



*"Strengthening
Catholic Families."*

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The Magnolia Knight

Serving the Mississippi Jurisdiction of the Knights of Columbus

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From Our State Deputy, Jim McCraw



How Parishes Can Stop Turning Boys Into Atheists

Mr. Jason Craig

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Fatherlessness and Atheism

In the book *Faith of the Fatherless*, psychologist Paul Vitz definitively links fatherlessness to atheism. He profiles dozens of prominent atheists, from Nietzsche to Dawkins, and finds an amazing but unsurprising pattern: "In no case [with the atheists] do we find a strong, beloved father with a close relationship with his son or daughter." What's also made clear in the book is that fatherlessness has a greater influence on predisposing boys to outright atheism than it does girls.

Mentorship Make the Difference Too

A boy becomes an adult male by biology, but he can only walk into secure manhood with the direction and affirmation of secure men. Though beginning with fathers, it is also necessary that the larger community of men ushers boys into manhood, confirming the truths the father has taught or correcting his weaknesses. In *Faith of the Fatherless* Vitz also points out, while profiling prominent Christians, that not only did they have strong fathers, but they had mentors along their steps to manhood: "[The] theists appear to have had many more loving and supportive relationships throughout their adult lives." We don't just need good fathers for our boys; we need good men in general.

And right there is a lesson on making men from boys: masculinity is a thing bestowed, man to boy – it's given to a boy by a man in words and deeds, in real presence, in flesh and blood, in brotherhood and friendship and danger. The Proverbs are a beautiful example of a man realizing the great gift of manhood received and a desire to pass it on: "A precious heirloom it is, the tradition I teach, not to be lightly bartered away. Time was when I had a father of my own; and when I was but a boy... in such words as these he would teach me" (Prov. 4:3).

Fight the Lies

Boys are surrounded by false masculinities; we must surround them with truth. Scripture speaks often of fathers and sons, but rarely in isolation – the faith is passed on from generation to generation, not just father to son. This is why the brotherhood that grows in men's groups must translate into means of mentoring. Authentic male formation does not get men in a room to supervise or coordinate boys and deliver a packaged curriculum, like some sort of daycare, but it is the brotherhood of men inviting boys into that brotherhood, into manhood, with real conversation and fraternal challenge. Don't patronize boys with silly meetings without any depth.

But it's not just atheism that fatherless and mentorless boys can slip in to. Boys from such situations can still appreciate the need to worship, the longing for the divine, but they reject Christianity because it is rooted in a Son Who came to reveal the Heart of the Father.

Take Robespierre, a famous character of the French Revolution, who was bent on destroying the father figure of the King and the father figures of the clergy. He was conceived out of wedlock and subsequently abandoned by his father. You can sympathize with the man as he yearns to honor God but utterly rejects God's fatherhood. In his opening speech for a day of festivities and "worship" (the revolutionaries sought to replace Catholicism with an "enlightened" religion because they knew better

than to pretend man does not need to worship), Robespierre says the French people were offering a day “consecrated to the Supreme Being.” This is a clear acceptance of the divine but a rejection of the paternal. His speech refers to God dozens of times, but only as “the Divine” and so on, with never a mention of “Father.” It was a rejection and repudiation of Christianity and its paternal-centrism.

Today rejecting the Father but accepting divinity comes in the form of eastern and new age religions. I have a pagan friend who often talks of “the Universe” giving him things. “Who?” I always answer. But he hates that and says that I am making the divine “anthropocentric” – projecting humanity onto God– when I refer to God as the Father. He explains that he is very sensitive to “patriarchy,” which he means as a symbol for tyranny and male dominated economics (see *Marxism Has Infiltrated Your Family*), which is how most famous atheists describe God, like Christopher Hitchen’s book *God is Not Great* and Dawkins in *The God Delusion*.

In both fatherless religion and outright atheism the heart of a son has been convinced that fathers are life-taking tyrants, not life-giving authorities. I’ve only heard Nietzsche admit that his atheism was a guttural rejection, not, as most atheists claim, an enlightened, reasoned-to position: “I have absolutely no knowledge of atheism as an outcome of reasoning, still less as an event; with me it is obvious by instinct.”

Call the Men Home!

So how are parishes causing all of this? By ignoring the needs of boys, and not addressing the urgent pastoral challenge of fatherlessness and the Catholic man-crisis in general. We don’t hear often enough the admission that there’s a crisis, or even that fathers exhibit that much influence. It’s time to admit it! Even Sigmund Freud, an atheist with a weak father profiled in Vitz’s book, said that work in psychoanalysis “daily demonstrates to us how youthful persons lose their religious belief as soon as the authority of the father breaks down.” As Matthew James Christoff says frequently, “There will not be a New Evangelization without the evangelization of men.”

In a survey of thousands of Catholic men, Christoff found that only 4% of Catholic men are reporting that they think their priests are doing a good job of bringing boys and men together. So, 96% think otherwise. The facts are confirming the anecdotal evidence we all see. And we can’t just look for simple and quick fixes like videos in a box, but we have to bring a paradigm shift to an entire generation of men.

If we want our boys to be Christians, we have to equip men and mentors in our parishes. In times past these things happened naturally (apprenticeships, community, etc.), but they don’t anymore. We have to make up for that. We have to teach and strengthen fathers and provide opportunities for mentoring, and this requires intentionality and frameworks to make sure it



Members of the 4th Degree Knights of Columbus who dressed out for the Convention Dinner and the Convention Masses

Supreme Drawing for Family of the Month

Congratulations to the recipients of the Supreme councils drawing of the Family of the Month Plaque.

