



Council Crier

Santo Rosario Council, No. 14449 • Indianapolis, Indiana

Vol. 7, Issue 4

December 2016

Visit us online at <http://kofcsantorosario.org>

Next meeting is Wednesday, January 4, at 6:45 p.m. — Please plan to attend!

A few thoughts on narrowing divisions

Prayers bind living to dead, and let's not forget the divided electorate

In the midst of the joyous celebrations of the Christmas season, it is hard to believe that just two months ago we were visiting cemeteries.

On Saturday, Nov. 5, Holy Rosary parishioners and guests joined the Knights of Santo Rosario Council for our second annual Indulgence Walk at Holy Cross and St. Joseph Cemeteries. Fr. Luke Reese presided over our procession to five noteworthy gravesites — just five among many at this historic place.

Not all of the occupants of those graves would have been called saintly. Certainly not Dillinger Gang member Harry Pierpont, who was executed for murder on Oct. 12, 1934. But we also learned about Civil War hero Frank Stolz, leader of a doomed-to-fail advance into enemy lines that helped set the stage for the Siege of Vicksburg, and an early recipient of the Medal of Honor for his bravery.

My turn to give the reading came at stop four. Event founder and coordinator David Walden assigned me a tough one. It was based on a 2012 homily by Pope Benedict XVI on the continuity between life and death that a cemetery visit provides; it was a profound meditation typical of that great and learned man. Here's a sample:

"[V]isiting cemeteries has allowed us to renew our bond



THE GRAND OPENING

**Brad Williams
Grand Knight**

with those loved ones who have left us; death, paradoxically, preserves what life cannot retain. We discover how our deceased lived, what they loved, feared and hoped, what they rejected, in a singular way from their tombs, that have remained almost as a mirror of their existence, of their world — challenging us and inducing us to reestablish a dialogue that death has put in jeopardy. Thus, the burial places are a kind of assembly, in which the living meet their dead and reaffirm the bonds of communion that death was unable to stop. ... This happens because death concerns man today just as it did then, and even if many things of the past have become estranged to us, death remains the same. In the fact of this reality, the human being of every age searches for a glimmer of light that brings hope, that still speaks of life, and visiting graves also expresses this desire."

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Densely-packed prose, isn't it? Pope Benedict's words stayed with me after the event. How does a cemetery visit "reaffirm the bonds of communion that death was unable to stop?" What dialogue do we reestablish?

An online search turned up St. Thomas More's 1528 pamphlet, *The Supplication of Souls*, where Thomas makes a similar point about the dialogue between the past and the present. At one point he quotes the souls in Purgatory speaking directly to the reader, imploring the assistance of the living to complete their heavenward journey.

"Now, dear friends, remember how nature and Christendom bindeth you to remember us. ... Remember our thirst while ye sit and drink; our

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Daniel Knight
Deputy Grand Knight

Building the Domestic Church

“But as for me and my house we will serve the Lord”

— Joshua 24:15

Our Venerable Founder, Fr. Michael J. McGivney, established the Knights of Columbus not merely to be a social club for men or a Church volunteer corps, although those do describe some of what the Knights do. He founded it to support the Catholic family in a time when social and cultural factors posed many challenges to the unity and sustainability of the Catholic family: poverty, alcoholism, anti-Catholic prejudice and discrimination. Families, in Fr. McGivney’s mind, might need material or financial aid to respond to these challenges (one purpose of the Knights of Columbus). He also realized that holiness is the common vocation of every baptized member of the family. This is the *domestic church* where every man, woman and child in the family lives the Gospel and follows the will of God. The parish church and, by extension, the Catholic Church as a whole form a “family of families” built from the individual domestic churches working, praying and loving together.

Following this concept and the teaching of the Second Vatican Council on this topic, the Knights of Columbus Supreme Council has launched a program entitled, “Building the Domestic Church while Strengthening our Parish.” The purpose of this program is to strengthen the domestic church through prayer and activity, which in turn enriches the parish church. The domestic church, as Blessed Pope Paul VI wrote, “mirrors the various aspects of the entire Church”; thus the domestic church is called to pray together, especially with Mass and the sacraments, and to serve the Church and world through charity. The “Building the Domestic Church” program is designed for Knights of Columbus councils to engage the families of the parish to pray together (through activities like the Fifth Sunday Rosary or Holy Family Consecration), to promote solid marriages (through the Father’s Day Renewal of Marriage Vows activity) and to connect these activities back to the parish at large.

