



Buckeye Bulletin

Volume 1 - Issue 7

January - 2026

State Chaplain - Fr. John Paul Walker, OP

State Deputy - Mike Felerski

State Advocate - Tony Offenberger

State Secretary - Jim Maslach

State Warden - M. Stewart Vetter

State Treasurer - Chris Sarka

Immediate Past State Deputy - Jeff Kiliany

From Our State Deputy

Happy new year, brothers! Or as Knights of Columbus we say *Happy Fraternal Mid-Year*. In the first six months of our fraternal year which started on July 1 we have made tremendous progress not only in growing the Order here in Ohio but also in the charitable works we have accomplished. I want to thank all of the councils who participated in this year's Coats for Kids program, especially those who took advantage of and helped with the distribution of the inaugural year of the buy one case - get one free offer. You made a tremendous difference in your communities. We also had an successful Measure-Up campaign which wrapped up in November, plus let's not forget the great support state-wide for this year's Matching Funds program and the first turn in for Support Our Seminarians. Ohio Councils and Assemblies were *Called* and you stepped into the breach to once again make a positive impact in your dioceses.



Michael J. Felerski
State Deputy
mfelerski@icloud.com



Going forward we are excited to implement the *new* Church Drive process in our parishes during the months of January through March which is when we have traditionally been a successful time for bringing new members into our councils. Be sure to reach out to your council's field agent who will help you coordinate and supply materials for the effort. If you don't know who your field agent is just reach out to one of our general agents Jason Staas or John Spencer.

Our flagship charitable effort, the Super Cash Bonanza, is launching in February with the 2026 Road Show ticket distribution. Make sure to get

your Super Cash "A-Team" together for another great season of fundraising for your charities. Road Show details can be found in this issue of the **Buckeye Bulletin** (page 3).

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make
A DIFFERENCE

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Finally, if you have not implemented Cor in your parish the start of a new calendar year is a great time to begin especially with Lent not far off. It is so easy to implement and you can start with something simple. Reach out to your Diocesan Cor Coordinator (DCC) and your District Deputy (DD) for support they can explain the initiative and provide all kinds of ideas to help you get started. The number of young people age 18-25 who are hungry to learn about our faith has exploded within the last year. Cor is a great way to reach out to those young men and invite them to learn and experience the faith with us.

ORA PRO NOBIS



SANCTA
DEI GENITRIX

Recalling the words of the late Cardinal James Gibbons, archbishop of Baltimore: “The Knights of Columbus do things.” He was commenting on our efforts in 1917 to provide assistance and chaplains to Catholic soldiers as America entered the First World War. Today we continue our charitable efforts helping those in need and sharing the faith together across this great jurisdiction of Ohio just as Father McGivney envisioned.

Blessed Michael McGivney, ora pro nobis.

Michael J. Felerski - State Deputy



From Your State Warden

I wish you all a blessed and merry Christmas and a happy and active new year. Measure Up kick off is around the corner. If you have not ordered your measure up rulers from your district deputy, TODAY is the day!! They need to know by Jan 2. We can still accommodate your order, but it's easiest if they can pick them up at the mid-year district deputy meeting.

As the Sacred Heart icon continues to tour the state, please remember to fill out the accompanying logbook. If you did the prayer service, write it down. If it was displayed at mass, write it down. We send those into Supreme, and they use those activity logs to decide how many icons Ohio gets. Without that activity log filled out, Supreme doesn't know if it was used or sitting in someone's garage.



Stew Vetter
State Warden
betterwithvet-ter@hotmail.com



The Silver Rose is touring Ohio June 14 – July 11. Your district

deputy will have more information soon. The Silver Rose program demonstrates the unity between Knights of Columbus in Canada, the United States and Mexico, through a series of prayer services promoting the dignity of all human life and honoring Our Lady.

A reminder to start selecting your “Of The Year” nominees and assembling paperwork and testimonials. Let's work together to make this year's selection especially hard for our worthy program directors.

M. Stewart Vetter - State Warden



2026 SUPER CASH BONANZA



Dear Brother Knights,

I pray you and your family had a very Merry Christmas and safe New Year celebration! We are now excited to announce the 2026 Super Ca\$h Bonanza Charity Campaign! This year, we once again aim to raise \$1,000,000 for local councils and the Ohio Charity Foundation through effective fundraising.

Boost results **by partnering with non-profits, parish ministries, and community groups**. Invite them to help sell tickets and share proceeds to support their missions—this strategy improves both your sales and community impact!

Tentative Tour Schedule:

Diocese	Location	Date	Time
Steubenville	Council 478 - 312 Franklin St. Marietta, OH 45750	2/5/2026	7:00 PM
Steubenville	Council 4361 - 218 Legion Dr. Mingo Junction, OH 43938	2/6/2026	7:00 PM
Youngstown	Council 15458 - 3430 Saint Michael Blvd NW, Canton, OH 44718	2/7/2026	10:00 AM
Cleveland	Council 16373 - 2345 Bassett Rd Westlake, OH 44145	2/7/2026	2:00 PM
Toledo	Council 678 49 East Perry Street Tiffin, OH 44883	2/13/2026	7:00 PM
Toledo	Council 1039 111 Elliot Rd Defiance, OH 4351	2/14/2026	10:00 AM
Cincinnati	Council 13874 - St Paul 1000 Wenger Rd. Englewood, OH 45322	2/14/2026	3:00 PM
Cincinnati	Council 3382 - 11144 Spinner Ave Cincinnati, OH 45241	2/14/2026	7:00 PM
Columbus	Council 5776 - Klinger Center 313 N State St Westerville, OH 43082	2/15/2026	3:00 PM

***Note: remote locations for webcast are TBD for Youngstown and Cleveland. More details will be sent via email once confirmed.**

Fraternally,

Christopher Sarka
2026 SBC Chairman, State Treasurer
Ohio State Council
Knights of Columbus

The image shows a promotional graphic for the 2026 Charity Campaign SUPER CASH BONANZA. On the left is a ticket stub with fields for FULL NAME, ADDRESS, CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE, PHONE, SELLER, and COUNCIL. The main graphic features a list of prizes: 1st Prize \$49,680 (Payable \$14/Month for 10 Years), 2nd Prize \$18,780 (Payable \$13/Month for 5 Years), 3rd Prize \$12,720 (Payable \$715/Month for 5 Years), 4th Prize \$4,990, 5th Prize \$1,990, 6th to 9th Prizes \$1,500, 10th to 13th Prizes \$1,200, 14th to 17th Prizes \$1,000, 18th to 21st Prizes \$750, and 22nd to 25th Prizes \$500. It also includes the Ohio State Council Knights of Columbus & Ohio Charity Foundation, Inc. logo, the drawing date of May 23, 2026, at the Hilton-Columbus at Eaton, Columbus, OH, and contact information for Christopher Sarka, State Treasurer, 7239 Winterbark Ave, New Albany, OH 43054. A vertical banner on the right states 'OVER \$108,000 In Cash Prizes'. The bottom right corner has a red box with 'XX XX XX' and a donation amount of \$5.00.

