



The Mace

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

Issue 686 • March 2026
District 34 • Division 4
www.kofc4981.net

Upcoming Events

Council Bus. Mtg. March 3, 7:00 p.m.
Queen of Apostles
Council Bus. Mtg. April 7, 7:00 p.m.
Sacred Heart Church

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Grand Knight's Message

Brother Knights,

Here we are in March, the stormy month. While we are observing Lent with reflection, prayer, and almsgiving, daylight saving time and the spring equinox return. May these longer days give you more time to appreciate nature and life. The month closes with Holy Week, and then it will soon be Easter. Our March 3rd business meeting will be at Queen of Apostles Parish in the meeting room near the gym. We will begin by reciting the rosary at 7 pm. Inside and Outside Guard positions are still available.

The meeting will also be available on Zoom. Look for the meeting link by email. Read the Mace about upcoming events

and activities. Look for our Lecturers monthly article. Let us prepare for the meeting with ideas and recommendations. We will combine our powers for the benefit of the council. Join your brothers in person or virtually on Zoom. The weather is expected to be clear and lit by the full moon. The full moon also brings the lunar new year celebrations to a close. Perhaps there will be extra good luck around for the attendance raffle. Could you be the winner? Come to the meeting and find out. Support your council! See you at the meeting.

Peace and Hope,
Ed Johnson, Grand Knight

Chaplain's Message

Waiting in Anticipation

We live in a world that does not like to wait. Our desires must be fulfilled instantly or as quickly as possible. In agriculture, farmers plant seeds and patiently wait for their growth, development, and eventual fruit-bearing. In a world driven by ever-accelerating technology, we seek immediate results. A few minutes at traffic lights or even a few seconds online feels like an eternity.

In the Scriptures, the number 40 symbolizes an extensive period, a time of significant testing, trial, or waiting. It symbolizes a full generation or an extended time necessary for fulfillment or transformation: Rain fell for 40 days and nights during the Great Flood, the Hebrews wandered for 40 years in the desert, Elijah traveled for 40 days to Mount Horeb, Jesus fasted in the wilderness for 40 days and nights, and Jesus appeared to his disciples for 40 days

after his resurrection, among other instances.

The holy season of Lent signifies a journey with the Lord, who spent significant time in solitude, silence, and communion with the Father while fasting and living simply in the wilderness.

Let us embrace this holy Lent to slow down, to recognize what is truly important in life: our relationships with each other and with God. Let us be quiet and still to listen to the Lord, who is always near us, in a world filled with noise and distractions. Let us be open to our surroundings, discovering the blessings of each day, the gifts of life, family, faith, and community, even amidst suffering and chaos. Let us learn to wait patiently for the Lord, whose Spirit continues to work in our lives, bringing about transformation when we least expect it.

Fr. Hao

Be More Than Mild

Brothers, as Lent begins, we are called to give up something in our lives to better appreciate the sacrifice Jesus made for us on Easter. This period is extremely difficult and can bring us to the brink of temptation, but it becomes important that we remember the true sacrifice of Christ during this time. Additionally, the period of Lent can be a benefit as we can learn to place Christ back at the center of our lives. When we begin to think about this premise more, it can make Lent a little bit easier to get through; furthermore, it may make it more enjoyable, as there are many worldly distractions that we can get rid of in this time. Secondly, if we think back to last weeks message, we need to be more than mild because if we are not

growing, we are declining in our faith. In essence, though Lent may be hard for us, it should be taken in stride, knowing that even small hardships now can be used to foster healthy growth in our faith. Furthermore, our sacrifices can be used in our everyday faith, not just during Lent, as we develop fundamental skills that can help us become better in both our physical and spiritual lives. Brothers, as we journey through Lent together, take a moment to think about what we have given up to advance our faith, and begin to think about how it will ultimately help us become better Christians.

