



CHRISTMAS, MD STATE COUNCIL STYLE

State Deputy Hosts Christmas Party for State Council Staff

Dec 11, 2010, White Marsh

In keeping with Maryland's annual tradition, State Deputy Peter Davio and First Lady Francine hosted a Christmas party at Columbus Gardens in White Marsh on Saturday evening. The party is a "thank you" from the State Deputy to his state and district officers, Past State Deputies, Directors, Chairmen and Chairwomen. As Davio explained during the evening's short program, the appropriate thing would be to invite his staff to his home during the Christmas holidays, but since the state family numbers several hundred men and women, Cardinal Gibbons Council home was selected to answer the need.



The event was a fun-filled evening with a splendid display of some of Chief Warden Owen McGinley's, animated Santa Claus collection – here being admired by State Membership Director Martin Luchansky and his wife Christine; a wonderful selection of Christmas baskets donated by Francine and her ladies to be raffled off as a fund raiser for the ladies program at the state convention, a Christmas program of speakers and song; and of course dining and dancing.

State Deputy Davio took advantage of the evening by holding a meeting with his District officers for about one hour –

then it was off for fun, food and the festivities.

After dinner, State Training Director Fred Dickens coached the audience on the spiritual significance of the twelve days of Christmas. Then State Program Director Joe Feakes and State Cantor Steve Upton led the group in song. Competing teams around the room did their best to outdo each other in a rendition of the *Twelve Days of Christmas*. Santa (Gramling) Claus also appeared and shared with us his personal experience with the Christ child – thus bringing to life the heart-warming story of the "Kneeling Santa".



Later, the First Lady assisted by Josie Boisvert and several husbands, conducted the drawing for the many baskets that had been on display throughout the evening.



This was followed by dessert; Columbus Gardens' renowned ice cream bar, and then dancing by the Monaldi Brothers.



Unlike the three Magi, over 240 guests came to the party bearing gifts for the Apostleship of the Sea. By evenings end, a large storage tub was filled to overflowing – along with several boxes and bags - with individual gifts and religious artifacts that Msgr. Fitzgerald will be able to give to the seamen he visits on a regular basis.



Per the State Deputy's request, checks have been coming in for several weeks; earmarked for the Little Sisters of the Poor. Throughout the evening State Secretary Bill Kuchmas collected additional checks bringing the event's total to \$3,085 for distribution to the Little Sisters in all three Diocese the Maryland jurisdiction serves – specifically their facilities in Washington D.C.; Baltimore; and Newark Delaware.

What a wonderful way to start off the Christmas Season.

State Deputy's Remarks



My Brothers and Ladies,

We're six months into the game now. Everyone has had time to settle into their new roles and take stock of their progress. But in past years, too often we've tended to rest on our laurels during this part of the Columbian year and slow down on our programs and efforts to expand membership.

State Deputy Peter Davio

The holidays are over, we've all worked hard and we've all had a chance to take a break, so it's the perfect time to decide if adjustments are needed.

You and I - we're all volunteers.

**Don't
waste the
time you
have
been
given.**

This precious time we're given from God makes up the rest of our lives. We don't know how much of it we have left, so it seems prudent to use that time wisely. I have a little memento on my desk from an old friend, the author is unknown, but it says "Live each day as though your life has just begun." On the other hand, the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius cautions "Live each day as though it were your last". Taken together, they don't give us much time do they?

The real message I think we need to take from this is, don't waste the time you've been given. That's a good motto for Catholics and more importantly, it's a good motto for Knights of Columbus.

The Beacon has successfully shown our accomplishments over the past six months. Not a bad track record if I do say so myself. But the question on the table is, what now? You can rest on your laurels, or you can continue in your good deeds.

Your council's programs are your legacy - they stand as testimony to the fact that you didn't waste your time. Through your council's programs, you turned your attention to your children, your spouses, your Brother Knights, the widows in your community, or your community as a whole; they are all God's children. As you include others in your membership, you provide them and their families an opportunity to come a little closer to God.

So you must ask yourselves, if this is just "the first day" of your life, will you continue to show thanks to God for the rest of your lives by continuing to care for God's children? On the other hand, if as Marcus Aurelius cautions, this is your "last", have you done enough to make God smile when you see him?

Francine and I wish you all a "Happy New Year" - and here's looking forward to an even better second half of this term.

