



# The Magnolia Knight

Serving the Mississippi Jurisdiction of the Knights of Columbus

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December 2014

## From Our State Deputy



There is something magical about this time of the year. We often think of family and friends who have passed away. Some of this brings sadness because we miss them but it also incites a powerful sense of love for the memories they gave us. As a southerner, more specifically, a Mississippian, I was raised on family stories. We have a cultural passion for our history, a need to connect on a personal level. Like my friend Ricky Cole says, "We like to know who our people are". This is probably true of Catholics in general.

My kids were beneficiaries of the stories their grandmother told about her childhood and family members. One particular Christmas my son and his cousins, all around the age of 11, were retelling a story as if they were there. She will live on for at least another generation because of this. When I talk with someone who had a recent family loss, I remind them of our obligation to keep that

persons memory alive by telling their stories. What better time than at family gatherings.

When we work on delinquent dues as members of the Retention Committee, it is important to remember each of those members has a story with us. They are our brothers not a debt to be collected. I continue to stress the importance of the Retention Committee because they approach things with a fraternal spirit. When you don't know the man, it is easy to make it "just business".

During this season, I encourage councils to make personal contact with its members. Let them hear your voice and you listen to them. Not to collect a debt, but to pay one. The debt we owe each brother knight for the service they have given, even if it was 10 years ago. We are all important. They are important.

Keep your state officers, program chairmen and district deputies in your prayers the weekend of Dec 6. We will have our Mid Year State Leadership Meeting at St. Jude in Pearl that weekend. Each District Deputy will report on his jurisdiction or district, discuss challenges and opportunities and learn about the new information coming from Supreme. We'll share this with council

leadership at our regional meetings in January. (North: Jan 10, Central: Jan 11, South: Jan 17)

As I close, I want to express my continued support and appreciation for our Ladies Auxiliaries throughout Mississippi. I thank State President Marcia Flagg and her officers for their commitment. My expectations for our Regents are very high. I rely on them to assist local auxiliaries that may be struggling, as well as groups interested in organizing. The Auxiliary is a key in our goal of Strengthening Catholic Families.

We must stand together in unity. Support our elected leaders as they carry that heavy cross of leadership. I would rather have a leader try and fail than not do anything to avoid being criticized. This applies to the Auxiliaries just as it does our Councils. We must all be Developing Catholic Leaders. The Auxiliaries must do this to attract the young mothers, wives and daughters. Provide them an opportunity to grow and make a difference. Let them be important. Embrace their energy and ideas. Push Family and Youth activities with your council.

May the peace of Christ give you comfort during this Advent season.

Jim

*Our goal is very specific.*

*Developing Catholic Leaders.*

*Strengthening Catholic Families. "*

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## Americans By 2:1 Margin Prefer "Merry Christmas" To "Happy Holidays"

A new survey finds Americans by a wide margin prefer the traditional "Merry Christmas" greeting to the non-specific "Happy Holidays."

This [Knights of Columbus-Marist Poll](#) found that nearly two-thirds of adults nationally – 64% – think people should say, "Merry Christmas," while less than one-third – 31% – believe the appropriate greeting is "Happy Holidays." Four percent are unsure. The proportion that prefers "Merry Christmas" increased slightly this year. Last year, 61% thought "Merry Christmas" was the more appropriate greeting while 35% preferred "Happy Holidays." Five percent, at that time, were unsure.

"That we prefer 'Merry Christmas' by such a wide margin is indicative of the importance that Christmas has in the lives of the great majority of Americans," said Knights of Columbus Supreme Knight Carl Anderson. "For that vast majority of Americans who observe Christmas, this day and season are a time for us to celebrate the fact that God exists and is with us. Saying 'Merry Christmas' allows us to celebrate that fact with joy, and to share our joy with our loved ones and neighbors."

