

122ND Ontario State Convention



**SPECIAL
EDITION**

*"Carrying Us Home"
painted by Dan Wilson.
Image courtesy of
Havenlight.*

**Our Father is welcoming,
this is Our Homecoming.**



Review your situation today.

One of your most valuable Fraternal Benefits is your KofC Field Agent.

The Order provides your Knights of Columbus Agent with NaviPlan, a highly rated financial planning software. Your professional Field Agent can perform a simple needs analysis or a full review of your finances. Call your Field Agent today to take advantage of this complimentary member benefit.



LIFE INSURANCE • DISABILITY INCOME INSURANCE • LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE • RETIREMENT ANNUITIES

Contact your local agency office to learn more:



Sonny Sangemino
CHS, FIC, CPCA
RAEC / General Agent
1-855-803-0448 - Office
sonny.sangemino@kofc.org



Dan Duval
FIC
General Agent
1-877-326-5632 - Office
daniel.duval@kofc.org



Michael Mullin
CLU, FIC, CPCA
General Agent
1-888-363-4755 - Office
michael.mullin@kofc.org



**Knights of
Columbus®**

Discover our Catholic difference.

Knights of Columbus ("KofC") offers life insurance, annuities, long-term care insurance and disability income insurance products. For costs, terms, conditions and complete details regarding these products, please contact your agent directly or call KofC at 1-800-380-9995. Products may vary by state. Insurance solutions are available to eligible KofC members in the U.S. and Canada. Knights of Columbus is located at: 1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

04 NEW RELEASE: STORM WARNINGS	33 STATE COMMUNITY DIRECTOR: DANIEL MAINVILLE
05 EDITOR'S FAREWELL MESSAGE	35 STATE SQUIRES DIRECTOR: ENZO CATERINA
06 STATE DEPUTY: BRUCE POULIN	36 STATE SPECIAL OLYMPICS CHAIRMAN: JOSEPH MATHEWS
12 COATS FOR KIDS IN THUNDER BAY AND SIOUX LOOKOUT	38 BLESSED FR. MICHAEL J. MCGIVNEY HONORIS AND GUILD CHAIRMAN: MICHAEL O'NEILL
13 STATE SECRETARY: DAVID GELINAS	40 GLOBAL WHEELCHAIR MISSION CHAIRMAN: FRANCISCO NAAR
14 MOVEMBER CAMPAIGN	41 CHRISTIAN REFUGEE RELIEF HOLY LAND AND PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS: HIKMAT DANDAN
15 STATE TREASURER: JOSEPH BODNAR	43 EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: MARIO DUGUAY
17 STATE ADVOCATE: HENRY MILLER	45 VICE SUPREME MASTER: JOSEPH MATHEWS
19 STATE WARDEN: EARLE DEPASS	47 AFTER 50 YEARS, ANNUAL STATE CONVENTION RETURNS TO OTTAWA
21 IMMEDIATE PAST STATE DEPUTY: MARCEL LEMMEN	51 NEW EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
23 STATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR: DAVID FISHER	52 SUDBURY AREA COUNCILS RAISES FUNDS WITH A CASH CALENDAR
25 STATE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR: DEM MAGMANLAC	
27 STATE FAITH DIRECTOR: JOSEPH REMEDIOS	
29 STATE FAMILY DIRECTOR: JAIME LIBAQUE	
31 STATE LIFE DIRECTOR: ALEX SCHADENBERG	

