



The Mace

St. Francis of Assisi Council 4981
Knights of Columbus
Cupertino • San Jose • Saratoga, CA

Issue 672 • January 2025
District 34 • Division 4
www.kofc4981.net

Upcoming Events

Council Bus. Mtg. Tues, Jan 7, 7:00 p.m.
Church of the Ascension, Worner Hall
Council Bus. Mtg. Tues, Feb 4, 7:00 p.m.
St. Joseph of Cupertino

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Grand Knight's Message

Brother Knights,

Happy New Year, and welcome to January! Frosty mornings and rainy days greet us now, yet days grow even longer, a few minutes each day. The month begins in the Christmas season until the Epiphany, then Ordinary Time for the remainder of the month. Lunar New Year starts on 29 January, the year of the Wood Snake.

Our January 7th council business meeting will be at Ascension Parish in Worner Hall. An earlier start was requested, so check the Mace and email notices for the 7:00 p.m. meeting time. At this meeting, let's discuss recruitment and retention along with the regular council and corporation business reports.

Important tasks remaining ahead include developing guidelines and operating procedures for the corporation once it becomes a 501c(3) charitable organization.

A few officer positions are open: warden, guards, and lector. Maybe you prefer another position, and if so, consider that officer elections for next year are coming soon.

Let us all meet together and enjoy each other's company. Perhaps you will win the attendance raffle. Come to the meeting and test your luck. The odds of winning are still high.

Peace and Faith,
Ed Johnson

Chaplain's Message

Pray for Peace

The World Day of Peace on January 1 is an annual observation by the Catholic Church, started in 1968 by Pope Paul VI. The idea was being inspired by the encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth) of Pope John XXIII, his predecessor. In 1981, the United Nations also established the International Day of Peace to commit to peace above all differences and to contribute to building a culture of peace.

According to data by The Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), the year 2023 saw the highest number of state-based conflicts since 1946. A record number of 59 conflicts involving 34 countries were recorded. The data also show that while the number of battle deaths fell last year, overall, the past three years saw more conflict-related deaths than any time in the last three decades. The dramatic

increase in battle deaths was driven by three conflicts: civil war in Ethiopia's Tigray region, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and the bombing of Gaza. Overall, there were 122,000 battle deaths, with over 71,000 people killed in Ukraine and some 23,000 killed in Gaza in less than three months of 2023 (by December 10, 2024, more than 44,000 killed in Gaza).

The theme chosen by Pope Francis for World Day of Peace 2025 is *Forgive us our trespasses: grant us your peace*. Let us continue to pray and work for peace every day.

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace: where there is hatred, let me sow love.

Fr. Hao

Caring for the Called

The Order marks \$100 million in RSVP aid to men and women pursuing a priestly or religious vocation

By John Burger 12/1/2024



Father Jake Mullin, associate pastor of St. Theresa Parish in Edmonton, Alberta, sits in his church with leaders of Holy Trinity Council 17034 in nearby Spruce Grove: (left to right) Past Grand Knight Glenn O'Neill, Grand Knight Brad Medernach and Past Grand Knight Ben Beil. Council 17034 supported Father Mullin through the Refund Support Vocations Program during his time in seminary. (Photo by Curtis Trent)

Zachary Samples was a third-year seminarian for the Diocese of Springfield, Illinois, in 2019 when his mother died suddenly in a traffic collision. In the time of intense grief that followed, the care packages he received every month in the mail from Our Lady of the Holy Spirit Council 11582 carried new weight. Council 11582 in Mount Zion, Illinois, had been supporting Samples through the Order's Refund Support Vocations Program for several years, giving him \$750 annually and regularly mailing him treats, small gifts and cards.

"The monthly care packages they sent were always appreciated, but to feel the love of my brother Knights during that season of my life was especially important," said Father

Samples. "I would get those packages and smile during a time period when it was pretty difficult to smile."