Supreme Council considers this goal so important that, in conjunction with promoting this program, other changes were made. These changes are mostly aimed at positioning Knights of Columbus councils to be an aid to the parish, rather than to compete with the parish’s programs. In particular, Supreme has:

- Requested that Boy Scout troops no longer be sponsored by councils but by parishes directly;
- Discouraged formation of new Squire Circles; and
- Encouraged Home Corporation (“Hall”) Councils to become parish-based.

Most of these changes do not impact us at Santo Rosario Council. The only immediate change that affects us is the change to the Columbian Award (given for council programming), which is a requirement to qualify for the Star Council Award. As before, to qualify a council must report four activities in each of the six categories: Council, Community, Church, Culture of Life, Family and Youth. Now, four of those activities must be “Domestic Church” activities which relate to the “Building the Domestic Church” initiative. The message from Supreme indicates there is a specific list of eligible activities (including Fifth Sunday Rosary, Holy Family Prayer Program, Renewal of Marriage Vows, Consecration to the Holy Family and Journey to the Inn), but at this time a complete list was not available.

As a council, we will incorporate these activities (and potentially others) into our scheduled activities for the year. We’ll be discussing these changes and activities at business meetings throughout the year. The input and ideas of our members are always welcome, so please come to the meetings whenever possible. We will also try to keep membership abreast of changes and activities through the quarterly newsletter and e-mail messages.



Santo Rosario Night

with the



 **KNIGHTS
OF COLUMBUS**
SANTO ROSARIO COUNCIL 14449

SATURDAY

January 14

2017

Indy Fuel vs. Tulsa Oilers at 7:35 p.m.

Indiana Farmers Coliseum — Indiana State Fairgrounds

**Tickets:
\$20/each**

*All Holy Rosary parishioners,
their families and friends
are welcome to attend!*

*A portion of ticket sales
goes to Santo Rosario Council
to help local Pro-Life charities*

**Purchase tickets online today:
click the link at
kofcsantorosario.org**



Charles Stevens
Council of Life Director

Pro-Life groups busy in January

The Culture of Life Committee was relatively quiet during the time leading up to this article.

The fall campaign of 40 Days for Life has ended. We are happy to report that 658 babies nationwide were saved from abortion.

Our parish's Pro-Life Ministry, along with the Pro-Life committee of St. John the Evangelist Parish, continued their jointly sponsored film series on Nov. 11 at St John's. The film raised the issue of adult stem cells vs. embryonic stem cells. There were about 30 people in attendance. The committees are in the process of planning a new series. Upon selection of the topics, we will inform members of our council as to where and when the next series will take place.

The Holy Rosary Pro-Life Ministry has not conducted any recent meetings, but upcoming events are:

- 1) Helpers of God's Precious Infants prayer vigil, which is held the third Saturday of every month after the 8:30 a.m. Mass at St. Michael the Archangel Church, 30th Street and Tibbs Ave. The rosary is prayed afterward at the nearby abortion facility on West 16th Street.
- 2) Every fourth Saturday following the 10 a.m. Mass at Holy Rosary, Faithful Citizens conducts a procession through the neighborhood, with hymns and the Divine Mercy Chaplet recited.
- 3) The annual Pro-Life Mass commemorating *Roe vs. Wade* will be Monday, Jan. 23, at SS. Peter & Paul Cathedral. Mass will be at noon with a procession following. There will also be Eucharistic Benediction. It should conclude around 2:30. Also, event organizers likely will look to our council once again for crossing guards for the procession. Please volunteer if you can.
- 4) Lastly, Jan. 25 at SS. Peter & Paul Cathedral, there will be a "Vigil for Life" program that starts at 6:30 p.m. It will feature music, prayers and witness talks. Admission to the program is free, but donations will be accepted. They are also requesting donations to Birthline of baby clothes, diapers, wash wipes and anything else baby-related.