393 Rymal Rd., West, Suite 201, Hamilton, ON, L9B 1V2

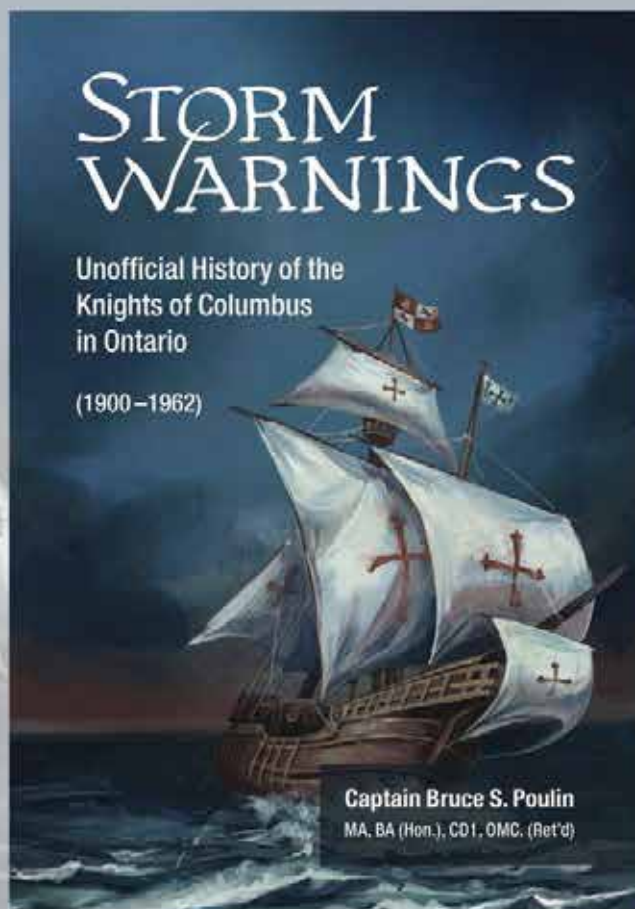
Toll Free: 1.800.759.0959

| OntarioKofC.ca

Purchase online or at the 2025 Annual State Convention



NEW RELEASE



"The story of ordinary Catholics out to make the world a better place and one organization that inspired them to try."

On Sale NOW

ontariokofc.ca/store/
OR CALL 905.388.2731



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

About the author should read: "Bruce S. Poulin, MA, BA (Hon), CD1, retired from the Canadian Armed Forces after 22 years of service. For the next 16 years, he worked with Canada's largest community-based veterans' organization, where he was a spokesperson and a service officer helping military veterans process their disability claims with the federal government. Bruce retired for the third time after working as a senior communications representative for one of the world's largest defence contractors.

Bruce has more than 30 years of community service and has been a proud member of the Knights of Columbus since 2007 and has the proud distinction of being acclaimed as the 60th State Deputy for the Knights of Columbus in Ontario since it was established in the province in 1900.

Bruce holds a master's degree from the School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University and his work has been published in various newspapers, magazines, and periodicals. This is Bruce's first book.



EDITOR'S FAREWELL MESSAGE

By: Editor, Bruce S. Poulin

After four years as the Editor and more than 16 editions under my belt, it is time for me to step aside for perhaps the most mundane of reasons: Personal and professional needs change, and its time for me to dosomething new in writing about the Knights of Columbus.

I became the Editor immediately following the COVID-19 lockdowns when communicating with each other became critical to our personal health, our work and our volunteerism through the Knightsof Columbus. I have worked with talented graphic designers, photographers, and authors to create these issues. We took the reports into a full colour magazine format, from hard copies to hyperlinked digital ones. We added humour and shared our rich Faith in action history of the Knights of Columbus in the jurisdiction of Ontario.



As a member of the Knights of Columbus since 2007, I seemed to walk daily through our history but largely unaware of the details. Now I am not only deeply aware, but I like to think I'm a little part of that history, a link in a long chain back to 1943 when the first issue of the State Bulletin appeared - using a gestetner printing machine.

Since this is my last edition as your editor, I think it appropriate to engage in some navel-gazing by posting several reports from our 2025 annual State Convention and allow you to appreciate what we have achieved over the course of the past four years together.

In the meantime, thank you for taking that journey with me.

Vivat Jesus!

Membership *Statistics*

05

Ontario Snapshot as of April 30, 2025		GOAL
Membership Intake this Fraternal Year	1,934	2,167
New Councils	3	4
Star Councils	35	71

Total Membership: 56,393

Like gasoline is the lifeblood of a car, new members are the lifeblood of a Council.

Invite your friends and family to join!

Vivat Jesus!