Let's Step Up and Support Our Seminarians

My Brother Knights

The shortage of priests available to our parishes has been a problem in every diocese in the State of Ohio for a number of years now. Over the past decade, every diocese has gone through reductions in the number of Sunday Masses, parish mergers, and even parish closures. The number of new vocations to the priesthood has not kept up with the retirements and deaths of our existing parish priests.

Even though this is not necessarily a Knights problem, but a Catholic Church problem, it is still very important that the Knights of Columbus do all that we can to continue to "Build up our Church". One of the ways that we can continue to do this is through our continued support of vocations in each of our dioceses. Our Support Our Seminarians (SOS) program through the Ohio State Council gives your council the opportunity to aid your own Diocese Vocations Department.

Last Fraternal year, 372 councils from the State of Ohio, contributed a total of \$168,581.52 to the 6 vocations departments across the state. If your council was 1 these councils that participated in the SOS Program and contributed to the amount that was presented to your Diocesan Vocations Director, thank you very much. I thank you for all that your council does in the name of the Knights of Columbus to grow Vocations in your diocese, and I thank you for your council's 2024-25 SOS contribution. I am asking that your council not only plan to commit to raising at least this same amount in the 2025-26 Fraternal year, but also to consider increasing this amount by another 10 to 20 % or more, and help us to raise at least \$200,000 for vocations in the State of Ohio. If all 6 dioceses in the state can increase their SOS contribution by 15%, we can raise this \$200,000 for vocations goal in the State of Ohio! Every Knights of Columbus Council in the State of Ohio should be participating in SOS and making some contribution. But no matter what your council gives, it is contributing to our Vocations efforts and helping the Knights to continue to Build Up Our Church.

Please keep in mind that the Final SOS turn-in date is March 15, 2026. We only have less than 4 months to complete our Vocations Support activities and submit our council contributions to reach our \$200,000 goal. Your council's Vocations Support activities should not only be designed to raise funds for your SOS contribution, but to also raise awareness of, and promote vocations to, the priesthood, diaconate, and consecrated life. Ask the members of your council to pray for those men and women in formation, as well as for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life

Like the Matching Funds program, every dollar collected by your council goes right back to your diocese. Turn-in forms can be downloaded from the State Website, www.kofcohio.org. The Support Our Seminarians info can be found in the Drop-Down list by selecting the "Programs" tab at the top of the page. All checks along with a council turn-in form should be mailed to:

Jeff Kilianny, Imm. Past State Deputy
Ohio State Council SOS Chairman
559 Walnut St.
Leetonia, Ohio 44431



Jeff Kilianny
Immediate Past
State Deputy
itktg@yahoo.com

PRIESTS, BROTHERS, NUNS.
THEY NEED US.
WE NEED THEM.

Vocations Are Everybody's Business

Growth Team Ohio

Inviting is a Mindset - Not a Date!

By the time you read this, the first half of the current Fraternal Year will be over, and we'll be turning our thoughts to the second half and the plans and goals we have to make this year a big success, especially for Growth! No matter how the first half turned out, we have plenty of opportunities to adjust our plans, re-start our initiatives, and continue our bold efforts to give every Catholic man the opportunity to be a Knight of Columbus.

Right off the bat, let's re-look at our goals – 2100 new Knights and 60 STAR councils. This remains a very achievable goal given how well we've done over the past six months of the year, and the past several years as well. Achieving this goal will help to support councils across the state with new members and new leaders who can further the dream of Blessed Michael McGivney here in Ohio. As much fun as it is to win awards and achieve goals, we need to remember that our future is dependent on our inviting men to join us!

Our Growth plan will continue to focus on four key concepts:

- Every council actively inviting! We need every council in the state to try and invite at least one new member into their council. Doing so not only helps all councils to grow but is also a great foundation for the entire state.
- Growth 365 – we all need to remember that Growth is an all-the-time thing! No matter where, when, or what is going on, be prepared to offer the invitation of membership in our Order to someone you meet. Remember that inviting is a mindset, not a date!
- We are relying heavily on Supreme's Fishers of Men programs and materials, leveraging the excellent new family-focused content as well as the expanded range of invitation products.
- And our core effort – focus on helping to mentor Knights at all levels to understand how we can be relevant to Catholic men across the state. We call this our Relevancy project, and we will be providing information and tips on how every Knight can learn to recognize when the moment is right to lead a man into the Order.

Our biggest success story of the first half of this year was the power of the new Brandon Chambers Process (BCP) inviting methodology. Teamed with the active, integral assistance of the members of the Fraternal Benefits side of our Order, we've seen fantastic Growth for councils who chose to use it. If your council has not yet experienced this powerful tool, I invite you to contact your Field Agent who can help you find the resources for using this great Growth tool!

And let's not forget our traditional tools – eMembership tools, eForm100's, personal invitations; as well as the many opportunities – Growth 365, Delta Church Drives, Fishers of Men initiatives, *COR*, Faith in Action programs – that put us in the position of being the best resource for the Catholic men of your parishes. Remember, it's up to us to provide the motive for a man to join us – just as someone once asked each of us to become a Knight, it's now our turn to extend that invitation. I look forward to your successes and as always, Vic Lauterbach, myself, and the rest of the Growth Specialty Team are happy to help you through the rough spots.

Our work isn't over, and we still have a journey ahead of us to try and reach 2100 new men here in the Great State of Ohio. So set your council goals high, communicate them to your fellow Brothers, then go out and start inviting!