The meaning of Christmas has long been important to the Knights of Columbus. For more than five decades, the Knights have been at the forefront of the campaign to "Keep Christ in Christmas," producing PSAs with the "Keep Christ in Christmas"

message since the 1980s. Last year the radio and television PSA spots reached almost 75 million people. The PSAs can be accessed at [www.kofc.org/christmas](http://www.kofc.org/christmas)

This Knights of Columbus-Marist Poll surveyed 1,026 adults and was conducted November 8th through November 10th, 2011 and has a margin of error within +/- 3 percentage points.

In December, do you think you should wish people:



## Advent Message From State Programs Director



Brother Knights,

As we move into the Season of Advent with excitement for the approach of Christmas Day, I would like to pass wishes for a most Holy and Blessed Christmas Season, from my

family to yours. I encourage each council across the state to take time to share the Christmas Season with your fraternal brothers and their families, by scheduling at least one activity this month as a council, celebrating the birth of Our Lord and Savior.

Some ideas for your council might be:

- Hold a Council Holiday Pot Luck
- Gather for a member and family Corporate Communion during the Advent Season
- Schedule a time to help out at a local food pantry or shelter.

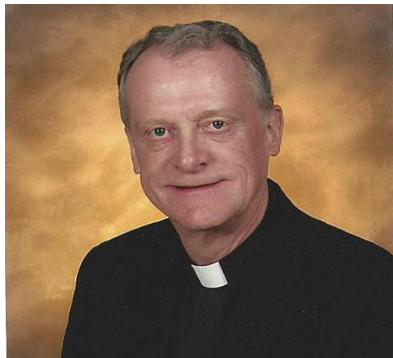
- Prepare a holiday food basket(s) for a needy family/ families in your parish or community.
- Host a Keep Christ in Christmas event

Most importantly, share this joyous time while showing our faith in Christ, as Knights, to our parish, family, friends, and communities. It is by our works and fraternity that we show our strength as members of the Knights of Columbus.

Merry Christmas and God Bless.  
Your Brother Knight,

Guy Heying  
State Programs Director

## Message From Our State Chaplain



Msgr. Elvin Sunds

Dear Brother Knights,

December is upon us and soon we will celebrate once again the greatest gift of all – God the Father’s gift of his son Jesus.

However, with all the commercialism it is easy to forget the real meaning of Christmas. It is even easier to overlook the importance of those few weeks leading up to Christmas – Advent.

Advent is the season of waiting and anticipation. We wait to celebrate again the coming of Jesus 2000 years ago. The Church also

reminds us we wait for his coming at the end of time, and we wait for his coming to us individually at the end of our life’s journey. However, Advent is also a time when we open our heart and open our eyes of faith to recognize the presence of the Lord in our midst right now.

In the first chapter of Matthew’s gospel, the angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she is to be the mother of the Messiah and then to Joseph that Mary has conceived by the Holy Spirit a child who is the Messiah. At the end of the announcements, Matthew quotes the prophet Isaiah, “A virgin will have a son and he will be called Emmanuel which means **God is with us.**” Then, in the very last sentence of Matthew’s gospel as Jesus is ascending to heaven he says to the disciples, “I will be with you always to the end of time.” Jesus is saying again, “**God is with us**” at all times *in him*.

So Advent is also a time we are

called to look at the world around us through the eyes of faith and recognize Emmanuel, “God is with us.” It is a time to open our eyes of faith and recognize Jesus in our midst. He may be present in the love of our family, the kindness shown to a stranger, the generosity to someone in need, the comfort and strength given with a kind or encouraging word. Jesus, Emmanuel, is with us. All we have to do is look to see him.

May you and all your loved ones have a blessed and merry Christmas. May you joyfully celebrate his coming 2000 years ago. And may you recognize his presence among us now and each and every day.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Msgr. Elvin Sunds  
State Chaplain

## Meridian Knights Support Cancer Patients

Recently the Knights donated \$500 to the Cancer Patient Benevolent Fund. 100% of the funds go to those in need. Just another way our council gives back to our community.

Pictured on the left is Wayne Herrington, Director of the Anderson Regional Cancer Center and in the center is Ginny Ruffin, the Patient Navigator at the Center.