Santo Rosario Council Officers **2016-2017**

Grand Knight	Brad Williams
Deputy Grand Knight	Daniel Knight
Chancellor.....	Charles Stevens
Chaplain.....	Fr. C. Ryan McCarthy
Assistant Chaplain	Fr. Luke Reese
Recorder	David Walden
Treasurer.....	Tom Brown
Advocate.....	Jose Ocampo
Warden	Kevin Richards
Inside Guard	Jerry Friederick
Outside Guard.....	Zachary Williams
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Past Grand Knight	Lee Ashton
Lecturer.....	Brad Love

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Program Director	Daniel Knight
Membership Director.....	Edwin Barron III
Church Director	Ned Hummel
Community Director.....	Frank Oliver
Council Director	Brad Love
Culture of Life Director.....	Charles Stevens
Youth Director.....	Walt Janiec
Family Director	Pat Preston
Gibault Envoy.....	Kevin Richards

Council Crier

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THE GRAND OPENING

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hunger while ye be feasting; our restless watch while ye be sleeping; our sore and grievous pain while ye be playing; our hot burning fire while ye be in pleasure and sporting: . . . so God keep you hence, or not long here, but bring you shortly to that bliss to which, for our Lord's love, help you to bring us, and we shall set hand to help you thither to us."

Just one month ago, Pope Francis summed up Catholic teaching on this subject:

"The last of the spiritual works of mercy, praying for the living and the dead, is especially meaningful in this month of November, when we commemorate all the faithful departed. Prayer for the living and the dead is an eloquent expression of the communion of saints."

So for Catholics, death does not utterly and permanently sever ties across the generations. If we can overcome that separation through prayer, what about

the ever-widening divisions among the living?

This brings me to the recent election. Three days after the Indulgence Walk, Americans went to the polls to vote for a president. On Nov. 8, a bitterly divided electorate, many of the divisions along generational lines, split close to fifty-fifty. The final national tally was 48.2 percent versus 46.1 percent, neither candidate receiving a majority.

Divisions were regional, too. The winning candidate received 57 percent of the vote in Missouri, 65 percent in Oklahoma, and 58 percent in Indiana; but only 33 percent in California, 37 percent in New York, 34 percent in Massachusetts. The electoral map is blue at the edges and, except for Illinois and Minnesota, red in the center.

Without detracting in any way from our duty of prayer for the faithful departed, consider additional prayer for the healing of divisions among the living.

Our council will continue to do its part to maintain Pope Benedict's "bonds of communion." Plans are underway for next year's Indulgence Walk, featuring all-new and different gravesites and subjects. Mark your calendars for Saturday, Nov. 4, 2017.

#Giving Tuesday lives on — help those in need today

In late November, Supreme Council promoted an opportunity for brother Knights to exercise their charity on #GivingTuesday? If you missed that chances, don't worry: there's still time!

People who live on the margins of society, those without warm clothing or even shelter, and those without enough food, have few choices in their lives. For them, life becomes a daily struggle to survive with few options.

But many of us do have choices. And one of those choices we can make is to decide to reach out and help those in need.

Consider making a gift today by visiting:

<https://www.kofc.org/un/en/secure/charities/giving-tues.html#>

Should you make a donation, you will be given a link to an "unselfie sign" that can be shared on Facebook and Twitter with the hashtag #KofC.

With your support, we can continue to provide for those in need. Thank you for your generosity!

Knights of Columbus
1 Columbus Plaza
New Haven, CT 06510
203-752-4000

Supreme Council appoints new Deputy Supreme Knight

Patrick E. Kelly, a past state deputy of the District of Columbia, was appointed Deputy Supreme Knight by the K of C Board of Directors Dec. 13.

A Knight for 33 years, Kelly became the Order's Vice President for Public Policy in 2006 and since 2011 has also served as Executive Director of the Saint John Paul II National Shrine in Washington, D.C. He was elected to the Order's Board of Directors in 2013.

Earlier this year, he retired with the rank of Captain from the U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General's Corps Reserve, where he specialized in international and operational law and served as the commanding officer of the international law unit at the United States Naval War College. Previously, Kelly had a long career of public service that included advisory roles to Congress and the Department of Justice. He also served as senior advisor to the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom at the State Department.

He succeeds Logan T. Ludwig, who is retiring at age 70 after serving as Deputy Supreme Knight since 2013.



SK Don R. Murphy, FIC, FICF
Field Agent

Have you insured your most valuable asset?