Pete

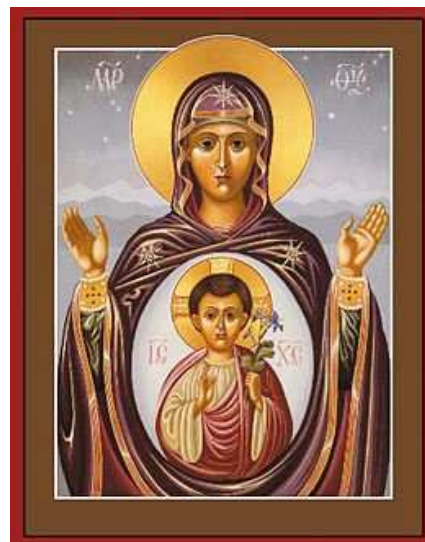
Marian Title for January

Mother of God (Theotokos)

The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God is a liturgical feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, celebrated by the Roman Catholic Church on **January 1st**, the Octave Day of Christmas. In the U.S. it is considered a holy day of obligation.

The feast was celebrated in the east before the west, but by the 5th century it was celebrated in France and Spain on the Sunday before Christmas. In Rome, even before the 7th century, January 1st was used as a celebration of the Mater-nity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Theotokos is the Greek title of Mary, the mother of Jesus, used especially in the Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, and Eastern Catholic Churches. Its literal English translations include "**The one who gives birth to God.**" Less literal translations include Mother of God, a title used more often by Roman Catholics, Anglicans, and some Protestants. The Council of Ephesus decreed in 431 that **Mary is Theotokos** because her son Jesus is one person who is both God and man, divine and human.



Theologically, Roman Catholic Mariology deals with not only her life but also with veneration of her in daily life: prayers, hymns, art (where she has been a favorite topic), music, and architecture; in modern and ancient Christianity throughout the ages. The development of Roman Catholic Mariology is ongoing; it continues to be shaped not only by papal encyclicals but also by the interplay of forces ranging from the writings of the saints, to the construction of major Marian churches at the sites of Marian apparitions. In Roman Catholicism, Mariology is a logical and necessary consequence of Christology: Jesus and Mary are son and mother, redeemer and redeemed. Mariology is Christology developed to its full potential.

In Catholic theology, Mary and her son Jesus are very close but not identical; therefore, Marian teaching, while contributing to the teaching of Christ, is also a separate discipline, called Mariology. The figure of Mary contributes to a fuller understanding of who Christ is and what He did.



Voices of the Bishops

Cardinal Burke Addresses Catholic Higher Education

MERRIMACK, New Hampshire, DEC. 15, 2010 (Zenit.org).- Cardinal Raymond Burke underlined the importance of Catholic higher education, and the need for these institutions to keep their identity strong. The prefect of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura gave an address at the Thomas More College of Liberal Arts, where he affirmed the importance that "the Church has consistently assigned to Catholic higher education, in order that 'the convergence of faith and reason in the one truth may be seen more clearly.'"

He stated that "In a society which is marked by a virulent secularism which threatens the integrity of every aspect of human endeavor and service, for example, medicine, law, government and higher education itself, the service of the Catholic university is more needed than ever.

Let Peace Begin in Jerusalem

VATICAN CITY, DEC. 15, 2010 (Zenit.org).- The president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace is asking for peace on earth, and that it begin in Jerusalem.

Cardinal Peter Turkson wrote this in his message for the Third International Day of Intercession for Peace in the Holy Land. Bishop Mario Toso, the dicastery's secretary, also signed the note, which was released today. The prayer initiative, which is organized by several Catholic youth associations, will take place Jan. 29-30.

The annual event began in 2009, when faithful from some 500 cities around the world joined in a common prayer for peace. Organizers say that groups from more than 2,000 cities have already confirmed participation in this year's event.

European Court: No Right to Abort

STRASBOURG, France, DEC. 16, 2010 (Zenit.org).- In a case regarding a challenge to the Irish constitution, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that there is "no human right to abortion."

The Grand Chamber of the European court decided today on the case, noting that the Irish constitutional prohibition of abortion does not violate the European Convention on Human Rights.

The challenge against Irish law was brought to the court by three women who allegedly were "forced" to go abroad for abortions, which they claim put their health in danger. The court decided that the country's laws do not violate the European Convention on Human Rights, which stresses the "right to respect for private and family life." The European Centre for Law and Justice, a third party in this case, lauded the court's further recognition of the "right to life of the unborn."

State Chaplain's Message



Fr. Donald Grzymalski, OFM
State Chaplain

Archbishop O'Brien of Baltimore recently wrote several articles for *The Catholic Review* on the declining number of clergy, and its impact on parishes. Combined with changing demographics in some areas, and fewer Catholics attending Mass on a regular basis (the national average is now around 30%), we can anticipate fewer scheduled Masses, twinned or combined parishes, and other changes. Since this issue goes well beyond Baltimore, the State Deputy recently asked me "what can the Knights do to prepare for this, and to help our priests who are also dealing with these changes?" I have been reflecting on that question, and here are a few thoughts.

