reflection as a fraternity.

Many Catholic young people can attest that religious retreats are radically rejuvenating spiritual events that often leave a lasting impact on participants' relationship to their faith. Yet, so often, retreats seem only to be open

to students and youth. Under the guidance of their chaplain, councils can attend a retreat or day of reflection together or perhaps organize their own event for the men of their parish. Councils and jurisdictions can also hold low-cost retreats of their own. These events might be open only to council members or men of the parish — or may be open to entire families. If councils are unable to organize these events themselves, they could go as a group and attend a retreat in their area to satisfy the requirement. Council participation in Spiritual Reflection is required to qualify for the Columbian Award.

## Holy Hour

Encourage deep personal encounter with God.

The chivalric character of the Knights of Columbus and the Church's long tradition of spiritual combat resonate with men today — especially as threats from the world and the devil are so keenly felt. Eucharistic adoration in the form of a regularly scheduled Holy Hour is a simple, direct, and meaningful way to address these needs. It is familiar to many, easy to organize, and something everyone can participate in together regardless of age, vocation, stage of life or membership status. Councils can organize their Holy Hours in a variety of ways and incorporate aspects such as: perpetual adoration, the sacrament of reconciliation, prayer for particular intentions and more. A Knights of Columbus Holy Hour, prepared for the men of the parish, could include a reflection, communal rosary, prayers for intercession by Father McGivney or St. Joseph, and various other aspects as decided by the council.

## Sacramental Gifts

Support families during the most important events in the life of the domestic church: the sacraments.

The sacraments stand as the most significant events in the life of the domestic church. The Knights of Columbus will be there to support and embrace our parish families at these essential moments of encounter with Christ. Councils will play an integral role in these momentous faith events and the lives of our families and parish community through prayer and the presentation of symbolic gifts. As children and adult members become more integrated into the life of the church and their parish, they should know that members of the Knights of Columbus will always be present in a tangible and meaningful way, regardless of who else is there for them.



# FAMILY



Put simply, programs in this category are developed for families, by families. Father McGivney sought to strengthen the familial bond of father to mother and children to parents. Catholics often struggle with the reality that they do not

have the opportunity to socialize and/or pray with other faith-filled Catholic families. It can be quite a challenge to continue to ground ourselves and raise our children in the faith when there is such limited exposure.

Our family programs are an evolution and response to a society that seeks to weaken the bonds of family. We must make it clear that society should value a family that is faithful to God and each other. Father McGivney's vision for family life was not only financial and material aid but also spiritual strength, as holiness is the calling of all baptized Christians. Put plainly, the majority of our time is easily spent in secular circles unless we intentionally create ways to live the domestic church. These programs help us to live this call.



## Food for Families

Help end hunger in communities across North America and around the globe.

The goal of Food for Families is to ensure that as few as possible go to bed hungry each night. Many in our communities are struggling through hardship and unable to provide food for their families. Knights of Columbus are committed to helping end hunger through the Food for Families program which has donated millions of dollars and millions of pounds of food toward this end.

A featured program, Food for Families counts for two credits toward the Columbian Award. Council and parish families will raise funds to support their local food pantries, food banks and soup kitchens. For every \$500 or 1,000 pounds of food donated, the Supreme Council will refund \$100 back to the council — up to a maximum of \$500 per council per fraternal year. Though in-kind donation of food is valuable, leaders of hunger-relief organizations often comment that financial contributions can be stretched even further and allow nonprofits to procure the exact items needed by the organization and its clients.

## Family of the Month/Year

Promote and support the development of strong and vibrant families.

Each month, the council Family of the Month committee selects one parish family that models Christian family values and visibly lives them every day. Each council establishes a committee to recognize a deserving Family of the Month and Family of the Year with potential for recognition on the international level. Once a year, each participating council also selects one of the previous twelve Family of the Month winners to represent the council/parish as the potential international Family of the Year. The Knights of Columbus Family of the Year is chosen by the Supreme Council and recognized each year at the annual Supreme Convention.

## Keep Christ in Christmas

Promote the true spirit of Christmas in our homes, schools, parishes and communities.

Councils will evangelize society through their faithful acts, celebrations and a variety of activities. The Knights



# FAMILY

of Columbus offers multiple activities that promote Christmas and the season of Advent in their proper context: Journey to the Inn, Light Up for Christ, Crèche or Advent Wreath Blessing, and the Christmas Poster Contest. These programs are centered on the example of the Holy Family and the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The new Keep Christ in Christmas (KCIC) program brings all KCIC activities together under one umbrella. It encourages councils to compel their neighbors to shift from a preoccupation with materialism to the light of Christ and the spirit of giving. KCIC activities include whatever efforts best suit the parish and community of a particular council and do not need to originate from the Supreme Council.