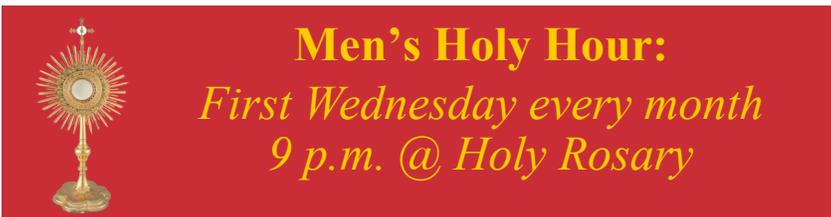
Is your income protected if you become sick or injured and cannot work? Your ability to work and earn an income is your most valuable asset. Yet a disability could prevent you from earning that income. Just one year of a disability could eliminate your savings.

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. I look forward to meeting with you.

Don Murphy
317-532-7330
Don.murphy@kofc.org



Men's Holy Hour:
First Wednesday every month
9 p.m. @ Holy Rosary

Free Throw Competition coming soon

Our Youth Committee will once again be sponsoring a Free Throw Competition at the CYO gym adjacent to Holy Rosary Church. As this went to press, a date had not been set but will most likely be in late January. Please watch the Holy Rosary parish bulletin and your e-mail in-box for information.

Since 1972, councils nationwide have sponsored the K of C International Free Throw Championship for boys and girls between the ages of 9 and 14.

The championship is set up to have the contestants compete within their own gender and age group. All competition starts at the local level. Winners move on to the district, regional, and state or provincial levels. From there, some make it to the international level for championship competition in their group.



COUNCIL CALENDAR

- Sunday **Café Rosario**
JAN 1 CLOSED FOR THE DAY
- Thursday **Business Meeting**
JAN 4 Priori Hall
6:45 p.m. to 8 p.m. (social hour until 9)
- Friday-Saturday **First Friday Adoration**
JAN 6-7 Holy Rosary Church
7 p.m. to 7 a.m.
- Saturday **Santo Rosario Night w/Indy Fuel**
JAN 14 Indiana State Fair Coliseum
7:35 p.m.
- Wednesday **Officers Meeting**
JAN 25 2nd-floor classroom
6:45 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- Sunday **Café Rosario**
JAN 29 CLOSED FOR THE DAY
- Wednesday **Business Meeting**
FEB 1 Priori Hall
6:45 p.m. to 8 p.m. (social hour until 9)
- Friday-Saturday **First Friday Adoration**
FEB 3-4 Holy Rosary Church
7 p.m. to 7 a.m.
- Sunday **Parish Breakfast**
FEB 19 Priori Hall
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Wednesday **Officers Meeting**
FEB 22 Priori Hall
6:45 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- Thursday **Business Meeting**
MAR 2 Priori Hall
6:45 p.m. to 8 p.m. (social hour until 9)
- Friday-Saturday **First Friday Adoration**
MAR 3-4 Holy Rosary Church
7 p.m. to 7 a.m.
- Tuesday **Officers Meeting**
MAR 28 Priori Hall
6:45 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- April 28-30** **Knights of Columbus State Convention**

INDULGENCE WALK 2016



Photos by Brad Williams and Kathy Walden



Top left: Several Carmelite Sisters were among those at this year's Walk. Here they gather around the memorial of the Darmody family, who owned a candy-making company in Downtown Indianapolis.

Above: Jay Stanley (left) tells the life story of missionary Bishop Ambrose Pinger. Fr. Reese (right) and his son, Alisdair led the Walk; David Walden holds the bullhorn.

Top right: Pilgrims wind along the scenic paths of Holy Cross & St. Joseph Cemeteries.

Right: Ned Hummel imparts the story of baseball player, team owner and scout Owen J. Bush, the namesake of the Indianapolis Indians former stadium on 16th Street.



ETERNAL REST GIVE UNTO THEM, O LORD;
AND LET PERPETUAL LIGHT SHINE UPON THEM.



Carl A. Anderson
Supreme Knight

This article first appeared in the January 2017 edition of Columbia magazine.

Roe v. Wade is still unsettling – and unsettled

As a special assistant to President Ronald Reagan in 1986, I was privileged to work on the nomination of Antonin Scalia to be a member of the U.S. Supreme Court. At the time, I could not imagine that 30 years later we would be considering a new nominee to fill the vacancy resulting from his untimely death.