Knights of Columbus councils have been supporting seminarians like Samples — as well as men and women discerning religious life — through the Refund Support Vocations Program since 1981. Ordained in 2022, Father Samples can attest that the program involves more than just financial aid. Spiritual and moral support are essential to the program and take different forms — from praying for beneficiaries before council meetings to sending them letters or cards expressing encouragement.

As for financial support, the program offers councils and assemblies in the U.S. and Canada a \$100 refund for every \$500 they donate directly to a seminarian or religious postulant or novice, up to a limit of \$2,000 per individual. Recipients can use the grants for books, transportation or personal needs. Over the years, these RSVP donations have added up. As of October, Knights have contributed over \$100 million to more than 125,000 men and women pursuing their vocations to the priesthood or religious life.

Currently, more than 3,700 individuals are receiving financial assistance from 2,600 K of C units through the program. Below are four examples of how councils in the U.S. and Canada are making a difference in the lives of the seminarians and postulants, and through them, in the life of the Church itself.

A Beacon of Joy

In late 2013, Kenneth Hulewicz, then chancellor of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen Council 7444 in Milford, Michigan, learned through his wife, Millie, about a vibrant

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Council Officers

Grand Knight

Ed Johnson
408-296-8146

Chaplain

Fr. Hao Dinh
408-725-3939

Deputy Grand Knight

Dick Sherman
408-444-3725

Chancellor

Steven Schauer
408-931-4756

Financial Secretary

Ron Schoengold
408-309-9830

Treasurer

John Steffens
408-985-9079

Recorder

Joe Kenney
408-253-7016

Warden

Open

Advocate

John Ruzzo
408-417-9089

Inside Guard

Open

Outside Guard

Open

Trustees

1 yr — Patrick Kwok
408-896-1462

2 yr — John Pozniak
408-230-6006

3 yr — Mark Wright
408-203-0942

Lecturer

Open

Insurance Field Agent

Joe Ayroso, Insurance Agent
510-403-1499

District Deputy

Lawrence DeSilva
650-400-3333

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religious community, the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist, in nearby Ann Arbor.



Sister Maria Lourdes smiles during her first profession as a member of the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist at Christ the King Church in Ann Arbor, Mich., in 2021. (Photo courtesy of the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist)

You know, our council should be involved with religious support of some kind," Hulewicz recalled telling a brother Knight, Paul Castiglione. "That should be one of our core values."

In discussion and a vote at a subsequent meeting, the council wholeheartedly agreed. Since then, Council 7444 has raised some \$70,000 in RSVP support through concerts, fish fries and other events for more than 20 Dominican Sisters of Mary and about a dozen seminarians.

Grand Knight Steven Battle said the council confers with the congregation's leadership, who identify specific sisters who could use the support. Each recipient generally receives \$500.

One beneficiary is Sister Maria Lourdes, who in 2021 took her name from the renowned shrine in France where she had received confirmation of a call to religious

life. As a student at St. Mary's High School in her native Phoenix, she was inspired to follow the example of some of her teachers, who were Dominicans from Ann Arbor.

"It was my first exposure to religious life and young religious who were on fire with their faith," said Sister Maria Lourdes. "They loved the Lord enough to give their whole life to Him and in service of the Church. They have something that the world doesn't have — they've got this joy. I was really struck by that."

She entered the order in the fall of 2020 and now, as part of her formation, is studying elementary education at Franciscan University of Steubenville in Ohio.

For the last three years, Sister Maria Lourdes has received grants from the council totaling \$1,500, which has helped with education as well as medical expenses.

"I had some exposure to the Knights when I lived in Phoenix, and I just was always struck by their care and service for the local Church and community," she said, adding that the RSVP support demonstrates her benefactors' "heart for serving the Church."

The feeling is certainly mutual.

"We think it's essential to support these sisters, and it's really become a great relationship over the years," said Battle. "At least once during our Lenten fish fry season, we invite some of them to come over and have dinner with us. They will sing songs, and people from the parish want to come and see them and hear their stories."