## Family Fully Alive

During his visit to the Philippines, Pope Francis cited the need for “holy and loving families to protect the beauty and truth of the family in God’s plan and to be an example for other families” (Address to Families at the Mall of Asia Arena, 2015). The Family Fully Alive monthly devotions are concrete ways that Knights of Columbus, in solidarity with Pope Francis, can support the growth of holy and loving families in the Church.

The Family Fully Alive program asks families to invite God into their homes and cultivates each family as a miniature domestic church. Using the *Family Fully Alive Booklet* as a devotional guide, this program provides monthly themes, reflections, meditations and group

projects. Through prayer and reflection, each family has the opportunity to grow in holiness together. This is a flexible program that can be started at any time of the year and continues year-round. Councils will order booklets to distribute or direct parish families to program resources on [kofc.org](http://kofc.org), all available at no cost.

## Family Week

Help families place God and the Catholic faith at the center of their lives, year-round.

Knights of Columbus councils will dedicate a special week of the year for their parish to recognize the vital importance of families as the foundation of our domestic church and to promote Catholic family values. Activities presented in this program seek strengthen the parish community and affirm the central importance of Catholic family life.

When choosing a week, councils should consider factors that might affect parishioner schedules such as school vacations, holidays and other local events. Though traditionally celebrated in the summer to commemorate the birth and death of our founder, Father McGivney, this program can take place anytime during the year.

## Consecration to the Holy Family

Strengthen families and revitalize our parishes.

To help families live out the joy of Christ, Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William Lori has composed a prayer through which families will come together to consecrate themselves under the protection of the Holy Family. In this prayer, we ask for the aid or intercession of the perfect son Jesus Christ, Mary the perfect mother, and Joseph who is a model for every father.

Seeking to strengthen families and revitalize our parishes, councils will guide their parishes and community to understand and offer this important and impactful prayer. Preparing for the Consecration to the Holy Family is not a single event. It is choosing a way of life for your family. Through this consecration, each participant is consciously choosing to be a beacon of God’s love through his Church. Council participation in Consecration to the Holy Family is required to qualify for the Columbian Award.



# FAMILY



## Family Prayer Night

Strengthen the bonds within our parishes and build faith-filled families.

Catholics often struggle with the reality that they do not have the opportunity to socialize and/or pray with other faith-filled Catholic families. It can be quite a challenge to raise our children in the faith when their only exposure comes from Mom and Dad. Family Prayer Night is an opportunity for children to be exposed to regular people living their faith in a casual setting. This is an opportunity for council members, their families, and the whole parish community to come together once a month for an evening of prayer, dinner and fellowship.

Families of council members, as well as other Catholic families within the parish and community, will gather for prayer, dinner and fellowship. Multiple groups can be formed and families are encouraged to rotate between these groups.

## Good Friday Family Promotion

Bring families into more robust practice and better understanding of our Catholic faith and the triduum.

Despite Good Friday's central role in the heart of Christianity, attendance at services remains low. In an effort to change this, councils will encourage participation in Good Friday services through a promotional campaign. In an effort to increase parish attendance and involvement, councils will conduct a promotional campaign to educate their parishes on the vital importance of Good Friday.

Setting an example for their community, Knights will attend Good Friday services with their families and work with their pastors to encourage increased parishioner involvement at these liturgies. In conjunction with these efforts, councils will also work to educate their parishes about the plight of Christians in the Holy Land and other areas around the world where Christians are persecuted for their faith.





# COMMUNITY



As Knights of Columbus, we are called to serve our family and our God. Our first principle is Charity, at home with our families or in our communities. This is a critical part of our Knights of Columbus mission. Have you ever wondered, “How can I make my community better?” Individuals can do great things on their own but there is something bigger than self when Knights of Columbus members come together as one through their council and accomplish great things. Councils that conduct these programs are positively shaping their communities by addressing the needs of its citizens.

## Coats for Kids

Provide warmth for deserving children during cold winter months.

Families struggling to make ends meet use their scarce resources to meet the most basic needs and cannot always afford the vital essential of a new winter coat. The goal of the Coats for Kids program is to ensure that no child in North America goes without a coat during the winter season. Through the dedication of councils across the United States and Canada, hundreds of thousands of new winter coats have been distributed to children since program inception.