President Reagan had pledged to appoint judges who respect “the sanctity of innocent human life.” Americans knew his language was to be understood in light of his repeated criticism of the Supreme Court’s 1973 abortion decision in *Roe v. Wade*. With the nomination of Justice Scalia, he kept his promise, and Scalia was unanimously confirmed by the Senate.

Whenever there is a Supreme Court vacancy, we are told by supporters of *Roe v. Wade* that the decision is “settled law.” But such supporters face this difficulty: *Roe v. Wade* will never be settled law, because *Roe v. Wade* is founded on the lie that we do not know that the victim of every abortion — an unborn child — is a human being.

There is another difficulty as well: Since *Roe v. Wade*, millions of women have concluded that instead of being helpful, abortion is deeply hurtful.

In America, judicial decisions that are contrary to the dignity of the human person simply cannot be sustained over time. This is the lesson we learned long ago from those tragic court decisions which held that African-Americans were not entitled to the equal protection of our laws.

Roe v. Wade will never be settled constitutional law as long as Americans say, “It is not settled.”

This was precisely the approach President Abraham Lincoln took regarding the Supreme Court’s 1857 decision in the *Dred Scott* case and laws on slavery. It was the right approach then, and it remains the right approach today.

Virtually unrestricted abortion continues to be morally unsettling for a majority of Americans. More than four decades after the Supreme Court handed down its decision, abortion remains one of our most controversial issues.

At the time, Justice Byron White called the court’s decision in *Roe v. Wade* an exercise of “raw judicial power.” His dissenting opinion remains one of the strongest critiques of the case. Appointed by President John F. Kennedy, Justice White continued to be a strong critic of *Roe v. Wade* during the 20 years he remained on the Supreme Court.

He later wrote, “The Judiciary, including this Court, is the most vulnerable and comes nearest to illegitimacy when it deals with judge-made constitutional law having little or no cognizable roots in the language or even the design of the Constitution.”

“Raw judicial power” has not convinced Americans that *Roe v. Wade* is right.

In recent years, our Knights of Columbus-Marist polling has consistently shown that more than 8 in 10 Americans would limit abortion — at most — to the first three months of pregnancy. Almost 6 in 10 would limit it — at most — to cases of rape or incest or to save the life of the mother, and that includes the majority of Americans who describe themselves as “pro-choice.”

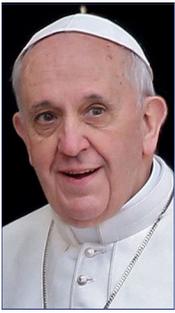
Almost two-thirds of Americans say that our abortion rate is too high. And 6 in 10 Americans continue to believe that abortion is morally wrong.

During my address to last year’s Supreme Convention, I stated that we will never build a culture of life if we continue to elect public officials who defend a legal regime of unrestricted abortion. The same must be said of those who are appointed as our judges.

As we look ahead to how the new president will keep his promise to be pro-life, we remember the words of the current occupant of that office who at the beginning of his administration famously said, “Elections have consequences.”

When it comes to defending the lives of millions of unborn children, we sincerely hope so.

Vivat Jesus!



**Pope Francis
Supreme Pontiff**

The Holy Father delivered this address at his weekly audience in Paul VI Audience Hall on Dec. 7, 2016.

Christian hope never disappoints

Today we shall begin a new series of catecheses, on the theme of *Christian hope*. It is very important, because hope never disappoints. Optimism disappoints, but hope does not! We have such need, in these times which appear dark, in which we sometimes feel disoriented at the evil and violence which surrounds us, at the distress of so many of our brothers and sisters. We need hope! We feel disoriented and even rather discouraged, because we are powerless and it seems this darkness will never end.

We must not let hope abandon us, because God, with his love, walks with us. “I hope, because God is beside me”: we can all say this. Each one of us can say: “I hope, I have hope, because God walks with me.” He walks and He holds my hand. God does not leave us to ourselves. The Lord Jesus has conquered evil and has opened the path of life for us.

Thus, particularly in this Season of Advent, which is the time of waiting, in which we prepare ourselves to welcome once again the comforting mystery of the Incarnation and the light of Christmas, it is important to reflect on hope. Let us allow the Lord to teach us what it means to hope. Therefore let us listen to the words of Sacred Scripture, beginning with *the Prophet Isaiah*, the great Prophet of Advent, the great messenger of hope.