Remember – Inviting is a mindset, not a date!

Vivat Jesus!

Mark Kosobud - State Growth Chairman



Mark Kosobud
State Growth Chairman
mkosobud@yahoo.com

Ask somebody to join

TODAY!



Make Cor a Council Goal

Worthy Brother Knights,

Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year! With all the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, it is a suitable time to remember to not lose sight of the reason for the celebration, the birth of Our Lord, Jesus Christ!

Whether you do this alone, with your family, or in your Cor small faith group, prayer is the easiest way to keep Jesus at the front of our thoughts. If your council is not currently participating in Cor, ask your council leadership about it. It is a terrific opportunity for all Brother Knights to gain a closer relationship with Christ. For those that are, fantastic! Keep spreading the Gospel.



There are currently seventy-one councils with a Council EFF (Evangelization & Faith Formation) Director appointed, according to Supreme. On the flip side of that, there were 177 councils that currently are or plan to participate in Cor this fraternal year according to the Form 944 submitted by the District Deputies. We have some work to do, so please reach out if you need assistance. We have a wonderful team in the State of Ohio to support you in this endeavor.

Next weekend is the District Deputy/Mid-Year meeting. My team and I will be going over Cor in great detail. My hope is that they become subject matter ex-

perts and can also help you facilitate the adoption of Cor in your councils.

I will close by saying that I am optimistic about at least one hundred councils participating in Cor by the end of the fraternal year. All it takes is understanding and desire to create a stronger relationship with Christ. Again, please reach out if you have questions or need assistance.

Vivat Jesus,

Arron Mier - Director of Evangelization & Faith Formation



Arron Mier
Evangelization & Faith
Formation Director
kofcohioeff@gmail.com

Special Olympics Funding Incentive



The Knights of Columbus has been supporting the Special Olympics since it began in 1968. As part of our support, each state level Special Olympics organization qualifies for an additional donation from Supreme. The checks for those donations are sent to each state deputy in April and are based on participation data submitted by councils in each jurisdiction. To earn a larger donation from Supreme for the Special Olympics in your state or province, councils make sure to report your participation through the online Fraternal Programs Report Form (#10784). All participation taking place in calendar year 2025 must be reported through the online #10784 by **January 31, 2026**, to be considered.

State Chaplain's Monthly Reflection

*Click below to access videos from a monthly series by Ohio's State Chaplain of the Knights of Columbus - **Father John Paul Walker O.P.**

Video Series Archive:

December - *Vocation of the Laity, Part 1*

November - *The Four Marks of the Church*

October - *"What is the Church?"*



Fr. John Paul Walker, OP
State Chaplain

It's More Than Just a Name

Happy New Year my Brother Knights!

As we start this New Year there've been some questions brought up to me from various councils regarding the prohibition on promotion of financial products and services. If you go to the supreme website www.kofc.org and check under officers desk reference, you will clearly see the laws under section 162.11 prohibits a member from using the name of the Knights of Columbus or his membership in the order in connection with any business, social, or other enterprise, without permission of the board of directors. Section 162.24 prohibits a member from using past or present title of his membership in the order for promotion of non Knights of Columbus financial products and services.

God bless,

Tony Offenberger - State Advocate



Tony Offenberger
State Advocate

tonyoffenberger@gmail.com

2100 New Knights
For Now and for Our Future
60 Star Councils



We Have Some Questions - Do You Have the Answers?

Worthy Brother Knights of the Great State of Ohio,
Happy New Year!

Well, 2026 has arrived! We are now halfway through the fraternal year! Now is the time to not only review what we did during the first half of the year, but also focus on the next six months, so we can finish off the fraternal year strongly! Is your council on track achieving Star Council? Are you at 50% or better in meeting your Supreme Council Growth Percentage? Has your council participated in at least one Fraternal Benefit Night Event? Is your council in compliance with the Safe Environmental Program? Did your council turn in Form 185 and Form 365? Is your council working on the Fraternal Survey 1728 Form that is due January 31, 2026? As a reminder, there are only 3 and a half months to go in the Ohio "We Are Called" [State General Program Contest](#), which ends on April 15, 2026.

There is still time, though it's running out, to achieve recognition for your council and your members for ALL the great work accomplished this fraternal year. The key to providing recognition for the council and your members is simply your council's participation in the "We Are Called" State General Program Contest, by just submitting simple, easy-to-do reports to the State Program Directors and a few forms.



Tim Mangan
State General
Program Director
timangan@icloud.com



Speaking of forms, the audit is now annual. So, there will be no February Audit due and, because of this, your council will get their points for the February Audit if the August Audit is completed and points are awarded for that audit! That means the only administrative activity left is the Fraternal Survey Form 1728 that I mentioned above. Get that form submitted, and 25 points will be awarded as part of the "We Are Called" State General Program Contest.

Now, as I mentioned already, we are in the second half of the fraternal year.

As a reminder, just like during the first half of the fraternal year, I have a "Second-Half Incentive." It is completed ALL administrative Requirements, reported 8 Programs in the FIA Portion of the general program contest, bring in at least 4 new members, and have participated in at least 2 fraternal Benefits Night Events. Councils that meet these requirements will be entered into a drawing for a \$500 Amazon Gift Card. 3 Councils will be drawn, and the drawing will take place at the 2026 State Convention. Once again, good luck!

If you want to attract new members, then do what is necessary to gain recognition for your council and members. Programs and Activities and public recognition attract men to your council. That recognition in the Knights, your Parish, and your Council through your council program activities reported to the State Council will garner Awards and recognition for your council and members.

Fraternally,

Tim Mangan - State General Program Director



Life

Check Out These New Faith in Action Life Activities

Brothers,

This month I would like to introduce two new Supreme activities that were recently introduced.

“Holy Hour for Life with Our Lady of Guadalupe” is any adoration of the Blessed Sacrament centered on the intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe for any of many pro-life cause. If you recently had a service near the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Dec. 12), please submit it under this program. It will be worth double points as a feature program. Another suggested time would be the International Day of the Unborn, Mar. 25, but this can be done at any time.

“Gospel of Life” asks Knights and others to educate themselves on the sanctity of life. The goal is to equip men with the knowledge they need to defend life. Councils are encouraged to study various pro-life materials and perhaps lead discussion groups with fellow Knights and parishioners. This program is based on St. John Paul’s historic encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* (Latin for “Gospel of Life”).

Finally, with the new year upon us, many councils will be selecting their Knight of the Year. Please keep in mind that you are also nominating them for the Diocesan Award and possibly the State Award with your program report. Give your honoree the respect that he deserves in your write-up. I’ll have more on this next month.

Vivat Jesus,

Mike Incorvati - State Life Director



Mike Incorvati
Life Director

mlbincorvati@gmail.com



Family

Keep Christ in Christmas Posters Due In

Worthy Brother Knights of the Great State of Ohio.

I am hoping that you and your families had a Merry & Blessed Christmas. Thanks for sending in your Family Program reports for November/December. For those of you that participated in the Keep Christ in Christmas Poster Contest, by now you should have turned in your posters to your District Deputy, as they will be judged at the January 9 District Deputy mid-year meeting and sent on to the next level to Supreme Council. If you have not given your posters to your District Deputy yet, do so this week.

Continue to participate in the Food for Families program, food banks are in great need this time of year. Get your reports and any pictures you may have taken into me as soon as you can. We are in our 3rd quarter now, you probably should be planning who your Family of the year will be. Make your reports as detailed as possible and attach pictures along with your report.

I want to wish you and your families a Happy, Healthy, & Prosperous 2026

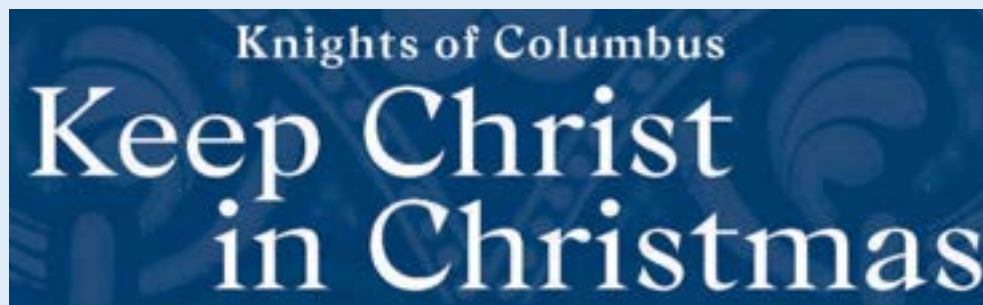
Vivat Jesus !!

Michael Freil - State Family Director



Michael Freil
Family Director

mcfreil2019@gmail.com





Month Seven: Spiritual Warfare The Battle for Your Soul

Faith

Call it spiritual warfare... or don't. Call it the battle for your soul. Call it the fight to become who you're meant to be. Either way, we know the battle, because we've felt it. It's the ordinary temptation of "I'll pray tomorrow," "just one more time," "it doesn't matter." And while we keep making little deals with comfort, we slowly become men stagnated by our mood, appetite and dulled by complacency. It's the quiet neglect

of Confession, the slow abandonment of prayer, and the numbing scroll that turns us into spectators of our own souls, until sin starts to feel normal and grace starts to feel optional. It's a thousand tiny surrenders. And while we keep trading conviction for convenience, the enemy keeps running the same three plays, temptation, discouragement, division; until we realize we didn't lose our souls in one dramatic fall... we gave them away in installments. The enemy doesn't need our worship. He just needs us comfortable, distracted, and domesticated; patient enough to function but not brave enough to change; religious enough to blend in but not courageous enough to lead.

We all say we want holiness. We ask God for it, but if we're handed "holiness" like a trophy we didn't train for, what happens? We don't know how to carry it. We can't comprehend it, appreciate it, or live it. Gifts we didn't grow into can feel less like blessings and more like burdens. God doesn't make saints by flipping a switch. He makes us holy by shaping us into the kind of men who show up. Holiness grows the way strength grows under steady, repeated load. We don't get real self-esteem from having a six-pack, we get it from being the kind of man who goes to the gym every day. And here's the point: that's the spiritual life.



This life isn't about collecting spiritual medals. It's an epic battle for souls, and the point isn't applause at the end. It's who we become in the fight. Worldly "stuff" can't love us back. It can't stand next to us when temptation hits, when suffering arrives, when our family needs us steady. But Christ can. He is not a distant general. He is with us. He fights beside us and within us. And the truth every soldier knows: men aren't heroic for ribbons. They fight for the brother on the left and the brother on the right. In spiritual warfare, we don't become holy alone.

But here's the hard truth: we don't get to opt out. We can enter the battle, or we can drift into it as bystanders. Sitting on the sidelines critiquing the men who fight, wishing we had their courage, while refusing to see the nights they wrestled with temptation. The Confessions that broke their pride, the mountains they climbed while we quietly chose the easier road. In that sense, our spiritual life is self-assignment. We decide whether to pick up the armor of God or keep our hands in our pockets. Not because grace is optional, but because non-action is still an action. Drifting is still a direction. We will either be formed on purpose, or formed by default, by appetite, environment, fatigue, the phone, the mood of the day. So, the question is not whether a battle exists. The question is simple: Who is taking ground in our life right now, Christ, or whatever keeps pulling us away from Him?

***continued on next page**



Chris Crum
Faith Director

chris-crum99@yahoo.com

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God is offering us holiness, but it comes shaped like responsibility. It's a daily decision to step onto the field and fight for our own souls, for our families, for our brothers. If we don't choose the fight, the enemy is already prowling. Because the war is already in our house, already in our habits, already at our door, and the devil's temptations won't vanish because we got serious. If anything, we start noticing the fight more clearly, but by grace we also become stronger at withstanding it. The battles don't end; we change. We become more disciplined, more resilient, more free, and as we grow closer to Christ, we're often entrusted with harder fights, not because God is cruel, but because in His providence He is forming us, and supplying the grace, to carry real responsibility. The weight doesn't get lighter; our backs get stronger.

We were not baptized to be decent guys with religious opinions. We were baptized to be saints; soldiers of Christ who can stand in the breach. And God will not hand us "trust-fund holiness" that leaves us soft and untrained. He loves us too much for that. God is forging us like a blacksmith forges steel: heat, pressure, repetition, endurance, and the forge often looks like our real life: mortgage, family, aging parents, inbox, bills, temptations; the ordinary battlefield where we learn to become men who can carry grace.