Changes, as in Mass schedules, are not easy to accept. We can try to understand the need, and to go along with these changes, and this means a lot. We can help to explain the changes to others, and the pastor will be most appreciative.

Only the largest of parishes are likely to have more than one priest today. Try to understand the calendar challenges that thus result for priests, and it may prevent some hard feelings. I trust priests are not ignoring phone calls or e-mails, but coming back to the office and a pile of messages can be daunting. Patience will be needed all around.

We can accept that there are many things priests used to do that don't require a priest, and likely the priest wasn't the best equipped for every role. Deacons, religious sisters, professional lay staff and volunteers do superbly in so many roles, and we all benefit from their talents.

We can stay active, volunteer and encourage others to do the same. Similarly, we can promote participation in the weekly Eucharist so we have healthy faith communities. This will also help promote vocations to Church ministry (and to membership in the Knights). It's harder to find vocations and practical Catholics among those who do not regularly attend Mass.

Finally, pray for your parish and your pastor, and for vocations from your local faith community. Doing so helps us remain people of hope and optimism for the future.

Do you have some other ideas? Perhaps we can share some, and help all around. Feel free to send me your suggestions.

Vivat Jesus!

Know your K of C Fraternal Benefits

"Rich or Poor?"

When thinking about whether to make your funds safe or keep them at risk...keep in mind this question:

"Would you rather make a stab at getting rich... or make sure you are never poor?"

As we age many of us have the same amount of equity exposure as we did when we were much younger. But, now we're 15, 20 or even 25 years older and have little or no room for error if there would be a market correction.

Here's the benefits of making some or all of your funds safe:

1. Peace of mind.
2. The ability to capitalize on a down market with a portion of your safe funds if that time comes.
3. Peace of mind.

Not much downside with the safe route. The unsafe route might offer higher returns, but the risk associated with the chance of higher returns is tremendous if you're at a station in life where you don't have time to recover. Be careful.

(And see your Council Benefits Advisor for more info)

Bob Marlowe, Jr., Clu, Ffic
Kc.marlowe@verizon.net

MASS OF REMEMBRANCE

In a nondescript building in Elkton, Maryland, an abortion doctor had been performing abortions on late-term “fetuses”. He transported pregnant mothers from his office in New Jersey where some abortion laws are stricter than in Maryland. One of his most recent trips was a caravan of vehicles with the mothers having the procedure done at his Elkton office. Life-threatening complications set in on one of the women and she was taken to the local hospital where the details of the doctor’s business were revealed.

The bodies of 35 babies, many who were very late-term, were discovered in a freezer. They were later examined by the State Medical Examiner. The doctor was holding this many bodies in an effort to obtain enough to fill a barrel that would be labeled and disposed of as “medical waste.” Eleven of the bodies were issued death certificates as they could have survived outside of the womb.

Rev. Father Joe Piekarski, Pastor at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Elkton, and Rev. Father Jay McKee of Good Shepherd Church in Perryville found out about these babies. They



felt it necessary to hold a memorial mass for them, as their discovery was only a few blocks from the church. The mass was scheduled for Oct 21, but the bodies had not been released. For the mass the babies were represented by white candles. Parishioners gave names to all but 9 of the babies prior to the mass. It was decided they should have some identity as they were human beings. After the mass the other 9 were given names by the attendees.

Bishop Becker and Havre de Grace Councils and St Francis Xavier Assembly were notified of the mass and the request for Sir Knights to assist. In all 10 SKs were in attendance.

The church was very full of local people, many who were not Catholic, but who came to pray over these babies.

In early November the interment of 34 of the babies took place. The babies were placed in a donated coffin and were given burial at the church’s cemetery. The 35th was taken by the grandparents back to Canada for burial.



IT WAS A MERRY CHRISTMAS...

December 21, 2010 - Washington, D.C

With all of the checks collected by the close of the Maryland State Council Christmas party, State Deputy Peter Davio headed off to the Jeanne Jugan residence on Harewood Road in Washington to deliver them. This was only his first stop as the Maryland State Council generously donated to the Little Sisters in Washington; Baltimore; and Newark, Delaware - a total of \$3,085.

Sister Celestine Meade, administrator for this residence for the aging, happily accepted the checks, saying they couldn’t have come at a better time.