In the second part of his Book, Isaiah addresses the people with his *message of comfort*:

“Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned. ... ‘A voice cries: In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken’” (40:1-2, 3-5).

God the Father comforts by raising up comforters, whom He asks to encourage the people, His children, by proclaiming that the tribulation has ended, affliction has ended, and sins have been forgiven. This is what heals the afflicted and fearful heart. This is why the Prophet asks them to *prepare the way of the Lord*, to be ready to receive his gifts and his salvation.

For the people, comfort begins with the opportunity to walk on God’s path, a new path, made straight and passable, a way prepared *in the desert*, so as to make it possible to cross it and return to the homeland. The Prophet addresses the people who are living the tragedy of the Exile in Babylon, and now instead they hear that they may return to their land, across a path made smooth and wide, without valleys and mountains that make the journey arduous, a level path across the desert. Thus, preparing that path means preparing *a way of salvation and liberation* from every obstacle and hindrance.

The Exile was a fraught moment in the history of Israel, when the people had lost everything. The people had lost their homeland, freedom, dignity, and even trust in God. They felt abandoned and hopeless. Instead, however, there is the Prophet’s appeal which reopens the heart to faith. *The desert* is a place in which it is difficult to live, but precisely there, one can now walk in order to *return not only to the homeland, but return to God, and return to hoping and smiling*. When we are in darkness, in difficulty, we do not smile, and it is precisely hope which teaches us to smile in order to find the path that leads to God. One of the first things that happens to people who distance themselves from God is that they are people who do not smile. Perhaps they can break

***Life is often a desert,
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Just never lose hope,
just continue to
believe, always, in
spite of everything.***

into a loud laugh, one after another, a joke, a chuckle ... but their smile is missing! Only hope brings a smile: it is the hopeful smile in the expectation of finding God.

Life is often a desert, it is difficult to walk in life, but if we trust in God it can become beautiful and wide as a highway. Just never lose hope, just continue to believe, always, in spite of everything. When we are before a child, although we have many problems and many difficulties, a smile comes to us from within, because we see hope in front of us: a child is hope! And in this way we must be able to discern in life the way of hope which leads us to find God, God who became a Child for us. He will make us smile, He will give us everything!

These very words of Isaiah were then used by John the Baptist in his preaching that invites to conversion. This is what he said:

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord” (Mt 3:3).

It is a voice which cries out where it seems that no one can hear it — for who can listen in the desert? — and which cries out in the disorientation caused by a crisis of faith. We cannot deny that the world today is in a crisis of faith. One says: “I believe in God, I am a Christian” — “I belong to this religion” But your life is far from being Christian; it is far removed from God! Religion, faith is but an expression: “Do I believe?” — “Yes!” This means returning to God, converting the heart to God and going on this path to find Him. He is waiting for us. This is John the Baptist’s preaching: prepare. Prepare for the encounter with this Child who will give our smile back to us.

When the Baptist proclaims Jesus’ coming, it is as if the Israelites are still in exile, because they are under the Roman dominion, which renders them foreigners in their own homeland, ruled by powerful occupiers that make decisions about their lives. However, the true history is not the one made by the powerful, but the one *made by God together with His little ones*. The true history — that which will remain in eternity — is the one that God writes *with His little ones*: God with Mary, God with Jesus, God with Joseph, *God with the little ones*. Those little and simple people whom we see around the newborn Jesus: Zechariah and Elizabeth, who were old and barren, Mary, the young virgin maiden betrothed to Joseph, the shepherds, who were scorned and counted for nothing. It is the little ones, made great by their faith, *the little ones who are able to continue to hope*. Hope is the virtue of the *little ones*. The great ones, those who are satisfied, do not know hope; they do not know what it is.

It is the little ones with God, with Jesus, who transform the desert of exile, of desperation and loneliness, of suffering, into a level plain on which to walk in order to encounter the glory of the Lord. We have come to the ‘point’: let us be taught hope. Let us be confident as we await the coming of the Lord, and what the desert may represent in our life — each one knows what desert he or she is walking in — it will become a garden in bloom. Hope does not disappoint!