Councils across North America can purchase new winter coats for children in need at a discount and distribute them in their local communities. A featured program, Coats for Kids counts for two credits toward the Columbian Award.

## Global Wheelchair Mission

Change the lives of people with disabilities worldwide.

The Knights of Columbus has partnered with the Global Wheelchair Mission since 2003 with the goal of providing wheelchairs to all those who lack the freedom of mobility, changing the lives of people with disabilities worldwide. Working with the Global Wheelchair Mission is a perfect opportunity to put your faith into action and involve the entire parish in the rewarding charitable work done by your council. Councils are encouraged to raise funds and make donations to purchase deeply discounted wheelchairs. Through



partnerships, councils can also purchase a large container of 110 to 280 wheelchairs at \$150 per wheelchair for their own donation sites. A featured program, Global Wheelchair Mission counts for two credits toward the Columbian Award. Today, this initiative started in the United States has expanded into Canada through partnership with the Canadian Wheelchair Foundation.

## Habitat for Humanity

Build homes for families in need.

Knights of Columbus councils work closely with Habitat for Humanity, a nonprofit Christian organization, to build homes for families in need at substantially reduced costs. Each year, councils throughout the Order donate a considerable number of volunteer hours and dollars to this worthy cause. In order to satisfy program requirements, councils are asked to donate a minimum of \$1,000 — or 200 service hours — to Habitat for Humanity projects in their community. A featured program, Habitat for Humanity counts for two credits toward the Columbian Award.

# COMMUNITY

## **Disaster Preparedness**

Prepare your community before disaster strikes.

Communities can be brought to a halt when disaster occurs — from large natural disasters to local crises. As community leaders, Knights of Columbus will ensure that their members, families and parish communities are prepared through a campaign that promotes planning and education. This program motivates councils to take a holistic approach to emergency situations by promoting readiness in times of crisis, assessing response capabilities, and learning how to properly respond well ahead of a disaster. Councils will engage their parish and community in disaster preparedness exercises by organizing trainings, fundraisers and various awareness activities.

## **Free Throw Championship**

Provide an athletic outlet for youth ages 9 to 14 in your community.

Since 1972, councils have sponsored the Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship for boys and girls between the ages of 9 and 14 to provide an athletic outlet and encourage the values of sportsmanship and healthy competition. Kids compete within their own gender and age and progress from local level to district, regional and state/province competitions. This program is a great way to introduce the Order to your community and recruit faithful family men of service. Councils can sponsor a competition by ordering a Free Throw Championship Kit, or volunteer to host and/or support the district, regional and state/province championships.

## **Catholic Citizenship Essay Contest**

Encourage youth in your community to become citizens grounded in their faith through creative writing. Open to all Catholic students (public, private, home, or parochial schools) in grades 8 to 12 during the current school year.

This contest encourages today's youth to be more connected to their community and their faith. The goal of this program is to involve young Catholics in 8th through 12th grade (public, private, parochial or home schools) in civic discourse and instill in them religious and life-affirming values. The essay should be approximately 500-750 words on a specific subject,

changing every other year. Entrants will be judged on grammar, style, and how clearly they present the theme — which should showcase creativity, imagination and overall development of the topic.

## **Soccer Challenge**

Provide an athletic outlet for youth ages 9 to 14 in your community. Designed for players to demonstrate their skills in the penalty kick. Councils can sponsor a competition by ordering a Soccer Challenge Kit, or volunteer to host and/or support the district, regional and state/province championships.

The Soccer Challenge is a great way for councils to engage in their communities with an athletic event for youth that encourages the values of sportsmanship and healthy competition. Children demonstrate the most important skill in soccer — shooting accuracy on the penalty kick — and compete to reach the international level of competition. The program is a great way to introduce the Order to your community and recruit faithful family men of service.





# COMMUNITY



## Helping Hands

Pope Francis writes in *Evangelii Gaudium*, “Our faith in Christ, who became poor, and was always close to the poor and the outcast, is the basis of our concern for the integral development of society’s most neglected

members” (186). He goes on to say, “In this context we can understand Jesus’ command to his disciples: ‘You yourselves give them something to eat!’ (Mk 6:37): it means working to eliminate the structural causes of poverty and to promote the integral development of the poor, as well as small daily acts of solidarity in meeting the real needs which we encounter” (188).

