

The Magnolia Knight

A Word from the State Deputy

Happy New Year– The End Is Near



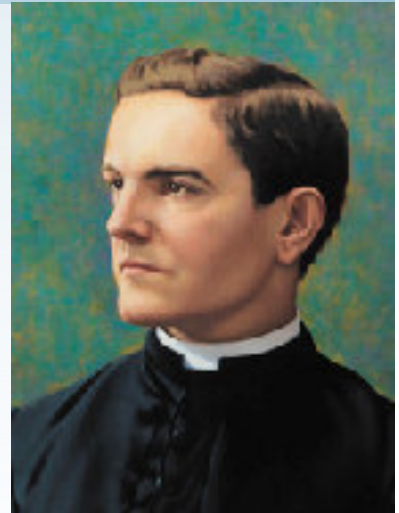
While we have all just celebrated a new calendar year, the state fraternal year is coming to a close. Our state fraternal year ends March 31 and there is much to be done between now and then. A council evaluation is in order. Have you met your goals with respect to program activities? There is no reason why every council cannot receive the honor council award at our convention in April. All you need to do is conduct four activities in each of the program areas (church, community, council, culture of life, family and youth). After all, isn't that what the Knights of Columbus is all about, conducting charitable activities?

How many new brother knights do you have in your council? I am asking each council to hold a church drive in February and offer the gift of membership to all qualified men in your parish. New members bring new ideas to a council. Invigorate your council with new members. Don't forget to look outside your parish at nearby mission churches. Many of these churches are too small to form a council but the men of that church deserve the opportunity to join the Knights of Columbus. Form a roundtable and offer membership in your council to the men of these mission churches.

Prepare your council for our state convention. Elect your delegates, send in your convention registration, purchase an ad in the convention booklet, invite your chaplain to the Friday night banquet, submit your best activities for awards, reserve your hotel rooms and celebrate a successful fraternal year with your brothers from around the state. This year's convention will be held in Jackson from April 25-27. Most of the information that you will need concerning the convention can be found on the State Council website: www.kofc-ms.org.

Our website contains valuable information about things happening in our state. The Marian Prayer Service schedule can be found there along with links to sev-

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State Officers

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State Deputy
David Scott, Madison

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State Treasurer
Noel Aucoin, D'Iberville

State Advocate
Philip Jabour, Flowood

State Warden
Ben Mokry, Jackson

Immediate Past State Deputy
Gerald E. Schmuck, Gulfport

Send Council, Assembly and Circle news to John Lacourrège at ijklacourrege@bellsouth.net

Bishop R.O. Gerow (Priest Education) Program

Brothers, our state convention is approximately 2 months away and we should be in our final preparation to support this important event in our 2013-2014 Fraternal Year. I hope your preparations include a donation to the Bishop R.O. Gerow Program. Your donation should be sent to State Treasurer Noel Aucoin by April 15th, if possible. He and I are in contact weekly and your donations will be monitored closely.

It is our aim to represent you properly as we give your donations to our Bishops. Lent will start soon and it is excellent opportunity to plan a non-meat dinner. You will most likely get great parish support if it is advertised to support priest education.

Carol and I are looking forward to seeing you at the convention in Jackson.

Vivat Jesus
Don Cox
Chairman, Bishop Gerow Program



Council Assessments

All council payments for Per Capita and Liability Insurance assessments as well as Degree Fees should be mailed to:

State Treasurer
Attn: Noel Aucoin
14620 Porteaux Bay Dr
Biloxi, MS 39532-7327

These payments should be forwarded to the State Council Treasurer's office within 65 days of the January 1 and July 1 billing date to allow sufficient processing time prior to the suspension date of April 10 and October 10.

Districts 5 and 6 Hold Joint Mid-winter Meeting



Grand Knights and Financial Secretaries of councils in Districts 5 and 6 meet with their District Deputies as well as state officers to discuss topics such as projects, membership recruitment and retention, and the state convention on Thursday, January 9th at St. Richard Catholic Church in Jackson.

In a scene that was replicated all over the state in January, Districts 5 and 6 in central Mississippi held a joint meeting on the evening of Thursday, January 9th, in meeting room at St. Richard Catholic Church in Jackson. State Deputy David Scott and State Secretary Jim McCraw and were in attendance as were Grand Knights and Financial Secretaries of the councils in both districts, as well as their District Deputies.

Participants discussed how their councils were doing thus far at the mid-point of the fraternal year and plans for the remainder of it up to and including the state convention to be held in Jackson in April.

Hattiesburg Knight and Guide Dog Receive Diploma



Mac David, First Degree Knight of St. Thomas Aquinas Council 15382 in Hattiesburg, receives his diploma at USM's December 2013 commencement ceremonies. (Picture courtesy WDAM.)

At its December 2013 commencement ceremonies the University of Southern Mississippi presented diplomas to Mac David and his faithful guide dog Cy, each wearing his own cap and gown. Mac's degree is in education, and when asked for what Cy received his sheepskin, Mac quipped, "Teacher's pet."

Mac David became a First Degree Knight of Columbus in St. Thomas Aquinas Council 15382 in Hattiesburg last year. Mac and Cy attend Mass together at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church.



Council 9409 Grand Knight and PSD Danny Lechner presents a check for \$800 to Tom Harder of The Arc. Pictured from left to right are Don Gall, Chairman of the council's fund-raiser; Tom Harder and his daughter Sarah, and GK Danny Lechner. (Photos and story courtesy of Jim Rigby)

West Biloxi Council Distributes Funds Collected for Those With Special Needs

Reinhart Schroeder Council #9409 of the Knights of Columbus recently presented three checks in the amount of \$800.00 each to representatives of Cheshire Parents Association, the Arc of the Gulf Coast and Biloxi Community Homes. These funds have been raised through the participation of its member volunteers and members of the Biloxi Community Homes collecting donations during its canister drives held at Winn-Dixie and out side of Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church.