Hulewicz couldn't agree more: "To have such a joyful group share an evening with us is really rewarding. They're a beacon to all the parishioners

(Continued on page 4)

Prayer Requests



The following Brother Knights, their families, and friends are remembered in the monthly prayer held each month before the Council's Business Meeting. If any member wishes to submit a name or remove a name from the list, please telephone or email Ron Schoengold, FS, at 408- 309-9830, ron@egoldsolutions.com

Brother Art Salazar
Brother Ron Miller's wife, Shirley
Brother Jim Mathews
Brother Mark Wright's sister Anne
Brother Rodger O'Brien
Brother Harry Tibbetts
Brother Peter Pozniak's wife, Patricia
Brother Ron Schoengold's wife, Arline

Deceased

Brother William Callen (08/29/2022)
Brother Ernest Camacho (01/04/2016)
Brother Philip Dean (12/26/2007)
Brother Joseph Denham Jr. (11/19/2014)
Brother Joseph Fitzsimmons (03/28/2017)
Brother Francis Hopkins (12/06/2018)
Brother Eugene Levitre (05/02/2024)
Brother Robert Lewis (08/08/2016)
Brother Robert MacKinnon (05/05/2024)
Brother John Marvin (05/06/2020)
Brother Larry Sandstrom (03/28/2021)
Brother Edward Shiras (04/02/2021)
Brother Philip Young (03/01/2016)
Brother Eli Thomas (03/02/2022)
Brother Freddie Schwalbach (03/30/2022)
Brother Robert Rolufs, PGK (06/26/2022)
Brother Mark Wright's mother-in-law Yingio Leung (06/29/2022)
Brother William Callen (08/29/2022)
Brother Jim Campbell's father Bob Anselmo (12/2/2022)
Brother Ted Wyess' wife Ann (01/11/2023)
Brother Dominic Guido's wife Roca (03/11/2023)
Brother Ted Wyess (03/19/2023)
Brother John Steffens sister-in-law Mary Steffens (11/30/2023)
Brother James Campbell (12/13/2023)
Brother Joseph Kenney's wife Sheila (02/18/2024)
Brother Tony Seidl's wife Helen Rose (08/21/2024)
Brother John Lehane, PGK (09/14/2024)
Brother Rodger O'Brien (12/24/2024)

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Our Future Priests

For Father Daniel Sessions, the financial support he received from brother Knights in Prince of Peace Council 11537 in Hoover, Alabama, was important. But he also received something that he cannot quantify.



Then-seminarian Daniel Sessions stands with members of Prince of Peace Council 11537 and parishioners during a 2021 visit to Prince of Peace Catholic Church and School in Hoover, Ala. Front row, left to right: Assistant Principal Bridget Carter; Deacon Rick DiGiorgio; Daniel Sessions; then-Grand Knight Don DeCesare. Back row: Principal Connie Angstadt; Father José Luis Guevara, associate pastor; and Jerry Gordon. (Photo courtesy of Don DeCesare)

Prince of Peace began participating in RSVP just four years ago, when Sessions was a student at the North American College in Rome, preparing for the priesthood for the Diocese of Birmingham. The council asked him if he might be willing to speak via Zoom with students in the parish school about his life as a seminarian.

“Having that connection to home and a personal connection with the students was nice,” said Father Sessions, who was ordained in 2023 and serves at Holy Spirit Parish in Huntsville. “It was a wonderful chance to share my story and the wonderful work that God has done

in my life, the many blessings he has so generously bestowed on me.”

Past Grand Knight Don DeCesare recalled how enthusiastic the sixth, seventh and eighth graders were to speak with Sessions on each call.

“The students absolutely loved it,” he affirmed. “They asked him questions, and he would walk around, showing them pictures and his surroundings in Rome.”

For his part, Father Sessions said that he appreciated the Knights’ approach and priorities when they reached out to him about RSVP.