State Deputy Jim McCraw and members of Picayune Council 6872 at their Vocations Breakfast to raise funds for Seminarian Education.



Vernon Ducote, Louisiana State Deputy receives Silver Rose from Jim McCraw with Silver Rose Chairman Mike Kassouf and Brian Cassagne, GK 6972 in St. Borromeo Catholic Church, Picayune.



2014-2015 Council 10443 Officers after an installation mass in St. Peter, Grenada.



District Masters of the Bienville Province were installed by Vice Supreme Master Russell Ruh at Sacred Heart, D'Iberville. Shown: Steve Koach, PSD, Alabama; David Lemaire, Louisiana; Bill O'Connor, Mississippi.



Attending the Bienville Provincial Installation and Banquet at Sacred Heart, D'Iberville were: Griffin Shreves, AL State Secretary; MS State Deputy Jim McCraw, Mike Wills, Supreme Director and TN PSD; AL State Deputy Pete Parrish; and Skip Gentle, Former Vice Supreme Master and AL PPSD. Not shown: John Park, TN State Deputy.

## Rosary Rally at Blessed Virgin Mary in Biloxi



Above: Members of Alhambra carry statue of our Lady of Fatima. Men are also members of councils along the coast.



Upper right: Our Lady of Fatima



Right: Honor guard readies for entrance procession at Annual Rosary Rally, Blessed Virgin Mary Cathedral, Biloxi.

## Installation Of Officers At Leland Council 2945

Bottom Left: Chaplain Fr. Charles Bucciattini and SD Jim McCraw listen as DD Bernie Brown gives the charge of office to the newly elected leaders.

Right" Former State Secretary Mike Columbus, GK Jimmy Sherman and DD Bernie Brown review last minute details for the installation

Bottom Center: 2014-2015 Council 2945 Officers with SD Jim McCraw, SA Ben Mokry and DD Bernie Brown.

Bottom Right: Leland Council members serve up a steak dinner.





## Brother Knight Celebrates 90th Birthday



Brother Eddie Merriman, Sr. recently celebrated his 90th birthday. Eddie is a member of Grenada council.

Pictured left to right with Eddie are DD Bernie Brown, Eddie, Fr. Martin Ruane, and SD Jim McCraw after Bro Merriman was presented a 2014-2015 State Pin for his contribution to the Order.

## Picayune Council Shines

Picayune Council 6872 has been chosen as Civic Club of the Year 2014 by the Greater Picayune Area Chamber of Commerce.

The 66th Annual Awards Banquet was held Thursday, November 6, 2014.



L-R Joey Temples, Chamber Sec/Treas, Ronnie Sperier, Trustee 6872 & Bryan Cassagne GK 6872

## Southaven Council Hosts 3rd Degree



A 3rd Degree Exemplification was held last month in Southaven. Eleven candidates were present for the event.

PSD Dr. Peter Sudanek, DD2 Joe Suhanin, and PSD and State Ceremonials Chairmen Jerry Schmuck led the Degree.

State Deputy Jim McCraw and State Treasurer Philip Jabour were also in attendance.

After the degree council #7120 hosted the degree team, dignitaries, candidates, and council members in the Council Hall for lunch and social time.

During the social SD McCraw

presented Council 7120 Grand Knight and State Church Director Ted Lander with the Council's Star Council plaque.



## Flag Retirement Ceremony Takes Place

Third degree Council 5654 and Fourth degree Assembly 2059 had a flag retirement on November 11th with St. Alphonsus school, Ocean Springs High ROTC, and the Ocean Springs Fire Department participating. Burning about 200 flags.



KC Knight, Benny Cantin, greets JROTC Commander Colonel Farragut prior to the ceremony



Ocean Springs Firefighters, Tim Heath and Jeff Harris representing the O.S. Fire Dept. (and for safety reasons)



A Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag: 4th Degree Knights of Columbus (with swords), Ms Kathy Mangin, and St. Alphonsus students



Ocean Springs High School JROTC Color Guard: Cadet Sgt. Kiarro Coleman, Cadet 1st Lt. TJ Hazuga, Cadet 1st Lt. Michael Magyar, Cadet 1st Lt. Owen Monaghan

## Veteran's Day Remember by Assembly 561

Assembly 561's Veteran's Day wreath was placed at the I-10 Welcome Center memorial on Saturday 8 November by Major Earl H. Meyer, USA (Retired), who is a WWII Vet and the step father of Sir Knight Robert Barr.

He was assisted by BMCM James Jackson, who is a Sir Knight himself. Sir Knights Lee Chandler, Benny French,

Joe Farr, Steve Parnell, Richard Clement, and Robert Barr were dressed out.

Sir Knight John Albano was the Master of Ceremony for the service honoring all veterans.



## Member Management Workshops



State Training Coordinator Mike Kassouf is shown with Dominic Pitts, Council 1522 Bay St. Louis, and State Deputy Jim McCraw.



In addition to conducting this final Member Management Workshop, Mike is also State Warden and State Membership Retentions Chairman. He is a member of Council 6765 in Starkville.



## Staff Changes and Needs Announced

Congratulations to Paul Mitchell who has moved from State Membership to Ceremonials. He will help develop 1<sup>st</sup> degree teams and at least one Second Degree team. "The key challenge we have today is access to a timely 1<sup>st</sup> degree. Paul is passionate about ceremonials and understands how this is an integral part of retention and council growth." Ceremonials Chairman Jerry Schmuck is looking forward to Paul's expertise with all degree ceremonials and his experience working with membership.

### **State Vacancies**

State Warden Mike Kassouf will absorb Membership into Retention. We will be looking for brother knights who are interested in working with Mike through June. Contact Mike: [Kassouf@bellsouth.net](mailto:Kassouf@bellsouth.net)

**District Deputy:** Should have grand knight experience. Provide council oversight and mentor officers. District includes Hattiesburg, Laurel, Bassfield, Columbia and Tylertown. Travel expenses reimbursed. This is a Supreme annual appointment for up to 4 years. Contact Jim McCraw. [jmccraw1148@comcast.net](mailto:jmccraw1148@comcast.net)

**State Council Director:** This position reports to the State Program Director and is an excellent opportunity to serve at the state level. It does not require significant travel. Contact Guy Heying for more details. [GuyHeying@Eaton.com](mailto:GuyHeying@Eaton.com)

**Media Relations** Individuals with experience in coordinating with print and electronic media. Promoting events through Facebook and Twitter is a plus. Contact Jim McCraw for more details. [jmccraw1148@comcast.net](mailto:jmccraw1148@comcast.net)

**Website Technical Support:** Members who have experience in PHP, Word Press, graphics and web management. Contact Ben Mokry for more information. [bmokry@aol.com](mailto:bmokry@aol.com)

**Special Olympics Area Coordinators:** State SO Chairman Larry Tabor is looking for coordinators to work with regional Special Olympic centers and neighboring councils. These are opportunities to be of service locally that may get overlooked. Contact Larry Tabor for more information: [Indtabor@cableone.net](mailto:Indtabor@cableone.net)

**Financial Secretary:** Council 15382, Hattiesburg. Training is provided. Contact OD Landrum. [Fatboy5405@aol.com](mailto:Fatboy5405@aol.com)





**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI**  
**DIOCESE OF BILOXI**  
**DIOCESE OF JACKSON**

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**State Vice President: Larry Tabor [Indtabor@cableone.net](mailto:Indtabor@cableone.net) 228-207-7182**



**JOIN THE MISSISSIPPI KNIGHTS TODAY**  
[www.knightsonbikes.net](http://www.knightsonbikes.net)

## State Deputy Attends Mid-Year Meetings



Supreme Knight Carl Anderson welcomes state deputies and their wives to the Mid Year State Deputies Meeting in Baltimore, MD.