Bruce S. Poulin
State Deputy



“The Father is Welcoming, and this is Our Homecoming”

As we confront the rising tide of secularism, the challenge of promoting and preserving our Catholic faith will only intensify in the years ahead. With the passing of senior leadership, whose visible presence has long underscored the spiritual heartbeat of our Order, we are called to develop new ways of inspiring the next generation. It is our duty to remind them—through visible action and meaningful witness—of the tireless commitment made by brother Knights, past and present, to build a society where families can live freely, faithfully, and fruitfully.



This was the mission my administration embraced. For the past two years, under the banner of our 125th Jubilee Anniversary, we witnessed our Faith in Action programs reignite across Ontario—from the production of a commemorative miniature jewel to the hosting of our State Convention in Ottawa. We chose to celebrate this historic milestone not because it was easy, but because our legacy demanded it. In doing so, we helped mobilize our membership in the wake of the COVID-19 lockdowns, when so many other institutions were faltering.

Looking back, I believe this strategic decision to focus on our legacy and renewal was the most important one made during my tenure as State Deputy. It inspired our members to rediscover purpose, pursue bold initiatives, and leave a lasting impact for the next 125 years—all within the framework of our Québec + 1 Strategic Action Plan.

This resurgence was not based merely on tradition or orthodoxy; it was rooted in action and relevance. Today, the Knights of Columbus in Ontario is once again a beacon of Catholic leadership, community engagement, and unwavering service. As I near the close of my term, I invite you to reflect on the highlights and accomplishments from these two remarkable fraternal years.

Marketing and Community Outreach

Special 125th Anniversary Jubilee Logo

The idea of commemorating our 125th anniversary was conceived nearly five years ago. Initially envisioned as a modest, localized celebration, the plan evolved significantly in response to the global pandemic. COVID-19 lockdowns made it clear that we needed something extraordinary to shake off the inertia that had set in. Too many of our once-active members had grown accustomed to inactivity.

In response, we launched a comprehensive marketing campaign, structured into three pillars:

1. **Regional Activities** to reconnect with our legacy and showcase our community impact.
2. **Aggressive Publicity** to amplify our presence.
3. **Commemorative Merchandise** available through our online webstore.

Regional Activities

Activities included the restoration of tombstones at Notre Dame Cemetery in Ottawa; the restoration of the Carhagouha Cross in Midland and the Pray for Peace Monument in Windsor; a pilgrimage to the St. Kateri Shrine in Montréal; and a special celebration hosted by Council #485 in Ottawa. These are just a few examples of our provincial commemoration outreach effort.

Publicity and Marketing



Columbia Magazine April 2024, page 30

Our work was featured in two separate issues of Columbia magazine. This trend is continuing

with another article scheduled to appear in Columbia magazine about our brother Bill Graham from Council #12706 in Mississauga and his food distribution network. This is an unprecedented level of publicity for Ontario. Additionally, our hockey game against the Flying Fathers on April 27 is being filmed by a public affairs team from New Haven to capture the only such game in the history of the Order.



Brother Bill Graham (Right)

Keynote Speakers

In 2023–2024, our keynote speakers included:



Tanya Granic Allen



Jeff Gunnarson



Hon. Michael Tibolo



Shari Guinta

Honoring OUR LEGACY

Knights in Ontario restore the tombstones of past leaders as they prepare to celebrate the jurisdiction's 125th anniversary

By Susan Wright

On the morning of Aug. 13, Ontario State Deputy Bruce Poulos sat in front of a granite monument, meticulously repainting the faded lettering on a tombstone. Marking the grave of Father John J. O'Connell, a founding member of Ontario's first Knights of Columbus council, it was the third upgush Poulos had personally restored in Ottawa's Notre Dame Cemetery. Each year looks about the same: a couple of weeks, but Poulos didn't mind, he was just one Knight honoring another.

Poulos finished his task and in January gave the O'Connell family a memorial service in his home in Bolton (O'Connell and seven other K of C members — including six past state deputies — lived in the four-acre cemetery). The Ontario State Council celebrated all night of the Knights' foundation as part of a series of initiatives to commemorate the jurisdiction's upcoming 125th anniversary in 2025.