“The importance to them was connecting seminarians with school children,” he said. “The money aspect was almost secondary.”

Through its annual Pennies from Heaven campaign, initiated by DeCesare, the council has raised a whopping \$130,000 for seminarians over the past four years, with the students at Prince of Peace School raising more than \$3,500 every year. Each of the Diocese of Birmingham’s 18 seminarians has received \$3,000 to help with their expenses, and the refunds from the Supreme Council are given to the seminarians too.

“Our seminarians are our future priests,” said DeCesare, who now serves as Alabama’s state vocations chairman. “Anything that we can do to help them is beneficial for our future.”

Monthly Attendance Raffle

Hugh Hoganson won the December raffle of \$10 but was not present to claim the prize. The January 2025 raffle is worth \$20. The winner must be present at the meeting to win!



Terrence Maguire

Alvin Mellin

Peter Dekruif

Mark Walljasper

Revalan Arnone

Joseph Kenney

Edgar Manalo

Albert Pina

Directors & Chairmen

Program Director

Ron Schoengold

Church Director

John Pozniak

Vocations	John Steffens
McGivney Shrine	Ron Schoengold
Bingo	open
Parish Round Tables	
Queen of Apostles	open
Sacred Heart in Saratoga	open
St. Joseph of Cupertino	Joe Kenney
Church of the Ascension	Ron Schoengold

Community Director

Michael Abdallah

Culture of Life	Joe Kenney
Charities	Patrick Kwok
Divine Mercy	
& Rosary Visitation	John Steffens
Food for Families	Dick Sherman
People with	
Intellectual Disabilities	open
Mass of Reparation	open
Community Projects	Round Table Members
Breakfast Supreme	Ron Schoengold

Council Director

Open

Fraternal Affairs	Ron Schoengold
First Degree Team	John Pozniak
Public Relations	Ron Schoengold
Website	Ron Schoengold
Communications	Ron Schoengold
Past Grand Knights Dinner	open
Special Appreciation Night	Patrick Kwok
McGivney Pilgrimage	John Pozniak

Family Director

Ed Johnson

Leisure Nights	open
Memorial Mass	open
Ladies Night	John Steffens
Ice Cream Social	Grand Knight Elect
Christmas Dinner	Ron Schoengold
Annual Picnic	open

Youth Director

Open

Scholarship Program	Patrick Kwok
Altar Servers Appreciation	Patrick Kwok
Free Throw Contest	Ed Johnson
Essay Contest	Ed Johnson

Membership & Retention

Mark Wright*

John Pozniak



Treasurer's Report

Balances as of 12/31/2024

Charity Checking	\$ 259.20
Checking	7,373.84
Council Savings	<u>20,818.45</u>
	<u>\$ 28,451.49</u>

Income for December 2024

Interest on Capital One Savings	\$ 1.76
Vocations	400.00
	<u>\$ 401.76</u>

Expenses for December 2024

Mace Printing	\$ 137.34
Membership Expenses	32.32
Miscellaneous Expenses	<u>150.00</u>
	<u>\$ 319.66</u>



Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
 Where there is hatred, let me sow love.
 Where there is injury, pardon.
 Where there is discord, unity.
 Where there is doubt, faith.
 Where there is error, truth.
 Where there is despair, hope.
 Where there is darkness, light.
 Where there is sadness, joy.

Oh Divine Master,
 grant that I may not so much seek
 to be consoled, as to console;
 to be understood, as to understand;
 to be loved, as to love.
 For it is in giving that we receive,
 it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
 it is in dying that we are born
 to Eternal Life.

January 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Dec 29	30	31	Jan 1, 25 New Year's Day	2	3	4
5	6	7 7:00pm Council Business Meeting (Meeting at Church of the Ascension, Wormer Hall Lounge)	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	Feb 1

February 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Jan 26	27	28	29	30	31	Feb 1
2	3	4 7:00pm Council Business Meeting (Meeting at St. Joseph of Cupertino)	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	Mar 1

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