The winning recipients are the Family of Joseph & Virginia Gauck, from council, 1908 Hattiesburg.

Please keep in mind that your entrees must be in to the Supreme council, by the 15th of the following month. i.e.:If you Family is selected in April, then your report is due by May 15th.

Bob Leo
State Family Director



**Mississippi Jurisdiction Knights of Columbus
Family of the Year**

Ike and Pam Kincke + 10
Council 9094
Diberville, Mississippi

**Mississippi Jurisdiction Knights of Columbus
Knight of the year**

March Creech
Council 9094
Diberville, Mississippi

Council 848 at the Cathedral of St. Peter the Apostle conducted a 40 Cans For Lent Food Drive. Parishioners dropped off canned goods at every Mass during Lent. The council collected 1,100 pounds of food and delivered it to Stew Pot Ministries in Jackson.



In the photo: Noel Machost, Michael Gill, Randy Jansen, GK Charlie Sims and Nick Schmidt.

Mississippi State Convention Membership Awards

Top Gun Awards

Top Gun Award given to the Councils that have achieved an Optima Potential recruitment goal set by State Deputy and Membership Director. With a formula of double or plus 10 of their state goal - whichever is lower.

Three Councils achieved the Top Gun award this year!

With a Top Gun Quota of 10 – Council brought in 12 new Members. Council 8038 Pearl – Grand Knight Bob Ganz

With a Top Gun Quota of 18 – Council brought in 20 new Members. Council 15382 St Thomas Hattiesburg – Grand Knight O D Landrum

With a Top Gun Quota of 10 – – Council brought in 10 new Members Council 11995 Most Holy Trinity Pass Christian – Grand Knight Paul Minnaert

Top Mississippi Star Recruiter

Top Mississippi Star Recruiter award is given to the Top recruiter – he has recruited the most Knights in the State Year in each region of the State, North, Central and Southern and then to the overall for the State.

| Region | Location | Council | Member |
|---------|------------|---------|-----------------|
| North | Southaven | 13502 | Carl Garton Tie |
| North | Batesville | 13052 | Billy Haire Tie |
| Central | linton | 7854 | Craig Harrell |
| South | The Kiln | 7087 | Gary Cuevas |

Top Mississippi Star Recruiter in 2015 - 2016

| Region | Location | Council | Member |
|---------|----------|---------|-------------------|
| Central | Clinton | 7854 | Craig Harrell Tie |
| South | The Kiln | 7087 | Gary Cuevas Tie |

Mississippi State Convention Membership Awards

Mississippi Star Recruiter Councils

These Councils have already achieved their Supreme Goal

| | | | |
|-------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| 8038 | Pearl | Grand Knight | Bob Ganz |
| 7854 | Clinton | Grand Knight | Craig Harrell |
| 11995 | Pass Christian | Grand Knight | Paul Minnaert |
| 15382 | Hattiesburg | Grand Knight | OD Landrum |
| 15155 | Vancleave | Grand Knight | Scott Johnson |
| 2180 | Laurel | Grand Knight | Keith Knight |
| 7087 | Kiln | Grand Knight | Gary Cuevas |
| 8285 | Jackson | Grand Knight | Doug Simmons |
| 13502 | Batesville | Grand Knight | Billy Haire |
| 6765 | Starkville | Grand Knight | Tomasz Haupt |
| 7974 | Columbus | Grand Knight | Kelly Tippit |
| 15131 | Jackson | Grand Knight | Dave Fisher |

These Councils will all get a credit on the State Per Capita Statement if they maintain thru the Fraternal Year.

Have You Insured Your Most Valuable Asset?

Is your income protected if you become sick or injured and cannot work? Your ability to work and earn an income is your most valuable asset. Yet a disability could prevent you from earning that income. Just one year of a disability could eliminate your savings.

Income Armor, an individual disability income insurance product from the Knights of Columbus, should be a key part of your overall financial plan and family's protection.

If you are ill or injured, Income Armor provides tax-free monthly benefits to help you meet living expenses and maintain you and your family's standard of living. Your monthly benefits help you pay your mortgage and other monthly bills, while your savings and retirement assets remain intact.

In short, if you have a job and don't have a way to protect that paycheck, you should seriously consider Income Armor today. The best way to learn about our products is by arranging an appointment with us at your home or our office. We can custom design an insurance program to meet your family's current needs, help you plan for the future, or simply explain the many fraternal benefits that come with membership. In addition, we can explain the benefits you may be offered through your employer and help you determine exactly what those benefits mean to your family. We are here to serve you!

Sincerely and Fraternally,

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**Please Have inputs for
the Magnolia Knight in
by the 24th of the month
Send inputs to**

halfdunn9094@gmail.com
or
halfdunn@att.net
or
magnoliaknight@kofc-ms.org



Pictured L to R, Larry Tabor, Sandy Firth, Jimmy Firth, Ben Tabor

The recent flooding in Biloxi left a local Woolmarket business with 3' of water. Knight of Columbus Council 9673, St. Mary, Woolmarket, donated \$500 to the business owners and neighbors to help the cleanup and re-stocking of inventory.

Mississippi Knights of Columbus State Convention