Not too long ago, Mother Benedict, Superior, had remarked that “with 100 elderly men and women in our care, the Little Sisters could have suffered many sleepless nights in recent months worrying how we would find the means to provide proper nutrition, medical care and a comfortable home for them. Instead, the Little Sisters rejoice in the way that God has cared for us through the many acts of kindness and generosity coming from our friends in the community. Indeed, we are overwhelmed at what we have witnessed this year and we

sincerely thank you for serving as an instrument of God’s Providence.”



As they face a new year, The Little Sisters of the Poor also face new challenges. Their aging building is in need of some major repairs in order to maintain a safe and comfortable home for the men and women who live there. First on the list will be replacing many sections of pipe that are hidden inside the walls and between floors of the residence. There have already been several pipe bursts.

Leakage around the window frames is another problem that they have to deal with. They know that the mortar is in need of repair to prevent water leakage around win-

dows. Upon repair of the mortar, they also plan to replace their old windows with more energy efficient ones that will save energy dollars and help to keep their elderly Residents warm and comfortable.

There are also heating and air conditioning systems that need to be upgraded with more energy efficient models. So although they are very grateful for our financial support, they would welcome any trades assistance that the Maryland Knights of Columbus could provide.

“Our primary responsibility is the care and comfort of the 100 men and women in the Jeanne Jugan Residence. As we proceed with our building renovations, we know that we will only be able to proceed as far as our finances will allow without affecting our Residents. This means that the expense of renovations will be an additional expense beyond our regular budget. It will reassure us tremendously if we know that we can continue to count on you.”

“We cannot thank you enough for all you do to help us in our mission to serve the elderly. We all love you dearly. God bless you and your families.” -

Sr. Benedict, l.s.p.

FAMILY OF THE MONTH

Ralph J. Close, Family of the Month Chairman

Bill & Jean McMahon

Bill was born October 1st, 1945 in Massachusetts and grew up in Baltimore. In 1965 got drafted. In 1980 graduated with an AA Degree in Business administration. Served 4 years in the Navy attaining the rank of Electronics Technician second class. Married Jean Blackert at St. Mark's Church in Catonsville, Maryland in 1967. The reception was held at the Patapsco Council No. 1960 home where Jean's dad was a PGK. The wedding Mass was celebrated by Fr. Albert McMahon, OFM, who is Bill's uncle. They have 3 children and 8 grandchildren.

Bill joined the Knights of Columbus in 1973 at John F. Kennedy Council No. 5482 in Accokeek, Maryland. He took his first 3 Degrees with JFK being knighted in 1973. He served there as secretary for the Building Corporation and Council Treasurer among many other chairmanships.

In 1983 transferred to Patuxent Council No. 2203 After many years of working and chairing events, he got into the chairs as Deputy Grand Knight then Grand Knight the Columbian year 1992 to 1993.

Bill has been Advocate and Recorder as well as Program Director, Community Activity Director, Membership Director and many other chairmanships. He is a mem-

ber of his council's 1st Degree Team, his District's 2nd and the State's 3rd Degree team.

Bill joined the 4th Degree in 1993 while he was Grand Knight of Patuxent Council. He still belongs to the Archbishop Michael J. Curley Assembly where he has held the offices of Faithful Captain, Navigator, Admiral and Trustee, and is member of the Color Corps.

Bill has been tremendously active in the State Council, having held a variety of chairmanships and appointed positions.

Jean helps the Council by organizing refreshments for the Council Memorial Mass and assists with the Council Christmas parties. Jean is an officer of the women's auxiliary. Among others, Jean is active in supporting Laurel Pregnancy Center and the Gabriel Project.

Over the years Bill has also been involved with Scouting in both Cub Scouts & Boy Scouts for a total of 22 years service; and he coached for 15 years with the Laurel Boys & Girls Club.

Since March 1993, Bill has been making Rosaries. To date he calculates having made almost 1,800 Rosaries. He was privileged to present his 1 thousandth Rosary to Fr. Bill Gurney in the name of Patuxent Council just as he left for his appointment as the Cardinal's new secretary.



A Note from the Archdiocese of Washington

For this newsletter I have asked Deacon Al Turner to give a report on the exciting happenings of Black Catholic History Month.

Fr. William Byrne

Secretary for Pastoral Ministry and Social Concerns

Archdiocese of Washington

Dear Friends,

The Office of Black Catholics has just completed the celebration of "Black Catholic History Month which was first established in 1990 by the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus. November is set aside to celebrate the accomplishments and faithfulness of black Catholics from the very beginnings of the church.

This year the office produced a series of "Black Catholic History Moments", a daily fact about black Catholics throughout history. All the parishes in the Archdiocese of Washington received copies. Many other organizations and individuals were also sent copies of these daily moments and the response to this was very. It was also interesting to find out that many people did not even know there was a Black Catholic History Month. Many only had knowledge of February Black History Month. So this was a teaching moment, which was well-received.

Also during the month, the Office of Black Catholics sponsored two other events, one cultural the other spiritual. The first, a Black Catholic History Month Concert, was held on November 13 at Holy Redeemer Church in DC. The concert was performed by the St. Augustine Gospel Choir, the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Choir, and a soloist from the St. Martin of Tours, DC choir. This

was I hope the first of an annual celebration of black spirituality in the Catholic Church. The second event, a Mass followed by a Veneration of Relics of African saints, was held at St. Joseph's Parish in Largo, Maryland on November 30th. The celebrant was auxiliary Bishop Martin Holley. The Mass was followed by a veneration liturgy, celebrating the relics of seven African saints.. It is hoped that this will be an annual event as well because during the month it came to the attention of my office that there are other parishes within the archdiocese that possess other relics of African saints.

The office is pleased to have been a part of celebrating the deep Catholic roots of all black people on both sides of the Atlantic and around the world.

**Deacon Al Douglas Turner, Director
Office of Black Catholics
Archdiocese of Washington**

Help a Child in Need

Our Lady of Guadalupe Council has a well deserved reputation for conducting fine programs and our "Help a Child in Need" certainly was no exception. Working at the Goshen Giant from 10am to 4pm, we collected over 800 pounds of baby food and supplies for donation to St. Martin's Food Pantry in Gaithersburg. According to Chuck Smith, director of the pantry, these items will allow them to feed children in our region for almost a month!

Special thanks to those who assisted with our program, including PGK Henry Ramirez; Komi Agopome

and his energetic daughters; Steve Rhodes; Wayne and Marlene Shoemaker; PGK Tom Johnson; and GK Ron Bauer and Raelene and Marla Bauer. We also were excited to have Dan Ward, Maryland State Pro-Life Chairman, join us as well. On a special note, Dan originated the "Help a Child in Need" program a few years ago and we are glad to make it one of our council's signature events. Thanks again to all those who made a difference today in helping our council to help mothers and their children who desperately need our support in the Gaithersburg area. Well done!



A "COLDEN" OPPORTUNITY



Once again **Special Olympics of Maryland** is inviting our Knights to make a difference in the lives of Intellectually Disabled people throughout Maryland by volunteering their time to help make the **2011 Polar Bear Plunge** run smoothly.

This year the Plunge will take place on **Saturday, January 29, 2011 at Sandy Point State Park**, at the western foot of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge in Anne Arundel County.

Maryland Special Olympics needs us to help direct parking, distribute food to the Plungers, operate some of the arcade games in the Amusement Tent, and distribute or sell memorabilia. This will be the third year that the Knights will be involved and the more volunteers we get out there, the better.

The photos seen here

are from last year's Plunge; note the snow. Usually there are two Plunges, the main and largest-attended at 1300 (1:00 pm) and another smaller one for stragglers at 1500 (3:00 pm).

Last year the 1500 Plunge was cancelled because the U of MD Shock Trauma doctors on site exceeded their heart-stoppage quota by the first Plunge, and because the snow got so heavy that you couldn't see the Plungers on the beach and the State Police were worried that some Plunger may go under and not come back up and no one would notice.

For this year, it'll be an early start, around 6:30 am, and our day will end around 3:00 pm. If you choose to volunteer, you will be sent a Parking Pass for one of the Volunteer Parking Lots. You will park at the Volunteer lot and take a shuttle bus into the park. The shuttle bus will drop you off near the Volunteer Check-In



tent. At the Volunteer Check-In tent, you will check in, receive an assignment, instructions, and any special equipment that you might need, and move on to your location. Lunch and snacks will be provided. Plenty of Port-a-Potties will be in place at various locations around the park. When the day is done or when you have to leave, the shuttle buses, which run continuously all day long, will take you back to your parking lot.

Since this is a one-day event, Special Olympics Co-Chair Walt Wankowski will be coordinating the volunteer activities for the Maryland State Council. So if anyone in your council or their families or friends would like to volunteer, they should contact Walt at wwanko@comcast.net or 410-866-6546.

Volunteers must be at least 16 years of age.



A SAMPLE of what we do around the State...

CHURCH ACTIVITES

Our Lady of Guadalupe Council, No. 12127, Gaithersburg Lenten Fish Dinner

February 19, 2010

Lent brings with it a special "flavor" at St. John Neumann Parish in Gaithersburg. Our Council hosted three Fish Dinner events, each of which was well-attended by Knights and parishioners and the dinner on February 19th involved a special presentation to a local Seminarian as part of the Knights' RSVP program. Parishioners were not disappointed and it was wonderful to see the SJN Parish Center filled with happy diners enjoying a fine meal and great conversation. Working tirelessly to serve these meals were the men & Ladies of Our Council.



YOUTH ACTIVITES

Rock Creek Council, No. 2797, Bethesda 9th Annual Charity Chess Tournament

April 25, 2010

On a beautiful Sunday afternoon students from 15 schools participated in our Annual Chess Tournament. Many schools send representatives every year, but we always have new participants from new schools. Children are divided into categories, K-2, 3-5, and 6-8, and play four rounds of chess against others in their group.

Congratulations to everyone who participated. The event promotes not only the game of chess, but also sportsmanship and family values. Each year we welcome a number of grandparents, parents and siblings who come to the event to watch and support their young chess players.



COUNCIL ACTIVITES

Fr. Michael C. Kidd Council, No. 14455, Mitchellville Indoor/Outdoor Sportsfest

June-July 2009

This is a two-day indoor and one day outdoor (golf) sportsfest for members and their families. They were held after the Social Meetings in June and July, 2009. The sports fest consists of six events: Dart, Table Tennis Basketball Shoot-out, Wii Bowling and Golf (putting and course play). Trophies were awarded to winners of the respective events.

The sportsfest was undertaken to promote physical well-being of the members of Fr. Kidd Council and facilitate closer interpersonal relationship among the members and their families.



COMMUNITY ACTIVITES

Calvert Council, No. 7870, North Beach A Blood Drive Milestone

December 2010

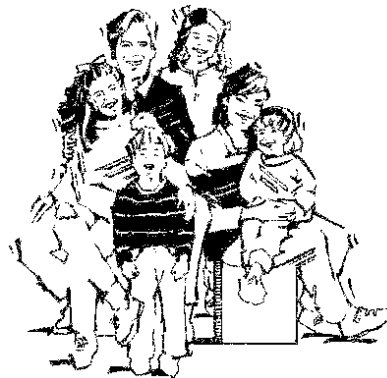
Our bi-monthly blood drives at St. Anthony's have become a local event in the "Twin Beaches Community." October marked the 10th year of our sponsorship with an average of 55 units collected. We rank 7th out of 892 in the "Religious" category with 1352 units since June 2005. The Red Cross Chesapeake & Potomac Region Chapter recognized the Council and St. Anthony's with "Outstanding Service Awards".



Staff & donors are always rewarded with their choice of Council chef Jack Lehane's "Beach" Cheese-steak, or egg or tuna salad sandwiches, and "homemade" chicken soup.

FAMILY ACTIVITES

Your Council, No. 12345, Yourtown Family Activity Program Any day from years 2009 and 2010



One of YOUR Council's many Family Activities could've been showcased here for all the State to see. However, you failed to submit your entry, or didn't do it on time.

Don't let it happen again!

ANY Council can submit an entry, why not yours?

PRO-LIFE ACTIVITES

Saint Joseph's Council, No. 11631, Taneytown Motherhood - Sanctity of Life Program Mothers Day Weekend, May 8th, And 9th, 2010

Our Celebration distributed marigolds to Mothers at our Masses and breakfast, honoring their Life-giving, sustaining Vocation. Children presented marigolds to their mothers with the message: "Thank you for choosing Life for me. Happy Mothers Day from the Knights Of Columbus."



52 helpers, including 23 Knights, their families and parish Cub Scouts prepared, delivered and benefited from a positive and educative Pro Life experience. Proceeds were used to help a local Crisis Pregnancy Center, "Priests For Life", The Gabriel Network, and the Archdiocese Rachael Project post-abortion counseling services.

If your Council, Assembly or District sponsors an **outstanding** activity which should be publicized here, please send us (eribanez@verizon.net) a description, AND a photo or two of the event. Your submission will be considered with others in the same activity category for inclusion in the next issue.

Columbus: Son of Polish King?

MADRID, Spain -- A new biography of Christopher Columbus claims that the man who discovered the Americas was neither Italian nor Spanish but the son of an exiled Polish king who kept his lineage secret.

Portuguese historian Manuel Rosa says he spent 20 years digging through medieval documents and genealogy for his book "**Columbus: The Untold Story**," published last November in Spain. A professor at Duke University in North Carolina, Rosa believes that Columbus was actually the son of exiled Polish King Vladislav III and a Portuguese noblewoman.

Conventional wisdom has said that Columbus was from a family of humble Italian weavers, born to a weaver, Domenico Columbo, in 1451 who also ran a cheese stall in the city of Genoa. But Rosa believes the explorer was able to woo monarchs into funding his seafaring adventures only because he was in fact descended from royalty himself -- from Poland. He cites documents he claims reveal that Columbus and his brother both had access to four European royal courts -- a rare feat for supposedly poor Genoese weavers. Rosa also believes that Columbus himself was married to a woman from the Portuguese aristocracy in 1479, years before his first Atlantic voyage, and that the marriage helped him secure contacts and funding for his trips.

"The sheer weight of the evidence presented makes the old tale of a Genoese wool-weaver so obviously unbelievable that only a fool would continue to insist on it," Rosa [told London's Daily Mail newspaper](#).

In 1498, Columbus signed his last will and testament with the words "being I born in Genoa" -- but Rosa writes that the document is now believed to be a forgery, written 80 years after his 1506 death by Italians who wanted to lay claim to his legacy.

Columbus' ancestors have long been a topic of intrigue and speculation among historians. Even though the explorer claimed to have been born in Genoa to a textile family, other theories have claimed his true roots lie in Portugal, Greece, Spain or even Scotland. There's some evidence that Columbus sought to obscure his origins, which could reveal that he was really Jewish or a double agent working for the Portuguese royal family. "Our whole understanding of Christopher Columbus has for 500 years been based on misinformation. We couldn't solve the mystery because we were looking for the wrong man, following lies that were spread intentionally to hide his true identity," Rosa [told The Daily Telegraph](#).



The new book, Rosa's third about Columbus, says the great navigator's father was in fact Vladislav, who is long thought to have died in the Battle of Varna against the Ottomans in 1444. Rosa believes that he actually survived and fled to live in exile on the island of Ma-

deira, a Portuguese territory, where he married a Portuguese noblewoman who gave birth to Columbus. On Madeira, Vladislav was known as "Henry the German."

Many paintings of Columbus show that he was red-haired, fair-skinned and blue-eyed -- all features more common in Poland than in Italy. Columbus' coat of arms was also strikingly similar to that of the Polish king, and a painting of the explorer housed in Seville, Spain, shows a crown hidden in his sleeve.

Rosa said there's plenty of evidence to support his theory, but his next project will try to back up his thesis indisputably -- with DNA evidence. "I have made a request to the Cathedral in Krakov to examine remains from the tomb of Vladislav II, who could turn out to be the grandfather of Columbus," Rosa told the Telegraph. "It would prove the truth of my theory."

Join the March for Life on January 24



[We will meet at noon, on the Mall, at the Smithsonian Metro Stop.](#) Look for the Maryland Flag on a 10 foot pole and the State blue sign, and join your brother knights!

The Maryland State Council Sponsors

Pro-Life Mass and Concert

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mass at 7:00 p.m.



Followed by a

Concert By Tony Melendez

Michaels Eighth Avenue
7220 Greyburn Drive
Glen Burnie, MD 21061

ALL ARE WELCOME!

PARTIAL BIRTH ABORTION DEMONSTRATION



Germantown, Md. - December 11

At 8 AM on a cold Saturday morning between 600 and 800 people joined Bishop Holley from the Washington Archdiocese and several priests and Deacons in the sacrifice of the mass at Mother Seton Parish in Germantown. The purpose was to pray for the babies that have or will lose their lives through abortion, the mothers who make that sad decision, the abortionist who makes a living by making sure that an infant isn't living once he's done his deed, and finally for us all that we continue the good fight against abortion.

The partial-birth abortion ban remains a hotly contested current political, legal, and cultural issue. The US Congress passed the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act (H.R. 760, S. 3) by a wide margin in October 2003 and it was signed into law by President Bush in November. Within hours of becoming law, judges in New York City, San Francisco, and Lincoln Nebraska blocked it from taking force.

The ban has yet to be enforced nationally pending legal challenges but individual states have passed legislation banning the procedure. Maryland unfortunately is not one of those states.

Nebraska Doctor LeRoy Carhart has said he wants to ensure more women have access to the procedure by expanding his practice to states where it remains legal. A new Nebraska law does not allow abortion after 20 weeks of pregnancy. So he has planned to open a clinic in Germantown, only a walking distance from Mother Seton parish.

At the conclusion of the mass, Christa Lopiccola, Executive Director of Life Issues for the Archdiocese of Washington, explained how the rest of the event would unfold and then asked the Pastor to open the prayers and the rosary.

Associate State Chaplain Father Thomas LaHood, pastor of St. John Neumann parish in Gaithersburg, then led the march and the rosary from the church to the site of the proposed clinic. State Deputy Peter Davio and Father LaHood, accompanied by a banner bearer carrying the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, led the participants as they prayerfully recited the decades for each set of mysteries of the rosary and singers led them in song between decades as they worked their way to the site. Brother Knights served as marshals to protect the crowd from traffic as they crossed through intersections and to respond to any needs that came up along the way.

After completing rosaries using all four sets of mysteries, the chilled and tired gathering retired to Mother Seton parish center for some welcomed coffee and doughnuts.



MARYLAND STATE COUNCIL CRUSADE FOR LIFE



Our pro-life activities this month take a national spotlight with the annual **March for Life** in Washington, DC, on Monday, January 24.

The Maryland State Council is arranging to [meet at noon on the Mall at the Smithsonian Metro Stop](#) (look for the Maryland Flag on a 10 foot pole and the State blue sign, seen on page 8).

We will also participate in the Maryland March for Life next March in Annapolis. Details will follow at the Mid-term meeting and here in The Beacon.

Grand Knights and District Deputies: there are many opportunities in the next couple of weeks to get involved. Many councils and parishes host groups traveling to Washington to participate in the annual March for Life. Consider helping or better yet, attend the march itself. At the very least, you can serve as a link in the communication chain.

There are many tasks to do the day of the march: from feeding groups and getting them out the door.

The Masses at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC, are yet another opportunity to unite with others in prayer. This year the Masses are scheduled as follows:

Vigil Mass for Life – January 23, at 6:30 pm

Solemn Mass for Life – January 24, at 7:30 am

Both Masses will be held at the Great Upper Church and normally are stand-room only, so plan to be there early!

You can support the theme of our State Deputy's address this month and answer the call to support our Church in a moral duty to those who have no voice.

REFLECTIONS

Lawrence P. Grayson

So Others Might Live

The U-boat rose silently to the ocean's surface in the dark winter night. For several days, it had been trailing a small American convoy. Now, with the ships about 150 miles from their destination in Greenland, there was a chance to strike.

The convoy consisted of one U.S. troopship, two freighters, and three Coast Guard cutters. The largest ship was the USAT Dorchester, a reconverted, aging, former luxury liner. It carried 902 men, among whom were four newly-commissioned chaplains – two Protestant ministers, a Jewish rabbi, and a Catholic priest, Fr. John P. Washington.

John Washington was the eldest of seven children born to a working-class, Irish-American family in 1908. Ordained in 1935, he served as a curate in several New Jersey parishes before enlisting shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. After graduating Chaplain's School, he and the three men who would be his companions were assigned to a base in Greenland, to be transported there on the Dorchester.

Most of the servicemen on board the troopship were young, new recruits, who were taking their first sea voyage. Now, on February 2, 1943, after ten days at sea, they expected to reach land the following day. But they still were in danger from the many German submarines that roamed the area north of Newfoundland, referred to as "Torpedo Junction." With an attack possible, the captain of the Dorchester ordered all men to wear heavy clothing and life jackets in case they had to abandon ship in a hurry. As the lower decks were hot from the ship's engines and overcrowding, many did not follow the directive.

Shortly before 1 A.M., the U-boat fired a fan of three torpedoes. One struck the Dorchester well below the water line on the starboard side. The lower compartments quickly filled with water, causing the ship to list and lose all power, while smoke, dust and fumes filtered through the ship. Panic set in. Men with a minimum of clothing rushed to the outer deck to be greeted by a cold blast of air. The dark, icy waters below promised death. Life boats were launched, but some left before many men were in them. Others were overcrowded to the point of capsizing. Still others could not be lowered because their cables were encrusted with ice. Some men were frozen with fear at the ship's rail. Others were swept into the sea as waves lapped over the deck.

The chaplains moved among them men, seeking to calm their fears. They opened lockers and distributed life jackets to those who did not have them. When the life jackets were all gone, they took off their own and gave them to others. About 20 minutes after it was hit, the Dorchester went under. Some survivors said their last memory of the ship was that of the four chaplains braced at the rail, arms entwined, praying and singing aloud. Only 230 men were rescued.

The chaplains were posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and Purple Heart. In 1960, Congress authorized that a special gold medal, called the Four Chaplains Medal, be awarded to them.

This is an abridgement of a longer article that can be found at the State website

January State Council Calendar

1. NEW YEAR, Feast of **Mary, Mother of God**
2. The Epiphany of the Lord celebrated
6. The **12th Day of Christmas**
8. State Council's Mid-term meeting, at Cardinal Gibbons Council No. 2521, Baltimore
9. Baptism of the Lord
19. State Sponsored **PRO-LIFE MASS** at 7:00 pm, & Tony Melendez concert. Glenn Burnie, MD
24. **March for LIFE**, Washington, DC



CATHOLIC LIGHT