This is where we get it wrong: we think we'll win by willpower alone. We won't. We win by training with grace. A rusty sword won't cut when we need it; a soul that hasn't been to Confession in years is fighting with broken armor. But thanks be to God: we can always return to the fountains of grace and be made battle-ready again. Confession is not a shame booth; it's a field hospital. The Eucharist is not a symbol; it's wartime food. The Rosary is not for "some guys;" it's a weapon that keeps our hands busy with prayer when our minds want to run, and brotherhood isn't optional; isolation is where the enemy does his best work.

Christ the King already won the war. We are not fighting for victory: we're fighting from His victory. When we renounce sin and put on the armor of God, we're claiming what Jesus already won. That's why the enemy trembles when a man kneels, when a family prays the Rosary, when we receive the Eucharist with reverence.



So what do we do, today, this week? Don't make peace with things we should resist. When the temptation to numb out hits, we don't negotiate. We move. We put the phone down, change the room, and say out loud, "Jesus, I trust in You." When discouragement hits, we don't spiral. We return. We schedule Confession, we get back to Mass, and we pray the Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel. We refuse the lie that "nothing will change." And when division creeps in, we don't isolate, we don't go silent. We choose communion. We text one brother, name the battle plainly, and ask for prayer. We counter the enemy's playbook like men who know we are at war. Then we step back into His forge. We let Him shape us, strengthen us, heal us, feed us, and call us. We let the war make us real, because this life is not about what we accomplish, it's about who we become. God is forming us into the men we were made to be; great men, great saints, men of great holiness. Not "trust-fund holiness," but crafted holiness, forged through repetition, resilience, fidelity, hope, and communion.

So step onto the field. Strap on the armor. Take your place on the line, because we fight for our souls, our families, our parishes, and our brothers. The weight will not get lighter, but by God's grace, our backs will get stronger.

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle.

Our Lady, Queen of Victory, pray for us.

Jesus Christ, King of Mercy, make us men who fight and do not flee.

Vivat Jesus!

Chris Crum - State Faith Director

Next Month - Month 8: Healing the Wounds of Sin – Reconciliation and Restoration



Share the Joy of Christmas With Those in Need

As the hustle and bustle of the holiday season comes to a close, we hope you had a joyful and meaningful time with family and friends. With the decorations coming down and routines returning, it's the perfect moment to refocus our energy on the impactful work that lies ahead for our council and our community.

Community

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
**FREE THROW
CHAMPIONSHIP**
BOYS AND GIRLS AGES 9-14

One of our most anticipated traditions is just around the corner: the annual Knights of Columbus Free Throw Contest. This event provides a fun and healthy outlet for youth in our community, promoting sportsmanship, camaraderie, and skill development. Local contests should be completed by the end of January. District and Regional Contests

Matt Smith
Community Director
matt.smith1974kofc@gmail.com

should be completed by February 28th. We encourage all members to volunteer, spread the word, and help us make this year's contest our best yet. Together, we can inspire young athletes and build lasting memories.

Our commitment to the next generation continues through the Bright Futures Initiative. By supporting education, mentorship, and leadership opportunities, we enable local youth to thrive and pursue their dreams. This year, let's renew our dedication to programs that provide scholarships, tutoring, and personal development workshops. Your involvement—big or small—can make a meaningful difference in a young person's life.

In the spirit of service, we need to continue or organize new charitable projects to address the evolving needs of our neighborhoods. Whether it's organizing food drives, supporting local shelters, or partnering with other civic organizations, our collective efforts help strengthen the bonds that unite us. I invite every member to bring forward ideas, volunteer their time, or contribute resources to ensure our charitable outreach continues to grow.



As we transition from the festivities of the holidays to the promise of a new year, let's channel our energy, compassion, and unity into making a tangible impact. The Knights of Columbus is more than a fraternity—it's a force for good in our community. Thank you for your commitment, and here's to a year filled with service, fellowship, and hope.

Together, we can make our Ohio communities stronger than ever.

Happy New Year!!

Vivat Jesus!

Matt Smith
State Community Director



NEW: March Madness "Road to the Final Four"

Don't put away your cheering gear just yet! The **2026 March Madness Sweepstakes** officially begins as of February 1, 2026. We are awarding **over \$6,000** in prize money to **60+ winners** across three electrifying weekends. Winners will be published and prizes mailed immediately at conclusion on the Final Four weekend.

Tickets are only \$20.00 each! (Supply is strictly limited—get yours before they're gone!)

 The Prize Breakdown – Tournament Round	<u>Winners</u>	<u>Prize Amount</u>
Opening Rounds – March 19 th – 22 nd	24 Winners	\$50 Each
Sweet 16 & Elite 8 – March 26 th – 29 th	18 Winners	\$100 Each
Final 4 Weekend – April 4 th – 6 th	12+ Winners	\$3,000+ Total Pool

Bonus Drawing: Buy or sell 3 tickets to be entered into a special **BONUS DRAWING** at the conclusion of the tournament of numerous \$75.00 cash awards!

What You Need to Know

- **Mailings:** Tickets will be mailed out **February 1st**.
- **Need Tickets?** If you haven't received yours by mid-February, contact **Gary Eckstein** at **614-679-4238**.

Prizes: Complete list of prizes printed on front of March Madness ticket.

You Can't Win, If You Don't Play!



New Ohio District 2 Master

Michael R. McCusker, Supreme Master, announced Monday afternoon that he has appointed **Daniel Roggelin** to “serve the balance of David Weeks term for Ohio District 2 [Master].”

Dan currently holds the state position of Diocesan District Deputy Coordinator for the Toledo Diocese on State Deputy Michael J. Felerski’s team. Dan has committed to continue in that position for the foreseeable future.



Congratulations!

That's a Touchdown!

A Massive Thank You to Our Participants!

As the dust settles on the football field, we want to extend a sincere thank you to all councils & everyone who participated in the 2025 Football FundCrazz Sweepstakes. Your support made this one of our best years yet!

- **Total Prizes Awarded:** Over \$28,000 and 310 winners!
- **The Grand Finale:** The 10th and final week is **January 4th, 2026**.
- **Bonus Drawing:** If you bought or sold **3 tickets** during the campaign, you are entered (if submitted)! Winners will be announced in **February**.

Rebates & Per Capita Credits

- We want to make sure your hard work is rewarded with CASH REBATES and your per capita credit (if applicable). Here is the timeline for your rewards:

Item	Expected Date
Campaign Rebates	Will sent out in February 2026
Per Capita Credits	Reflected on your July 1st, 2026 statement

- **A Note from the Ohio State Council:** These credits and rebates are our way of saying thank you for the incredible effort you put into making this season a success. Your commitment to the Ohio State Council truly makes a difference.



2025 Fund Crazz Football Sweepstakes					
5th Week Winners					
HIGH SCORES					
Rank	Name	Location	Council	Ticket #	Score
1	Dave Leistner	Sidney - Cincinnati	659	103977	127 \$ 250.00
1	Rose Ann Stauder	Avon - Cleveland	3269	52179	127 \$ 250.00
1	Jim Tripp	N. Jackson - Youngstown	11369	504424	127 \$ 250.00
1	Peter Donato	Mason - Cincinnati	10272	24612	127 \$ 250.00
1	Dennis Connolly	Valley City - Cleveland	14769	26977	127 \$ 250.00
6	John Grosh	Worthington - Toledo	1750	49506	126 \$ 116.25
6	Nancy Huber	Cincinnati - Cincinnati	3861	95666	126 \$ 116.25
6	Lorelei Licata	Ashtabula - Youngstown	380	56469	126 \$ 116.25
6	Tom Miner	Circleville - Columbus	5297	34097	126 \$ 116.25
10	James F. O'Neil	Dayton - Cincinnati	10215	97572	125 \$ 79.00
10	Joseph Fonagy	Brookfield - Youngstown	13260	101580	125 \$ 79.00
10	James Bowling	Columbus - Columbus	14962	107470	125 \$ 79.00
13	Eric F. Chronister	East Liverpool - Youngstown	587	34693	124 \$ 58.00
13	Paul Giannarco	Brook Park - Cleveland	2803	4154	124 \$ 58.00
13	Joe Scully	Cincinnati - Cincinnati	15533	63898	124 \$ 58.00
16	Ed Birck	Cincinnati - Cincinnati	12359	85375	123 \$ 29.00
16	Gerry Fitzpatrick	Uniontown - Youngstown	14959	102489	123 \$ 29.00
16	Philip Kiger	Lancaster - Columbus	1016	40328	123 \$ 29.00
16	Tim Solter	Marysville - Columbus	5534	36091	123 \$ 29.00
16	Shelby Burrows	Mentor - Toledo	2642	30278	123 \$ 29.00
16	Anastor Molina	Grove City - Columbus	4803	37277	123 \$ 29.00
16	Debbie Feke	Youngstown - Youngstown	15573	55198	123 \$ 29.00
16	Alex Schultz	Madison - Youngstown	5063	58601	123 \$ 29.00
16	Gene Kroscher	Fairborn - Cincinnati	3724	63699	123 \$ 29.00
LOW SCORES					
-1	Jason Sims	Mentor on the Lake - Cleveland	11464	54096	18 \$ 100.00
-2	Thomas Boyle	Bucild - Cleveland	733	107841	24 \$ 62.50
-2	Sherry Zimmerman	Tip City - Cincinnati	4424	95881	24 \$ 62.50
-4	Steve Walico	Port Clinton - Toledo	12224	88859	25 \$ 29.00
-4	John Schroeder	Wapakoneta - Cincinnati	1272	84049	25 \$ 29.00
-4	Gerald Myers	Maumee - Toledo	15905	53365	25 \$ 29.00

2025 Fund Crazz Football Sweepstakes					
6th Week Winners					
HIGH SCORES					
Rank	Name	Location	Council	Ticket #	Score
1	M. Stewart Vetter	Bellevue - Toledo	752	52724	165 \$ 400.00
2	Karl Crook	London - Columbus	1786	29089	164 \$ 250.00
3	Christine Sansonetti	Beachwood - Cleveland	310	605	162 \$ 187.50
3	Merk Moyer	Thornville - Columbus	505	21162	162 \$ 187.50
3	David Cornish	Amherst - Cleveland	4891	58293	162 \$ 187.50
3	Curtis Groves	Bucyrus - Toledo	885	85926	162 \$ 187.50
7	Jeff Prenger	Russia - Cincinnati	3890	77222	161 \$ 125.00
8	Megan Musser	Ossining, NY - Toledo	1234	75218	160 \$ 100.00
9	Jeff Sylvester	Lewis Center - Columbus	11275	11793	159 \$ 80.00
9	John Roeder	New London - Toledo	10063	30291	159 \$ 80.00
9	Tom Penwell	Poland - Youngstown	11551	70162	159 \$ 80.00
12	Tom Welsh	Cuyahoga Falls - Youngstown	1411	58203	158 \$ 60.00
13	Rod Strahler	Marietta - Steubenville	15569	89316	157 \$ 48.00
13	Joe Lufai	Camfield - Youngstown	11369	19876	157 \$ 48.00
13	Terry T. Magyar	Gahanna - Columbus	5801	33835	157 \$ 48.00
13	Jim Hopper	Cincinnati - Cincinnati	15533	65890	157 \$ 48.00
13	Chris Gobell	Sherrodsville - Columbus	2898	90410	157 \$ 48.00
18	Erica Howard	Streetsboro - Youngstown	4571	88240	156 \$ 23.34
18	Craig Cox	Mt Vernon - Columbus	847	90777	156 \$ 23.34
18	Ron Babika	Wickliffe - Cleveland	5405	107820	156 \$ 23.34
LOW SCORES					
-1	James A. Leonard	Findlay - Toledo	957	103933	34 \$ 75.00
-1	Arnold Ziroll	Medina - Cleveland	4168	20126	34 \$ 75.00
-1	Samuel Beckett	Toronto - Steubenville	4361	67855	34 \$ 75.00
-4	Chad Gady	Chardon - Cleveland	15942	5930	35 \$ 20.00
-4	Tom Loshotzki	Sandusky - Toledo	626	86203	35 \$ 20.00