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***This means
returning to God,
converting the heart
to God and going
on this path
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He is waiting
for us.***

Poll shows Americans still view Columbus in favorable light



Most Americans – including a majority of Californians – have a positive view of Christopher Columbus and support the holiday in his honor, according to a recent Marist poll commissioned by the Knights of Columbus.

By more than two to one, most Americans (62 percent) expressed a favorable opinion of Columbus himself. Only 29 percent view him unfavorably. When asked whether they think it is a good idea to have a holiday named for Columbus, 55 percent of respondents nationwide said yes, only 37 percent said no.

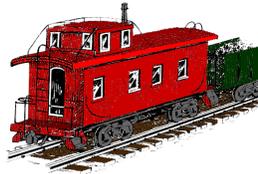
In California, where the City of Los Angeles is considering changes to its Columbus Day observance, 57 percent of respondents view Columbus positively and only 29 percent view him negatively. In addition, by a wide margin, most Californians support the current Columbus Day holiday (53 percent to 38 percent).

The survey of 1,005 adults was conducted Dec. 1-9, 2016, by the Marist Poll and sponsored by the Knights of Columbus. Results are statistically significant within ± 3.1 percentage points. The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.



THE EDITOR'S CABOOSE

David Walden
Editor



A Christmas carol born from the horrors of war

The bullet ripped through the left shoulder of the 19-year-old soldier, traveled across his back and exited under his right shoulder blade. Comrades rushed him to a nearby church, which was serving as a field hospital. They left him in the care of surgeons who, by today's standards, were practicing a primitive brand of medicine.

The soldier proved to be a lucky man. The bullet had nicked his spine. Though the wound brought an end to his military service, it hadn't killed or paralyzed him. In his personal journal, he marked the occasion with a terse entry: "got plugged (*sic*)."

The date was Nov. 27, 1863, and 2nd Lt. Charles Appleton Longfellow of the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry had been felled near New Hope, Va., in the opening moments of the Mine Run Campaign. In the overall scheme of things, it was a trivial moment in insignificant and inconclusive skirmish in the American Civil War. Yet, strangely enough, it would inspire an enduring Christmas carol.

On Dec. 1, 1863, the famous literary critic and poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow received a telegram informing him of his son's serious injury (incorrectly being told it was a facial wound). He immediately left for Washington, D.C., and, exercising his notoriety, procured a pass that allowed him to travel to the front lines. Soon thereafter, he loaded his son into a train and brought him home to Massachusetts.

The elder Longfellow knew a thing or two about suffering. Less than two years earlier, not long after the Civil War had begun, his wife had accidentally set her dress on fire. Awakened from a nap, Longfellow managed to extinguish the flames — but not in time. She died the next morning. His own facial burns were so severe that he was unable to attend her funeral; he then grew a beard to cover the scars.

Years earlier, he and his wife had buried an infant daughter.

Longfellow carried all of these experiences in his heart when he heard church bells ringing on Christmas Day 1863. He was undoubtedly struck by the irony of the moment: the joyous proclamation of the birth of the King of Peace while, not too far away,

Americans killed and maimed one another by the thousands. A victim of that warfare lay convalescing under his own roof.

Before the day was done, Longfellow penned his classic poem, "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day."

These days, more people know it not as the work of one of America's literary giants, but as the seasonal crooning of Bing Crosby, Burl Ives, Frank Sinatra and many other popular performers. It's a favorite tune of many choirs, carolers and croakers like me.

In most of its renditions, however, the carol falls short of the poem. The singers jump from hearing the bells toll "peace on earth, good-will to men" straight to "in despair I bowed my head." No explanation is given as to why the narrator is overwhelmed.

Longfellow's work filled in the gap:

*Then from each black, accursed mouth
The cannon thundered in the South
And with the sound
The carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!
It was as if an earthquake rent
The hearthstones of a continent
And made forlorn
The households born
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!*

Longfellow might laugh at those who wring their hands over how divided our country is today. The mini-riots, street protests, whining and general lamentations following our recent elections pale in comparison to what he and our forefathers experienced in the 1860s. Yet even those dark, hellish days failed to diminish the message of Hope we know as Christmas:

*Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead nor doth He sleep;
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men!"*

Amen.

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We wish all a Merry Christmas & Blessed New Year



Francesco di Giorgio Martini, Nativity (detail), 1475, Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena