

My Brother Knights,

Each year your State Deputy is required to give a “State of the State” address for all members to hear. This in general describes the condition of the Jurisdiction and hopes for the future. In today’s message, as I write this on Easter Sunday, I am reminded of the renewal of the church and our Order at the same time. Our Holy Father has even spoken on “everyday grace” as a key to surviving the troubles of the day.

As we look forward from this Pandemic and the terrible effects that came with it, we can see more than just the unpleasant issues. There were multiple “Food for Families” events that were held with tremendous results. Feeding those that suddenly found themselves out of a job or moving back to their relatives homes as they had none of their own thanks to the troubles of the times.

Several Ultrasound machines were placed in multiple locations, saving the lives of the unborn, at a time when money for even the most basic services was hard to find. Still, members and Councils stepped up to make these happen. Supreme continued to support our efforts and funding for each to make these efforts more successful. Yes, there are always reasons anyone can point at to quit, but there are just as many reasons and more to go forward, if we just look hard enough.

True, Membership is nearly flat in terms of new folks joining as opposed to the number that leave every year. BUT, if it were not for the troubles we have fought our way through these past two years, I doubt the online joining of new members and the online ceremonials to teach a new brother our values, would have produced the numbers new brothers we have with us today. We all know it is the entrance of new members joining the order that allows us to be able to live up to Father McGivney’s ideals and dreams.

We will always need newer and younger folks to replace us, as we age and someday have to step down, so that the charitable programs and efforts we hold so dear will continue to serve the less fortunate. Is that not what we are here for? To always help those less fortunate?, To serve our Lord by helping his church here on earth? Of course it is. That is what Charity is all about and that is why Father McGivney made that our first Principle.

While the cost of in-person meetings has declined due to the canceling of nearly all of those meetings, the cost of “going virtual” has increased significantly. We now spend large amounts on new hardware and software to make our communications as effective and available as possible. We continue to have to provide a Website (and staff) to accommodate recorded

meetings of our own and the items sent to us by Supreme so that these items remain available for all members to see

So finally, yes, we are at a crossroads of where we were at in how we conducted business, offered grants, performed programs, and encouraged non-members to joining us. We are also learning and adapting to newer ways to do all these things. There is a silver lining in some of this exercise we have all been through these last two years and that is, at least in part, that the electronic and virtual things we enjoy today would not have arrived as soon as they did. I believe we are far better off with these things than without.

It is easier to thumb our noses and snub things that seem like “the wave of the future” and the “realities of tomorrow”, but it will always be the case that we need to adapt as time goes by to stay the relevant and blessed Order that we are.

My dear Brothers, while my two years as your State Deputy have been far less than expected in many ways, and far more encumbered with things we never saw coming, we, your State Council Officers, Chairmen, and District Deputies have moved into the future with you. We know we are all better off than before. We are stronger, more united, both in person and virtually, and we are far more capable of greater things in the digital world than ever before. All of this will serve those that come after us.

Know that the future is bright, more in-person meetings will be coming, new members are joining online all the time, and we will be bigger and stronger than ever before....all because of you. It has been the Grace of God, your perseverance, dogged determination, and faithfulness that have brought us through this time of uncertainty, hurt, and yes, even death. With the continued Grace of Almighty God we will emerge greater than ever before. So, hold your head high and be proud that you are a KNIGHT OF COLUMBUS.

Vivat Jesus

Pat Kelley