2025 Fund Craze Football Sweepstakes

7th Week Winners

HIGH SCORES

Rank	Name	Location	Council	Ticket #	Score	Price
1	Tom Wilhelm	Walbridge - Toledo	11450	52282	164	\$ 400.00
2	Larry Scott	Saint Marys - Cincinnati	1592	82526	163	\$ 237.50
2	Mark Messina	Parma Heights - Cleveland	15901	55877	163	\$ 237.50
4	Scott Schiffer	Lebanon - Cincinnati	13429	24451	161	\$ 200.00
5	Ron Reese	Archbold - Toledo	7552	72471	160	\$ 106.25
5	Mike Nye	Fostoria - Toledo	1197	87148	160	\$ 106.25
5	Joseph J. Wickham	Hilliard - Columbus	12939	35296	160	\$ 106.25
5	Patrick Gillig	Waterville - Toledo	14502	50466	160	\$ 106.25
5	Kylee Moody	Van Wert - Toledo	6034	59808	160	\$ 106.25
5	Wes Szienecker	New Bremen - Cincinnati	2158	84618	160	\$ 106.25
5	Kristin Heile	Girard - Youngstown	2835	104633	160	\$ 106.25
5	Jessica Manko	Euclid - Cleveland	2643	454	160	\$ 106.25
13	Rachel Hughes	Liberty Twp - Cincinnati	1162	22775	158	\$ 44.29
13	Matt Frank	Canal Fulton - Youngstown	5582	25149	158	\$ 44.29
13	Kevin Miller	Galloway - Columbus	2890	30778	158	\$ 44.29
13	Richard T. Jobe	Dayton - Cincinnati	4424	63037	158	\$ 44.29
13	Connie Gast	Saint Henry - Cincinnati	2640	92983	158	\$ 44.29
13	Dan Dull	Beavercreek - Cincinnati	7981	98526	158	\$ 44.29
13	Michael E. Murphy	Findlay - Toledo	957	30671	158	\$ 44.29

LOW SCORES

-1	Paul Mezmarich	Geneva - Youngstown	5286	100619	16	\$ 100.00
-2	Brian LeCount	Cincinnati - Cincinnati	13608	82224	19	\$ 75.00
-3	Judith Birman	Massillon - Youngstown	554	19456	20	\$ 50.00
-4	Dominic Arend	Urbana, IL - Cleveland	3297	107341	23	\$ 40.00

2025 Fund Craze Football Sweepstakes

8th Week Winners

HIGH SCORES

Rank	Name	Location	Council	Ticket #	Score	Price
1	John Schmidt	New Philadelphia	2372	41090	165	\$ 291.67
1	Roger R. Richter	Perrysburg	11370	58927	165	\$ 291.67
1	Brian J. Gilboy	Twinsburg	11831	90331	165	\$ 291.67
4	Fr. James Dunfee	Mingo Jct	4361	9872	164	\$ 187.50
4	Joyce Baker	Oregon	14344	53832	164	\$ 187.50
6	Adam Oberdick	Wheeling, wv	1246	18004	161	\$ 150.00
7	Betty A. Woshman	Valley City	10792	75998	160	\$ 112.50
7	Bruce J. Gerken	Cincinnati	15533	64251	160	\$ 112.50
9	Sylvia Karecki	N. Royalton	13984	56374	159	\$ 85.00
9	Wafa Langenbrunner	Cincinnati	16706	94610	159	\$ 85.00
11	John von Spiegel	Alliance	3410	12578	158	\$ 60.00
11	Kenneth White	Warrensville Heights	733	47304	158	\$ 60.00
11	Sue Patrick	Cleveland	11464	56856	158	\$ 60.00
14	Byron Phillips	New Albany	10941	36375	157	\$ 50.00
14	Matthew English	Cave Creek, AZ	12359	88345	157	\$ 50.00
16	Pete Casenhiser	Green	3410	1047	156	\$ 26.67
16	Tim Wilson	Plain City	11208	9134	156	\$ 26.67
16	Michael Mescher	Reading	1756	32483	156	\$ 26.67
16	John Szewczyk	Jefferson	360	56478	156	\$ 26.67
16	Dominic Booher-Rex	Toledo	13636	61356	156	\$ 26.67
16	Marie Plassman	Defiance	2530	100682	156	\$ 26.67

LOW SCORES

-1	Willard Houk	New Castle, PA	4539	50803	44	\$ 87.50
-1	Terry Melton	Defiance	1039	88796	44	\$ 87.50
-3	Rick J. Ruppel	Maumee	14502	59335	45	\$ 50.00
-4	Trevor Vorst	Beavercreek	3724	72577	47	\$ 20.00
-4	Zach Holshu	Canton	4733	102743	47	\$ 20.00

2025 Fund Craze Football Sweepstakes

9th Week Winners

HIGH SCORES

Rank	Name	Location	Council	Ticket #	Score	Price
1	Tom Novak	Columbia Station - Cleveland	14416	13187	159	\$ 291.67
1	Vicki Mestek	Strongsville - Cleveland	10792	17271	159	\$ 291.67
1	Raymond Decristofaro	Warren - Youngstown	17390	104602	159	\$ 291.67
4	Jerome Rodak	Parma - Cleveland	16137	74382	158	\$ 200.00
5	John Ross	Lore City - Steubenville	1641	18075	156	\$ 150.00
5	Tim Yingling	Canal Fulton - Youngstown	11037	57061	156	\$ 150.00
5	Dave Fisher	Sandusky - Toledo	546	88485	156	\$ 150.00
8	James McClurg	New Weston - Cincinnati	1756	2682	155	\$ 71.43
8	Justin May	Yorkshire - Cincinnati	1756	3472	155	\$ 71.43
8	Steve Falter	Payton - Cincinnati	590	24872	155	\$ 71.43
8	Frank Zuniga	Edinburg, TX - Cleveland	7970	44256	155	\$ 71.43
8	Pet Monachino	Broadview Hts - Cleveland	16137	74253	155	\$ 71.43
8	Eric Harris	West Chester - Cincinnati	13808	82231	155	\$ 71.43
8	Jim Justus	Lancaster - Columbus	1016	40375	155	\$ 71.43
15	Ted Sidor	Madeira - Cincinnati	2927	25799	154	\$ 47.50
15	Christine Knapp	Fairview Park - Cleveland	4217	75382	154	\$ 47.50
17	Peg Heinzer	Middleburg Hts. - Cleveland	13984	12934	152	\$ 45.00
18	Zack Colette	West Seneca, NY - Cleveland	16373	15654	151	\$ 20.00
18	Mariah Berryman	Cincinnati - Cincinnati	1162	22671	151	\$ 20.00
18	Mark S. Hoffman	Canton - Youngstown	3777	69550	151	\$ 20.00
18	Jim Buehrle	New Franklin - Cleveland	4064	76011	151	\$ 20.00
18	Craig Austin	Painesville - Cleveland	947	107355	151	\$ 20.00
18	Gary Melssen	Sandusky - Toledo	546	52678	151	\$ 20.00