Joseph Wescoat



Treasurer's Report

Balances as of 2/28/2026	
Charity Checking	\$ 259.20
Checking	\$ 2,965.39
Council Savings	\$15,840.99
TOTAL	\$19,065.58
Income	
Interest Capital One Savings	\$ 1.22
TOTAL	\$1.22
Expenses	
MACE Printing	\$ 106.84
Computer & Web Expense	\$ 43.98
TOTAL	\$ 150.82

Council Officers

Grand Knight

Ed Johnson
408-296-8146

Chaplain

Fr. Hao Dinh
408-725-3939

Deputy Grand Knight

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408-444-3725

Chancellor

Donald Goers
630-329-9765

Financial Secretary

Ron Schoengold
408-309-9830

Treasurer

John Steffens
408-985-9079

Recorder

Mark Wright
408-203-0942

Warden

Thomas Gaynor
408-839-3473

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 — *Joseph Kenney*

408-823-4162

Lecturer

Joseph Wescoat — 408 724 0797

Insurance Field Agent

Fernando Motas, Insurance Agent

510-404-8080

District Deputy

Toby Laufer

408-455-7321

A Future Not Forgotten

Knights in Ukraine offer scholarships to young people who have lost a parent — just as Father McGivney once did.

By Kateryna Kolodii



Ukraine State Deputy Mykola Mostovyak and scholarship recipient Kateryna Poplavska make the sign of the cross during the Divine Liturgy that accompanied the distribution of Father Michael McGivney Scholarships in the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ in Kyiv, Sept. 7, 2025. (Castletown Media)

Amid the turmoil of war in Ukraine, many children and young adults who have lost a parent are struggling to pursue an education — a reality that prompted the Knights of Columbus to introduce a new scholarship fund named for the Order’s founder, Blessed Michael McGivney.

Since Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, one in five Ukrainian children report having lost a close relative or friend. More than 13,000 have been left without parental care, and nearly half have experienced displacement, either within the country or abroad.

In response to this crisis, Ukraine State Council established the this year to help young people who have lost a parent in the war pursue an education at the high school or university level. To date, 15 students from parishes served by 13 councils across Ukraine have each received \$1,000 scholarships. The councils identified and recommended candidates, organized award ceremonies with liturgical celebrations, and remain committed to ongoing prayer and spiritual support — all to ensure that the loss of a parent does not also mean the loss of a future.

Father McGivney’s legacy of responding to personal loss with communal support lies at the very heart of the scholarship program, which is sustained through .

Father McGivney himself lost his father as a young man in 1873 — a tragedy that forced him to put his seminary studies on hold in order to provide for his mother and younger siblings. With the Church’s support, he was eventually able to resume his formation. The experience helped shape to his life’s mission.

“Going through such trials strengthened his faith and his vocation,” explained Father Vitalii Martysiuk, associate state chaplain of Ukraine, reflecting on Father McGivney’s life. “He understood that many people go through similar experiences, and I believe this was exactly what inspired him.”

For Knights in Ukraine, it’s an investment in the next generation. “We want them to have the opportunity to receive a quality education rather than remain victims of circumstance,” said Ukraine State Deputy Mykola Mostovyak, who joined representatives from local councils at the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ in Kyiv on Sept. 7 to distribute the McGivney scholarships. Similar award ceremonies took place around the country to distribute the scholarships, each beginning with a celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

Kateryna Poplavska, an 18-year-old theater management student at the Kyiv National University of Theater, Cinema and Television, received a \$1,000 McGivney scholarship at the Sept. 7 ceremony in Kyiv. Her mother, a medical doctor, was killed during a missile strike on Kyiv in 2024.

“I was at my dance class when they told me that a missile hit my mom’s practice,” Poplavska recalled.

Faced with the tragic loss of her mother, Poplavska — a stage actress who has performed professionally — said the McGivney scholarship will help advance her career. She recently enrolled in a theater program that will round out her acting experience with vocal and dance training.

“If it weren’t for the scholarship, I would not have been able to afford the classes,” Poplavska said. She expressed gratitude not only for her own opportunity, but also on behalf of her

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fellow scholarship recipients. “It’s heartwarming to know there are people out there who care,” she said.

Another scholarship recipient is 16-year-old Rostyslav Berezovskyi, an altar server who enjoys swimming and chess. He has also participated in Knights of Columbus activities, volunteering to distribute school supply packages to children.

His father, who was deployed with Ukraine’s armed forces in August 2022, died in combat in December 2024.

“Thanks to this scholarship from the Knights of Columbus, I was able to take an English course to improve my language skills,” said Berezovskyi. “I want to learn the language better so that I can enter a university — maybe even abroad.”

“It’s a huge gift from people who had never met me before,” he added.

Berezovskyi’s mother, Zhanna Berezovska, noted that the Knights’ assistance goes beyond the monetary.

“I am very grateful to the Knights for their support — for being present in our lives and offering encouragement, both to me and to my son,” she said. “I feel that I’m not completely alone: There are men I can call if I need help.”

Berezovska’s experience reflects the Knights’ ethos of service. “It’s one thing to give a child material support,” said Father Martsyniuk, “and another thing entirely to spend time with these children. Personal attention is what helps them heal from the wound of loss.”



Seventeen-year-old Valeriia Skakovska from Zviahel lost her father in 2023, when he was killed defending his country in . Now, together with her mother and older sister, she is rebuilding her life and pursuing her education.

Creative by nature, Valeriia enjoys drawing, painting and knitting. This fall, however, she enrolled at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, Poland, to study something completely different — international law.

The McGivney scholarship she received will allow her to purchase a computer, which is essential for her studies.

What drives Valeriia to excel academically is simple — and deeply human: “I want my family to heal, become even stronger and be happy in the future,” she said.

Support for education is central to the Order’s mission, explained Father Martsyniuk. “Father McGivney’s own trials, in part, led him to found the Knights of Columbus,” he said. “Today, we have the opportunity to help others.”

“If a family has the opportunity to further a child’s education, the child can grow and move forward — not just to stay at home and grieve their loss.”

It is with this goal in mind that Ukrainian Knights are finding inspiration in Blessed Michael McGivney’s original vision.

“Orphans in Ukraine should not have to give up their education due to lack of funds,” said Mostovyak. “They’re given a chance because there are brothers ready to support their path.”

To learn more about the Order’s work in Ukraine and to support those efforts, visit [.kofc.org/ukraine](https://kofc.org/ukraine).



Blake Schindler

John Steffens

Paul De Benedetti

Peter Pozniak

David Adams

Fr. Hao Dinh

John Ruzzo

Monthly Attendance Raffle

Fr. Hao Dinh won the February \$90 raffle but was not present to receive the prize. The March 2026 raffle is worth **\$100**. ***The winner must be present at the meeting to win!***

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

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

Prayer Requests

The following Brother Knights, their families, and friends are remembered in the monthly Rosary prayer held each month before the Councils 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



Prayers

- Brother Art Salazar
- Brother Ron Miller's wife, Shirley
- Brother Jim Mathews
- Brother Mark Wright's sister Anne
- Brother Harry Tibbetts
- Brother Peter Pozniak's wife, Patricia
- Brother Peter Pozniak
- Brother Ron Schoengold's wife, Arline
- Brother Tom Lewis
- Brother Fernando Motas' mother, Concepcion

Deceased

- 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 John Steffen's mother-in-law Emma Firpo (11/8/2024)
- Brother Rodger OBrien (12/24/2024)
- Brother Raymond Mark Gallant (04/10/2025)
- Brother Albert Pina (11/26/2025)

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.

March 2026

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

April 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Mar 29	30	31	Apr 1	2 Holy Thursday	3 Good Friday	4
5 Easter Sunday	6	7 7:00pm Council Business Meeting (Meeting at Sacred Heart Church)	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	May 1	2

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KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS®

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