In the model of our founder, Father McGivney, councils will lead efforts to assist those most in need. The Helping Hands program is designed to recognize the important work many councils already do to care for the most disadvantaged members of our communities — the homeless, the addicted, the elderly who may feel isolated and abandoned, and many others. Through this program, councils will aid the needy through the activities they feel best suit their community, such as serving at or running a soup kitchen, repairing the facilities of a local service organization or something entirely unique. The requirements for this program are very broad in order to allow councils to serve their community in whatever way is most needed. Council participation in Helping Hands is required to qualify for the Columbian Award.





# LIFE



The urgency of the threat to a culture of life cannot be misunderstood. Respect for the dignity of life demands a commitment to human rights across a broad spectrum. Both as Knights of Columbus and as followers of Christ, “Catholics must be committed to the defense of life in all its stages and in every condition” (St. John Paul II, 1995).

The Knights of Columbus defends the dignity of each human being at every stage of life. Knights work together to build a culture of life and a civilization of love. Your council should stand ready to assist any pregnant woman in need, care for the elderly, aid the handicapped, empower those with special needs to realize their full potential and bring attention to the injustices of abortion, embryonic stem cell research, euthanasia and assisted suicide.

## Marches for Life

Show public support for the right to life.

The Knights of Columbus encourages others to choose life through public support of the pro-life cause. Knights can organize and participate in local/state/province/regional Marches for Life and/or organize participation of Knights/parishioners/students/etc., in bus trips to the



national Marches in Washington, D.C., Ottawa, Mexico City, throughout the Philippines, or in other countries.

Showing unwavering public support for the right to life. Councils are encouraged to participate in or sponsor local, state/province, regional or national Marches for Life. Councils that coordinate at least 50 participants or who organize a local March for Life will receive credit for this program. A featured program, Marches for Life counts for two credits toward the Columbian Award.



## Special Olympics

Celebrate the intrinsic worth and dignity of every single human being through the Special Olympics.

The Knights of Columbus has a unique partnership with the Special Olympics and has helped disabled athletes train for and compete in games around the world. Knights of Columbus councils have assisted with all aspects of the program from fundraising to feeding the athletes, organizing and judging events, and providing equipment and awards. Without the support of the Knights, participants would not be able to train for the events that they love.

Work with Special Olympics affiliates to determine how best to fund, sponsor or volunteer for events in the local community. Featured program credit is awarded to councils providing at least \$2,000 in donations or 200 service hours in a fraternal year. As a featured program, Special Olympics counts for two credits toward the Columbian Award.



# LIFE

## Ultrasound Program

Save lives by helping each abortion-minded woman who visits a pro-life pregnancy care center to choose life by viewing her unborn child on an ultrasound machine.

This initiative is funded by state and local councils and matching grants from the Supreme Council's Culture of Life Fund. The Knights of Columbus works together to purchase ultrasound machines for qualifying pregnancy centers. After the state and/or local council raises 50% of the cost, the Supreme Council will provide the other 50% to complete funding for purchase of an ultrasound. Or, if the council raises 100% of the cost of a vehicle outfitted to serve as a mobile medical unit for a pregnancy center, the Supreme Council will provide 100% of the funds for an ultrasound machine to be used in that vehicle. A featured program, Ultrasound Program counts for two credits toward the Columbian Award.

## Christian Refugee Relief

Help save persecuted and at-risk Christians facing genocide all over the world, particularly in the Middle East.

Knights of Columbus are called to bring awareness and support to those who have suffered for their faith through various parish-based programs and fundraisers. The Knights of Columbus Christian Refugee Relief Fund, which has provided humanitarian assistance, primarily in Iraq, Syria, and the surrounding region. Councils will aid this cause by collaborating with their parishes to spread awareness and raise funds to help these Christians and those in their care. In particular, councils

are encouraged to utilize Solidarity Crosses as a fundraiser and prayer campaign in their parishes.

## Silver Rose

Share the message of Our Lady of Guadalupe and promote respect for life by participating in this meaningful pilgrimage.

The Silver Rose program demonstrates the unity between Knights of Columbus in Canada, the United States, and Mexico, through a series of prayer services promoting the dignity of all human life and honoring Our Lady. Each year, from early March through mid-December, Silver Roses are stewarded by councils along routes from Canada to Mexico. Every stop the Silver Rose makes throughout the pilgrimage is a rosary-centered occasion for Knights, parishioners and community members to pray for respect for life, for the spiritual renewal of each nation, and for the advancement of the message of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

## Mass for People with Special Needs

Welcome individuals or families who might not normally feel comfortable participating in a regularly scheduled Mass.