LOW SCORES

-1	Melissa Torres	Lowell - Steubenville	4617	11358	36	\$ 75.00
-1	James Blum	Plymouth - Toledo	885	85776	36	\$ 75.00
-1	Javier Icaza	Canton - Youngstown	15458	99004	36	\$ 75.00
-4	Ann Hess	Gahanna - Columbus	10941	28469	38	\$ 20.00
-4	Jerry Nowak	Maumee - Toledo	11370	59000	38	\$ 20.00
-4	Todd Francis	Kent - Youngstown	4571	102375	38	\$ 20.00
-4	David A. Panak	Kinsman - Youngstown	5063	104277	38	\$ 20.00
-4	R. Lee Reed	Tipp City - Cincinnati	12912	27515	38	\$ 20.00



1 Week to Go!

Around the Buckeye State



Fort Recovery Council 3324 held a “Kick off to Christmas” party in late November with a terrific turnout, including the big man in red.



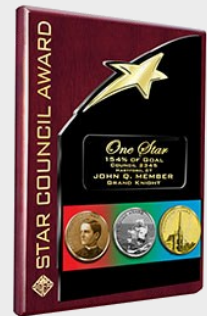
At left **Mingo Knights of Columbus Council 4361** made a donation for Mingo Police Department’s “Shop with a Cop” program.

Pictured left to right - Patrolman Ashley Close, Grand Knight Shawn Zarych, and Chief Willie McKenzie

Around the Buckeye State



The 2025 Greater Cincinnati Knight of the Year Award (aka the William Rieckelman Award) was presented for the 55th time this month by the Cincinnati Chapter. It has been awarded since 1969 in honor of Brother Rieckelman - a 48-year member of **Archbishop Elder Council #1195**. Nominees are submitted by councils and voted on by past honorees. This year's winner was **SK Russell Wernke** – GK of **Queen of Apostles Council #14665** in Reading and Color Corps Commander of **Archbishop Elko Assembly #2332**. Joining John for the award presentation at the Chapter Advent Party were past honorees (L to R): John Beckstedt – **Queen of Apostles Council #14665**, Bob Hilmer – **Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Council #12359**, Gene Cordier – **Bishop Fenwick Council #2927**, Chapter President Tom Hahn, Russell Wernke, Andy Nuckols – **Madonna Council #3891**, Mike Byrne – **St. John the Evangelist Council #13608**.

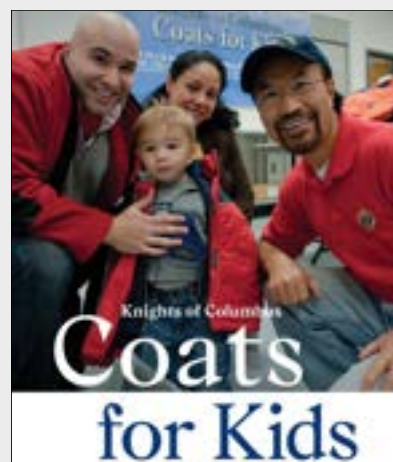


Members of Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Council #12359 stand with PGK Tom Geers as he receives the Star Council plaque recognizing the council for superior performance during the 2024-25 fraternal year. The council is well on its way to repeating as a Star Council having already met their Growth and Fraternal Benefits goals for the 2025-26 year!

Around the Buckeye State



Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Council #12359 Program Director Bob Hilmer, Financial Secretary Dave Buschle, and Grand Knight Frank Simms, Jr. present a check to Mikki and Kirk Doerger (also a Brother Knight) who run the Mater Filius home for unwed mothers in Cincinnati. Over \$18,000 was raised from a council-hosted Big Band Dance and silent auction held in October. These funds were matched by an anonymous donor resulting in a total donation of over \$40,000!



Archbishop Elder Council #1195 and **Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Council #12359** partnered on a Coats for Kids distribution at St. Boniface Catholic School in Northside Cincinnati. 170 coats were distributed to children from Pre-K to 8th grade. Knights taking part in the distribution (from left): Pete Marcello-PGK Elder Council, Steve Yards-PGK Bernardin Council, Tom Geers-PGK Bernardin Council, Jim Hook-Elder Council, Tom Hahn-DD, Frank Simms, Jr.-GK Bernardin Council, Aaron Slusher-Bernardin Council.

Around the Buckeye State



Above and below: Sir Knights of the Fourth Degree Ohio District 3 of the Father Hennepin Province participated in an Honor Guard for the Simbang Gabi Mass celebrated by the Most Reverend Earl K. Fernandes, Bishop of Columbus, on December 23 at Columbus St. Josephine Bakhita Parish. This Mass was the last in a series of nine Masses, also known as Misa de Gallo (Mass of the Rooster), that are celebrated in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and is a Filipino tradition as a spiritual preparation for Christmas.



Around the Buckeye State



During the Holiday season, **Fairborn Council 3724** kept busy with many acts of charity and kindness. Monetary donations were given to;

- Archbishop Carroll HS students (trip to March for Life in DC.)
- Operation Veteran and Caregiver Support
- St Vincent de Paul
- Family & Youth Initiatives
- Four Oaks Early Childhood Intervention of Greene County (Measure UP), and Developmental Disabilities of Clark County (Measure Up).

Knights cooked and served for Holiday Bazaar, Thanksgiving Dinner, Parish Breakfasts, and Breakfast with St. Nick. Some even gave their blood at the semiannual drive. Our most needy neighbors were not forgotten as over 100 Christmas cards from the Knights were distributed to the Wright Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.