"We are acknowledging the legacy upon which we are building our future today, both on their success and sacrifice of yesterday," State Deputy Poulos affirmed. Writing to the Ontario State Council of Knights, he explained that the sentiment was "inspired by love and a sacred memory of our deeply departed," and the responsibility to pay for those who have gone before us. "Days later, during the month of November, we are reminded of our duty to the past."

The Order's presence in Ontario began with Ottawa Council #485, chartered Jan. 28, 1900. While investigating the history of Ontario's Knights in early years of the century, Poulos discovered that more Ontario state deputies are buried in Notre Dame Cemetery than any other site.

"That got my interest going, so I went out to the cemetery to see these tombstones," Poulos said. "I saw that they were

well-kept and didn't mean we were going to them and the following had all faded. Many of these tombstones date back to the 1920s and '30s."

The state council decided to restore the tombstones, and a contractor was hired this past summer to give each and every up the tombstones and take in its entirety the stones that had become overgrown and buried in dirt and grass.

One thing the contractor would not restore, however, were the faded inscriptions on faces of the Knights' tombstones. So Poulos took matters into his own hands.

"I took 100, probably 150, to do it. So I thought some paint and a paintbrush, and all that," he said. "The process, Poulos explained, required sanding and cleaning the lead letters, applying a sealant, then carefully applying waterproof black paint with a small paintbrush.

The cemetery is the final resting place of five founding members of Council #485, including its charter grand knight, John Francis (1864-1914), and its first chaplain, Father Matthew Wilkie (1815-1917). Dennis, considered the father of the Knights of Columbus in Ontario, was also the first Canadian-born state deputy of what was then the jurisdiction of Canada and Newfoundland.

The other charter council members buried at Notre Dame are Father O'Connell (1884-1933), a World War I military chaplain who was awarded the Order of the British Empire and later helped to build the Order's Canadian Catholic Army Unit program; Michael J. Gorman (1858-1931), a prominent lawyer in Ottawa and the jurisdiction's first state deputy; and State Deputy Francis J. Carleton (1868-1938), a justice of the peace who served in Ottawa and later served on the Supreme Court of Ontario. These men state deputies are buried there, as well. Thomas Brown (1874-1945).



Columbia Magazine November 2024, page 24

In 2024-2025, our roster of keynote speakers expanded to include:



Dr. David D' Souza



Dr. Ramona Cueolho



Jamil Jivani



Abby Johnson

Social Media

It has often been said that social media is where facts and neutrality go to die. But ignoring it is not the solution. Controlling the narrative on social media must remain at the forefront of our minds moving forward. So, it is with much pride that we have seen visits to our FB page increase from 2.1K followers to more than 2.2K followers. We have also doubled our social media post to almost one every calendar day. Likewise, we have 1,619 followers on "X" with more than 17K impressions (an increase of 70 per cent). Finally, on Instagram, we have 546 followers, and the number of visits has increased by 25 per cent.

District Deputies and Membership Information Officers:



The number of districts was reduced from 120 to 103 in our first fraternal year. This better reflected the reduction of 43 local councils. At the same time, for the first time in recent memory, every district in Ontario began the fraternal year with an appointed District Deputy. Each was welcomed by all State Board Officers and gifted a replica Rosary made of gunmetal symbolizing our bond with Canada's armed forces. Many councils have since purchased these rosaries to honor their clergy and deacons.

District Deputy attendance rose by 90 per cent, thanks to engaging keynote speakers and a completely revamped training program headed by a professional trainer. Likewise, the participation in the Ladies' Program doubled, thanks to Lady Zoye's ambitious concept of "Indulgence after Charity."

State Convention attendance also more than doubled, from 284 attendees in 2022 (Niagara Falls) to 650 in 2025 (Ottawa). To accommodate the growing attendance, we have to use two ball rooms at The Westin Ottawa hotel this year. Not to be outdone, the annual Squires Convention has seen its greatest attendance since 2020 with some 150 Squires, parents and guests attending their Convention in conjunction with our 2025 annual State Convention in Ottawa. This is the first time both conventions have been held at the same time, in the same place, since 1948. To mark this milestone, we will be exemplifying more than 15 Squires, who have turned 18, as regular members of the Knights at this State Convention.