People with special needs resulting from physical, emotional, mental or cognitive conditions are all around us in society, at school, at work and in our families. It can be challenging for these important members of our society to participate in church due to physical and social barriers — or even family member anxiety. Councils will sponsor a distinct Mass, conducted annually, for people with special needs. Celebrating a Mass for People with Special Needs can be the first of many steps toward integrating them into regular weekly or even daily Mass — and more deeply into all of the sacraments and other aspects of parish life. Holding this Mass sends the message that all of God's children are welcome under the parish roof and that every person is an integral part of the parish family.

## Pregnancy Center Support

Change the hearts and minds of society about abortion by showing that we love both mother and child before and after birth.



# LIFE

More than three thousand pro-life pregnancy centers now operate in jurisdictions throughout the Order. By the very nature of our founding, Knights of Columbus are called to care for the widow and orphan. Abortion vulnerable unborn children and mothers experiencing unexpected pregnancies certainly fall within our mandate. With our aid, pregnancy centers can offer support to help them choose life. Councils can provide material, financial, labor and other support to pro-life pregnancy centers that help pregnant women during pregnancy and following the birth of their newborn children. Councils can “adopt” a pregnancy center and provide material, labor, and spiritual support throughout the year.

## **Novena for Life**

Lead your community in the spiritual fight to establish a culture of life in our nations.

The protection of life is a sustained prayer intention of the Church, and in particular of the Knights of Columbus. Knights remain firmly committed to defending the right to life of every human being — from the moment of conception to natural death. To commemorate and bolster this important cause, councils will promote a novena, nine days of sustained prayer, to build up a culture of life in our parishes, homes and wider community.

Knights and their families will come together in both public and private acts of prayer to promote the protection of life. Council participation in Novena for Life is required to qualify for the Columbian Award.





# FAITH IN ACTION

## SUPREME CHAPLAIN'S FAITH IN ACTION MONTHLY CHALLENGE

Few if any organizations can unify nearly two million Catholic men and coordinate their efforts to live their faith in their councils, homes, parishes and communities. Through this challenge, all Knights of Columbus around the world will grow in their faith and be united with their brother Knights doing the same. They will be personally blessed by their efforts and equally reassured not to give up if they struggle to live the challenge.

The supreme chaplain's monthly challenge is a council activity in which each member of the council is challenged to read and then fulfill the activity. The challenge is simple and consistent. The supreme chaplain chooses a few lines from scripture that will be heard at a Sunday Mass during the upcoming month. He then shares a brief reflection on the scripture verses. Finally, he gives his monthly challenge to all Knights of Columbus, and they are instructed to live that challenge for the month.

At the next month's council meeting, during the chaplain's message, the chaplain will lead a discussion about what it was like living the challenge for the month. If the chaplain is unable to attend the meeting, this discussion is to take place during the grand knight's report. The monthly challenge will be found primarily in:

- Monthly email blast to grand knight, chaplain and lecturer
- Social media
- *Knightline*
- *Columbia Magazine*
- [kofc.org/domesticchurch](http://kofc.org/domesticchurch)

## Faith in Action Monthly Challenge Instructions

1. Begin with a prayer of your choosing or use the following:
  - Make the Sign of the Cross
  - **Prayer:** Come Holy Spirit. We thank you for guiding our lives and pray that we may have the courage exemplified by Father McGivney to live our faith to the fullest through our council, our families and in society. May our words today give glory to your Sacred Heart and if we struggled this past month in living our faith, help us to never stop turning to you and always try again.
2. Re-read the Faith In Action monthly challenge from the previous month
  - Invite the men to talk about what it was like to try and live last month's challenge from the supreme chaplain
  - Do not be concerned about the order that men speak in
  - It's OK if there is silence in between men speaking
  - Try to make sure that others are listening when one man is speaking
  - It is fine if someone doesn't want to speak
  - The men are welcome to give encouraging comments to each other
3. When finished, read the Faith in Action for the next month
4. Ask the men if there is anything they would like the group to pray for and end with this prayer:
  - **Prayer:** Heavenly Father, we thank you for this time together with our brothers. We ask you to have mercy on all those people and intentions we prayed for. Give us the perseverance to live next month's Faith in Action and to remember that we are united with our brother Knights around the world in doing so.
  - Make the Sign of the Cross



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