Ralph Body, DE; Franklin Davis, SC; Dave Roy, ME; Supreme Secretary Charles Maurer; Deputy Supreme Knight Logan Ludwig; Jim McCraw, MS; Dan McAvinney,



Babe Ruth statue outside Camden Park, Home of the Orioles. Ruth was also a 4<sup>th</sup> degree Knight of Columbus



Fr. Jonathon Kalisch, concelebrates mass at **Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore.**



Ralph Body SD-DE; Franklin Davis SD-SC; Dave Roy, SD-ME; Jim McCraw, SD-MS, Dan McAvinney, SD-VT

The [Basilica](#) was constructed between 1806 and 1821 to a design of [Benjamin Henry Latrobe](#), America's first professionally trained architect and [Thomas Jefferson's Architect of the U.S. Capitol](#).<sup>1</sup> was built under the guidance of the first American bishop of the [Roman Catholic Church](#), [John Carroll](#). It was built under the guidance of the first American bishop of the [Roman Catholic Church](#), [John Carroll](#).

The Basilica was consecrated on May 31, 1821, by the third Archbishop of Baltimore, [Ambrose Maréchal](#).

Many famous events have occurred within its walls, including the funeral Mass of [Charles Carroll of Carrollton](#), the only Catholic signatory of the [Declaration of Independence](#).

Most of the first American bishops were consecrated here to fill the ever-multiplying dioceses necessitated by the young country's territorial expansion and great waves of immigration.

Until recent years, more priests were ordained at the Baltimore Basilica than in any other church in the United States. It was also where Fr. Michael J McGivney was ordained.



# Knights of Columbus Senior Thanksgiving Dinner

Sponsored by Councils 7087 Kiln & 12331 Dedeaux



The Sunday before Thanksgiving over 200 seniors were served a turkey dinner with all the fixings plus dessert! The blessing was given by Fr. Richard Paul LaCorte of Annunciation Parish (who kept it short because everyone was hungry.)

Music was provided by a live band and afterwards the participants enjoyed a game of BINGO with prizes. Hancock Medical Center was there with information and gifts also. The councils sliced up 15 turkeys provided by the Hancock County Sheriffs Office. Many of the elderly of the area look forward to this event every year.



During the even the State Deputy Jim McCraw presented the Star Council Plaque to council 7087 Grand Knight Gary Cuevas.



## State Programs

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*"In Service to One, In Service to All."*

## Insurance News



### State of the Agency

My travels continue to bring to the far reaches of the great State of Mississippi, and each day my quest to staff the agency with qualified men who can look out for the wellbeing of our Brothers comes closer to reality. A lot of times our most meaningful efforts go unnoticed. The amount of coverage being placed in the homes of Brother Knights across the state is substantially greater than the previous year, and that means Father McGivney's Mission is being fulfilled. I have done 15 interviews over the past 4 weeks, and it looks like we will have a couple of new and highly qualified men joining our ranks very soon. One in the North part of the state, and one in the remaining open territory on the coast. As soon as I know for sure, you will too.

Please remember that if you currently don't have an assigned agent, I am your contact. I can handle a lot of the

issues myself as I am out searching and training.

### The Cost of Waiting

Nothing saddens me more than to bring the news of declination to a potential client. Many times I get "the call" too late. You have to be eligible to buy health wise, and capable to buy financially. It amazes me how many 65 to 70 year olds decide they would like to continue their life insurance program, only to find out the products they own are running out. Lack of health and money then become the mitigating factor.

Many of our products are designed to pass wealth to surviving spouses and children income tax free. However, we can't do a thing if there is no health or money.

Long term planning while you are eligible to mitigate the risk of living to long is the answer. Please take the time to sit with your agent regularly and make sure you have a good plan in place.

**Don't wait until you know you need it.**

Contact me, or your agent if you know him, today.

**John H. Stice**

**General Agent for Mississippi**

**Cell: 205-908-1253 E-mail: [john.stice@kofc.org](mailto:john.stice@kofc.org)**