The canister drives that were held were jointly done with some of the family members of the council and residents of Biloxi Community Homes with the benefits going to the three community organizations. The organizations that received the benefits are all non-profit organizations that support people that are intellectually and developmentally disabled.

The Cheshire Parents Association is a group of parents that have children that live in the Cheshire Home and apartments. The Arc is an organization that supports these special needs people by finding others who can help train them. The Biloxi Community Homes is a living community for these special needs people.

All three of these organizations believe that *all* people have worth and purpose. It is for this reason that the Reinhart Schroeder Council has selected these three community groups to receive the funds.



Don Gall., Helen and Michael Roberson of Cheshire Parents Association, and GK Danny Lechner.



GK Danny Lechner, Jeff and Antonio Johnson of Biloxi Community Homes, and Don Gall.

King Cake and Catholicism



The current King Cake is believed to have originated in France around the 12th century. However, the original custom could have had its start in the Roman Empire from the pagan festival of Saturnalia. This celebration was thought to praise the god of Saturn as he brought the world from the bleakness of winter into the fertility of spring. It is believed that the Catholic Church used the Feast of the Epiphany to draw pagans away from the god of Saturn into the arms of Christ.

It was these early Europeans celebrating the coming of the three wise men bearing gifts twelve days after Christmas calling it the Feast of the Epiphany (Greek for "the showing"), Twelfth Night, or King's Day. It was St. Augustine who is credited with first bestowing the title of Kings to the three Magi; a name that quickly stuck. At a time when Kings and Queens were held in high esteem, the poor people of the time could relate well to the image of three mighty Kings doing homage to a poor child destined to rule Heaven and Earth. The festivities begin January 6th, Kings Day, and ends on Fat Tuesday (Mardi Gras in French), which is the day before Ash Wednesday, the start of the 40 day Lenten season. It is during Lent that the Christian people sacrifice comforts and indulgences to prepare themselves, spiritually, for the resurrected Lord of Easter Sunday.

The main part of today's Mardi Gras celebrations, beginning January 6 going through midnight of Mardi Gras, is of course the parades; elaborate street parties that last hours at a time. On a more intimate and personal level, is the sharing of King Cakes through weekly or monthly parties to honor the three Kings finding of our Savior. The cakes are made in a circular form to portray the circular route used by the kings to find the Christ Child and return to

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King Cake and Catholicism *(continued from page 3)*

their home land. In Matthew's Gospel, it is said this route was taken to avoid King Herod who feared the new King of the Jewish people and was secretly plotting to kill the Christ Child. The circular pattern also represents that God, in the body of Jesus, lived as man, died and rose from the dead, never to die again. He is eternal in nature thus the never ending circle of the cake.

In the earliest King Cakes, a bean, pea or coin was hidden inside the cake. The person who got the hidden piece was declared King for the day or was said to have good luck in the coming year. Soon after this tradition was firmly established the ceramic baby doll or a small crown began to be used as a symbol of the baby Jesus. Like the three Kings who found the original baby, offering Him gifts, the person who finds the doll or crown is expected to provide the next cake as a gift to all their friends. The deeper meaning from the Catholic faith's perspective is that by finding the baby Jesus, you are reminded that you too found Jesus in your personal life; always being a presence in your life and a part of your family and friends. As Jesus gave freely to all, we are expected to give freely of ourselves; carrying on the carnival festivities by providing the next King Cake for the group to enjoy.

The King Cakes are usually formed as braided dough to represent the whips that will be used in Christ's suffering. Though He was God, as man, He endured much suffering for us. We are asked to remember the price that He paid even as we celebrate with fun and festivities of this carnival season because we know Good Friday is also approaching. Even the frosting used in the decoration of the cake has meaning to our faith. The traditional Mardi Gras colors are used; gold (for power), green (for faith) and purple (for justice).

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eral local council newsletters. Ben Mokry has done an excellent job as webmaster. Submit items to Ben for inclusion on the calendar. If you have a twitter account, be sure to follow the State Council twitter feed @MississippiKofC.

We welcome a new Bishop to the Diocese of Jackson. The Pope has appointed the Reverend Joseph Kopacz to succeed Bishop Latino. The installation of the new Bishop will be February 6 at St. Peter's Cathedral in Jackson. We look forward to the Bishop's leadership and we say a prayer of gratitude and appreciation for the spiritual guidance and support that Bishop Latino has shown the Knights of Columbus over the years.

Have you thanked a priest today?

David Scott
State Deputy



Pictured are some of the 59 Knights of Council 9543 of St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in Madison, who tuned out in force prepare and serve the delectable dishes at the annual Starry Night Gala to raise over \$80,000 for St. Anthony Catholic School.

Madison Council 9543 Shines at Starry Night Gala

On a very chilly Saturday, December 7th, some 59 Knights of Council 9543 at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in Madison, as well as some wives and others, put in a total of 602 hours preparing a wide variety of delicacies to delight the palates of those attending the annual Starry Night Gala held at and for the benefit of St. Anthony Catholic School. After many spent much of the day cooking turkey, pork and beef tenderloins, crawfish étouffée, oysters Rockefeller, shrimp grits, boiled shrimp and salmon, among other things, some stuck around to help a later shift keep the chafing dishes stocked and/or serve the guests.

After all had eaten their fill, danced to the music of a live band and found out what their fortune had been in the draw down, the school was over \$80,000 closer to its goal of retiring its debt. And the Knights of 9543 gear up to do it all over again for St. Joseph Catholic School in February.