

Knights of Columbus
St. Joseph Assembly No. 2246
Milpitas, CA



THE CARPENTER'S EDGE

March 2010 Newsletter

Website: <http://www.Kofcassembly2246.org>

Knights of Columbus
St. Joseph Assembly No. 2246
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ADDRESS CORRECTION



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Newsletter



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FAITHFUL CAPTAIN



Editorial Opinion

Sports like snowboarding, surfing, swimming and running are solo sports; baseball, basketball, football and volleyball are team sports. Those who choose to play choose between playing a solo sport and a team based sport. By choosing they commit to learn the rules of the game and they commit to learn the game. Then they practice over and over again to be able perform to the best of their ability. They commit to do whatever it takes to train their minds and bodies to prepare themselves for the moment when it's their turn to compete. If you've been watching the Winter Olympics in Vancouver you know what I'm saying here. You have to agree that all those competitors are committed.

What about you? Do you like doing your own thing at you own pace? Would you be a solo player able to motivate yourself or would you prefer to be team player feeding off the encouragement and camaraderie of others? Are you loner or are you a team player in social groups and business situations? Are you a committed player?

What about us? Our Assembly... are we a solo or are we a team? Is it not the primary purpose of the Fourth Degree to foster the spirit of patriotism and to encourage active Catholic Citizenship? Have we forgotten who we are and what we stand for? What is happening with our

assembly? Where did everybody go...? "What's all this about," you may be asking yourself.

Without tippy toeing around political correctness; I believe it's time we put on our brogans and start marching like Sir Knights and uphold the values and virtues we learned and we promised to live by when we received our Fourth Degree.

Our Assembly represents five councils, St. Victors # 4112, St. Peter the Apostle # 5796, Most Holy Trinity # 9718 and St. Elizabeth Council # 8747. Between these four council there are over 80 members. In February we had a total of **4** members at our officers meeting and at our regularly scheduled business meeting we had a total of **6**. Our few events are just as sparse.

I am not talking of our aged Brothers who have donated years of dedicated work or the hardworking nucleolus that is trying so hard to keep this assembly alive. You know who I'm referring to.

For most men who follow Jesus, there comes a time when duty extends beyond our own lives, beyond how we lead our families, and into how we serve our fellow man. That's what the Knights of Columbus is all about. The Patriotic Degree allows knights to take this one step further. "Sir Knight" is more than a title. It's an honor. The time to act is NOW!

I've included "The Roots of the Fourth Degree" to remind us why there is a fourth Degree and why we Joined.

The Roots of the Fourth Degree

The “Roots of the Fourth Degree” is an excerpt from Christopher J. Kauffman’s “Faith & Fraternalism: The History of the Knights of Columbus 1882-1982.” The title is not part of the excerpt; it was selected for this presentation. This is part one of a two part presentation. Part two will be in next month’s newsletter.



The Fourth Degree was first considered in 1886 when the Order was in its infancy. Enthusiasm over the degree work led various councils to seek an additional one. Supreme Knight Mullen had even recommended that the Supreme Council consider establishing two degrees, which he referred to as commandery degrees.

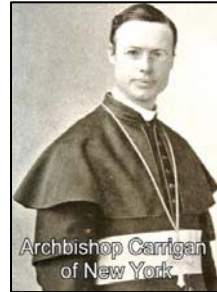
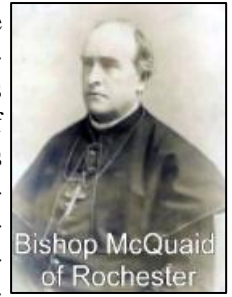
Because the Supreme Council of 1886 was immersed in establishing a new governance structure and insurance reforms, as well as electing a new Supreme Knight, the degree proposals were set aside for future action. However, a Connecticut Catholic editorial entitled “Knights of Columbus in Uniforms” indicated that at least one council had established a new degree program in 1886 without prior approval. “Our New Haven correspondent says ‘the first regular meeting of the proposed uniformed legion will be held Monday evening, July 12.’” The editorial also quoted from an untitled New Haven newspaper which reported on the new uniformed degree:

The uniform of the Knights of Columbus [will consist] of a black Prince Albert coat, black trousers, black soft felt hat, with an ostrich feather encircling the crown, similar to that worn by Columbus as represented in his pictures, a reversible cape, black on one side and scarlet on the other, white cross and waist belt, sword and gauntlet. The officers of each commandery will consist of a commander, vice-commander, sub-commander, ensign, and first, second, third, fourth, and fifth orderlies. When five commanderies are established, a battalion will be formed.

The editor of the Connecticut Catholic, who was a Knight in Hartford’s Green Cross Council, was considerably disturbed by this report on the unconstitutional behavior of his New Haven confreres. After scolding the latter for presuming “to speak for others in the state not represented” in the decision to embark on a new degree, the editor indicated that he was opposed to a uniformed degree on democratic grounds. “A complete uniform, as proposed, could not be purchased for much less than \$100. We hardly think that many would care to go to this extraordinary expense. . . . It is hardly the proper thing to set up *class distinction* in a benevolent association where charity and unity should dwell.”

The reluctance to pursue seriously additional ceremonials

may be explained by the fact that the Order had been criticized for its Masonic-like character by such members of the hierarchy as Bishop McQuaid of Rochester and had had to defend its ritualistic structure to Archbishop Corrigan of New York and Bishop McDonnell of Brooklyn. Though, as an organization, it was free from the direct authority of the Church, the Knights were very sensitive to the need for the general approval from members of the hierarchy.



Whatever apprehension over additional degrees might have existed prior to 1889, it does not appear to have had any impact upon Supreme Knight Edward Hearn. With the Order expanding westward across the Mississippi, Hearn, shortly after his election, urged a special committee to design a new degree immediately. Serving on the committee with Hearn was Daniel Colwell, National Secretary and one of the authors of the first three degrees; Charles A. Webber of Brooklyn, a National Director; John J. Delaney, first State Deputy of New York and a nationally recognized master of ceremonials; Right Reverend Joseph H. Conroy, Vicar-General and later appointed Bishop of the Diocese of Ogdensburg; Patrick T. McArdle, a National Director and one of the outstanding fraternalists of the Midwest. New York was also represented by John Hogan of Syracuse and William H. Bennett of Brooklyn. William S. McNary and William T. Cashman were the Boston members of the committee. A subcommittee composed of Webber, Conroy, and Delaney was authorized actually to prepare the ceremonials while the full committee considered qualifications and organizational matters. Since New York was the center of interest for a new degree, there was a strong preponderance of New Yorkers on the committee.

The ceremonial for the new degree was approved in August of 1899. To qualify for the Fourth Degree one had to have been a member for three years and to have served the Order, the Church, and the community with distinction. The first exemplification of the new degree was on February 22, 1900. The Order had intended to use the Astor Hotel in New York, but with 1,100 Knights qualified to receive the degree, the Lenox Lyceum, “a large frame building erected to display a mammoth painting of the Civil War,” was chosen for the gala occasion. The following May 8, another 750 Knights received the Fourth Degree in Boston.

Fourth Degree districts were formed representing the distribution of membership: For example, seven districts

were established in New York, five in Massachusetts, two in Connecticut, eight for the remaining states, and two for "the rest of the West." Each district was headed by a master who was appointed by the National Board of Directors. Until 1910, when there was a major restructuring of the organization, there were no Fourth Degree assemblies, nor was there a Supreme Master. Instead, Fourth Degree members, called Sir Knights, were lodged within local councils, and all district masters reported to the National Board. However, between 1900 and 1910, Sir Knights in various cities gradually adopted the custom of meeting separately to discuss ways in which they could pursue their own specialized activities.

The ceremonial for the Fourth Degree was orchestrated on the theme of Catholic citizenship. "Proud in the olden days was the boast; 'I am a Roman Catholic'; prouder yet today is the boast, 'I am an American citizen'; but the proudest boast of all times is ours to make, 'I am an American Catholic citizen.'" "The lessons of Catholic citizenship entailed a lengthy litany of the Catholic contribution to America. "To Catholics, America can give thanks for her discovery, her exploration, and her very name. They baptized this continent, our rivers, our lakes, our mountains, our valleys, and our hearthstones." After a long discourse on Christopher Columbus, whose "prophetic name," translated to "Christ-bearer Dove," symbolized the Catholic baptism of the New World, the candidates were introduced to other Catholic explorers: Amerigo Vespucci, Cabot, Verrazano, Cartier, LaSalle, Desoto, Cadillac, Father Marquette, Balboa, and the missionaries who brought Christianity to the New World. The Catholic contribution also included the principle of religious toleration in Lord Baltimore's colony. "What he did in Maryland, the 'land of sanctuary,' Dongan, a Catholic governor, did in New York. The two oldest and grandest movements of religious toleration in the world are, therefore, to be credited to the sons of the Catholic Church." The Catholics of the revolutionary periods, such as John Carroll and John Barry, were also extolled as noble predecessors of the Sir Knights. The degree ceremonial also praised the "grand, staunch, fearless, patriotic prelates-Carroll, Hughes, Ireland, and Gibbons"-as illustrations of the Church's "weighty influence in the crises of the nation."

After listening to the lessons on the Catholic discovery, exploration, settlement, and evangelization of the nation, the candidates were reminded of "what our republic has done for the Church." In accord with Columbianism's strong affinity to the "Americanist" ideals of Archbishop Ireland, the ritual read: "Under laws of toleration and freedom she [the Catholic Church] has enjoyed a peace and progress, a prosperity and growth unequalled and beyond all expectation." Just as Catholics nobly shaped the past, so must they be aware of their duty to preserve "the



Charter members of the Fourth Degree, which is founded upon patriotism

virtue and permanence of our republic. If it is to endure in the future as in the past, the Catholic Church must be a potent and indispensable agent. Her sons, by the morality of their lives, their loyalty to the constitution and their conscientious performance of the duties of citizenship and, above all, by their steadfast adherence to Catholic principles, must strengthen the Church, stem the tide of irreligion, preserve the reign of God in the land, or see the republic perish." Because the Sir Knights "ought to be, must be, nay will be . . . the flower of Catholicity" they must be in the vanguard of Catholic-American citizenship.

To place the spirit of the Fourth Degree within its proper perspective, one should recall specific trends within the Order, the Church, and American society at the turn of the century. We have noted that Columbianism, so impassionedly expressed by Thomas H. Cummings in the mid-nineties, was a Catholic fraternal spirit analogous to the Americanist ideals of Archbishop John Ireland. Both Cummings and Ireland identified America as a land where Catholicism and democratic freedom existed in a symbiotic way. In the relationship, Catholicism brought out the best in American freedom, and within American freedom Catholicism progressed to a higher stage in its development.

Columbianism and Ireland's "Americanism" extolled the Catholic ideals infused into American culture as well as the American ideals infused into Catholicism. "The great theologians of the Church lay the foundation of political democracy which today attains its perfect form.

They [the Knights of Columbus] stand for what is clean, moral, wholesome, and effective in American manhood when that is crowned with the teachings of Holy Mother Church, and as a result, they must achieve in time the social uplift of the entire American people."

Note: I would like to emphasize the last paragraph, if I may.

Part 2 will continue on next month's issue.

FAITHFUL FRIAR



The eleventh of February was Feast of St. Bernadette of Lourdes.

Lourdes is a place of comfort, healing and hope.

One of the messages of the Immaculate Conception to Bernadette was Repent.

To Repent means feeling sorry about our behavior and trying to do better.

When we feel sorry and try to do better, Repentance becomes the medicine which brings healing comfort and hope.

St. Peter's Second Letter assures us.

“...the Lord does not delay his promise of comfort...but He is patient with you... that all should come to Repentance.”

In the mass of the First Saturday in Lent the opening prayer is: “Father look upon our weakness and reach out to help us with your loving power.”

In Repentance we reach out to accept that loving power of God already reaching out to us.

The Lord will patiently wait for us to accept our faults and decide to change.

May our Repentance open the way to the peace and freedom God so eagerly wills his children to have.

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COLOR CORPS COMMANDER

Dear Sir Knights,

The month of February seemed to be a continuation of January as it too began on a sad note as we did honors for SK Simon Lopez who passed away on January 22nd. Present to do him full honors were Sir Knights Ed Kantack, Greg Dessel, Pat Villena, and Dave Marshall.

A few days later, the Exemplification of the Fourth Degree took place in Rohnert Park and saw three new members come into our Assembly. They are:

Ruben Esguerra

Marciano Estioko

Ernesto Tigmo

We welcome these new Sir Knights and look forward to their participation in Assembly activities.

At this year Exemplification, we set a record for candidates. Yes, you heard correctly. Not long before the Exemplification was to be held, there was a rumor going

COLOR CORPS COMMANDER



around that the number of total candidates for the western side of the Serra Province was dismal to non-existent. When SK Ralph Manfredo let me know that he had recruited three candidates, I was elated but still concerned as to whether or not an Exemplification would be held.

To my surprise, and many others, we had, count them, 108 candidates at Rohnert Park this year. One Assembly alone, Holy Spirit Assembly in Dublin brought in thirty, that's right, 30 candidates. I congratulated members of their Assembly for their accomplishment. To give you an idea as to the size of Holy Spirit Assembly, with those 30 new Sir Knights, they now top the scale at about 170 members, well over double our size.

And, unlike the past two years, there was a real Color Corps competition. Portola Assembly and Holy Spirit Assembly went at it sword and chapeau. Both teams did a great job but in the end, it would be Holy Spirit walking away with the trophy. The Color Corps Commander for Holy Spirit Assembly is TW Starkweather and his team was precise in their movements.

I had the pleasure of joining our three new Sir Knights along with their wives and family members at the banquet Saturday night.

The next morning, I, as well as the other Color Corps Commanders, Faithful Navigators, and Comptrollers met with the Master to discuss how the Exemplification went.

Without revealing anything of the ceremony, I will only say that they have made some major improvements including the use of an ante-chamber to get the candidates into the position they would be seated at within the chamber, plus giving them their baldrics and lapel pins then so as to avoid the time taken up in the chamber.

The next Exemplification will occur in Sacramento in April and for that one, both SK Guillermo Uribe and I must attend the Master's meeting on Sunday, April 11th.

Finally, in addition to the current Marshalls JC Greco and Larry Narvaez, Michael (Mike) Langer, who is in the same Assembly as JC Greco, has been appointed by Master Romy assisting JC and Larry Narvaez.

Respectively submitted,

Ed Blake, Color Corps Commander

St. Joseph Assembly # 2246

Ph: (408) 263-0247



St. Joseph Assembly No. 2246

March 2010



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