



Joe Bodnar – State Warden

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Worthy District Deputy,

As the State Warden for 2020-2021 I have been appointed by our State Deputy to act as the State Squires Liaison. I was extremely happy when I was asked to take this position over from brother Bruce Poulin as the Squire Program is very dear to me. After coaching local sports teams for 25 years in Oshawa I decided to join the Knights of Columbus 20 years ago because of the great things I heard of the Columbian Squire program.

Over the years I have held the following positions within the Squire program:

- Charter Chief Counsellor for S.K. Leonard T. Smith Circle 4742 in Oshawa (2001-2011)
- Metro East Area Chairman (2008 – 2011)
- New Circle Development Chairman (2008 – 2011)
- Safe Environment (worked with Supreme to set up our Safe Environment program)
- State Squires Director (2011 - 2017)
- I am still a full time Squires Counsellor with our Circle in Oshawa (past 19 years)

In 1925, the K of C Supreme Board wanted to offer young catholic men an opportunity to join a leadership organization that let them learn and live their faith. Competing against the Boys Scouts of America and Big Brothers, Supreme Director Danial Tobin and Brother Barnabas started the Columbian Squire program on August 5, 1925. Their stated mission of the Squire program was **“to develop young men as leaders who understand their Catholic religion, who have a strong commitment to their Church and who are ready, willing and capable of patterning their lives after the Youth Christ”**. This mission statement not only allowed young men to share and live their faith but also gave them an opportunity to become leaders. Over the years I have seen first hand many young men go through the Squire program and then want to join the Knights to continue their mission.

Each year, your Councils support the Columbian Squire Ontario Provincial Board by paying a \$40.00 fee to help offset the cost of running the Provincial Board. I strongly urge you to explain to your District Councils that this fee should be looked at as an investment in our future. This investment helps pay for the ten Provincial Board members from across the province to travel to their monthly Board meetings, pays for their meals, their Provincial Board clothing, holding Counsellor training workshops, hosting an annual Provincial Convention, attend the two D.D. meetings and K of C State Convention and also visit and communicate with their local Circles to encourage growth. It is very important for us as Knights to support this important group started by Brother Barnabas. Properly trained Squires will provide the strength and leadership of our Orders future.

Having the opportunity to be the Squire Director for six years I have met many great young men who now hold elected positions on their local Council executive. After being involved with the program for the past 19 years, the greatest feeling comes when out of the blue one of my former Squires will call me and let me know how they are doing and also thank me for the time we spent together. Being part of a leadership training program, I can honestly say I learned more from these young men over the years than I taught them. They truly are the leaders of our future

Our role as Knights is to support and allow our catholic young men the opportunity to follow the words of ***1 Timothy 4:12 “Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity”***. I have personally witnessed these teachings of Timothy being lived each day by the Squires of Ontario.

Vivat Jesus