Community Programs



Toys for Tots, Toy Mountain

Over the past two years we shifted the Knights persona into a real Catholic man with real programs making a real difference one Holy Moment at a time. Since then, thousands of Catholic men partnered with the Knights of Columbus in Ontario to make society a better place for their families to live more freely in a healthier and more prosperous Ontario.

What is even more exciting is that this enthusiasm has been seen at all levels of our Order. One example, among many,

is the Toy Mountain collection organized by Council #5135 in Waterloo which has seen an increase from 7,500 toys being collected and distributed in 2022 to 25,000 in 2024-2025.

Coats for Kids



Coats for Kids



Coats for Veterans

Our flagship charity program saw its donation of coats double in the past two years. This fraternal year alone, 18,696 coats were donated, representing almost 50 per cent of Canada's total with an estimated value of almost \$600,000.

The Coats for Veterans initiative, piloted in 2023-2024, was officially launched this year. Many councils are now partnering with Royal Canadian Legion branches to donate homeless veterans with warm winter coats during our cold winter months.

Global Wheelchair Program

In the 2023-2024 fraternal year, we donated 110 wheelchairs to Puerto Rico for the first time. The effort proved so successful that our brother Knights in Puerto Rico have started their own local wheelchair donation campaign and have asked our Wheelchair Chairman, Francisco Naar Chang, to mentor them. Building upon our lessons learned, we doubled the number of donations in my second term. This year, we donated 218 wheelchairs (estimated value of \$65,000).



As a result, we were able to double the number of trips under this administration (e.g. two trips instead of one) at no extra cost to the State Council. Since this program began in 2006, Ontario has donated more than 3,600 wheelchairs.

Veterans' House Canada

We raised \$75,000 to fund the construction of a cenotaph at Veterans' House Canada in Ottawa—without passing any legacy debt to my successor.

Ultrasound Machines

Many of our community programs had a fundraising component. Raising funds for an ultrasound machine was a top priority. Much like every other major project under our Faith in Action pillars, we set an ambitious goal when it comes to supporting life: three new ultrasound machines, donated in Brampton, Hamilton, and a third one to be donated in Sudbury. This will bring Ontario's total to 50 per cent of all ultrasound machines donated in Canada.



Awards



In 2024, the Ontario government recognized our legacy of service. The Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, Hon. Michael Tibolo, a brother Knight, honoured us for our commitment to community service with a Certificate of Appreciation. We also received the City of Mayagüez Medal of Merit, Puerto Rico, from the city's Mayor in appreciation for our donation of wheelchairs to his city.



Mayagüez Medal of Merit

125th Anniversary Commemorative State Deputy Coin

One hundred numbered coins were personally awarded by yours truly to recognize outstanding, often unsung, service from our brother Knights during my two consecutive terms in office.



Membership

A critical look at the Québec + 1 Strategic Action Plan concerning Membership reveals many healthy and encouraging signs. Because of our increased presence through our programs, we achieved a rare milestone in our first year together. We achieved the title Circle of Honour, and we have every confidence that success in membership awaits us again at the end of this fraternal year. So far, this administration has seen membership grow by almost 4,500 members, or about eight per cent of all current members of the Knights of Columbus in Ontario.

New Councils are indicative of a healthy jurisdiction. In Ontario, for example, we established three of the three new Councils in the country so far this fraternal year. This success is predicated on a great membership team, including Brothers Vincent D'Souza, Dem Magmanlac, Rory Facca and Chris Dunn.

Online membership statistics remained the key marker of our new membership intake for 2024-2025. The importance of online membership cannot be understated. That being said, the conversion rate to regular membership has hovered around 50 per cent.

With deep appreciation for our roundtable chairman, Dan Pergolesi, we have also exceeded all expectations during the past two years. We went from 22 round tables between 2022-2023 to 32 in the 2023-2024 fraternal year and we expect this same number to continue, if not increase, by the end of this fraternal year. Even our Cor initiative saw a 66 per cent increase from one year ago thanks to our Cor Director and IPSD, Marcel Lemmen.

Webstore



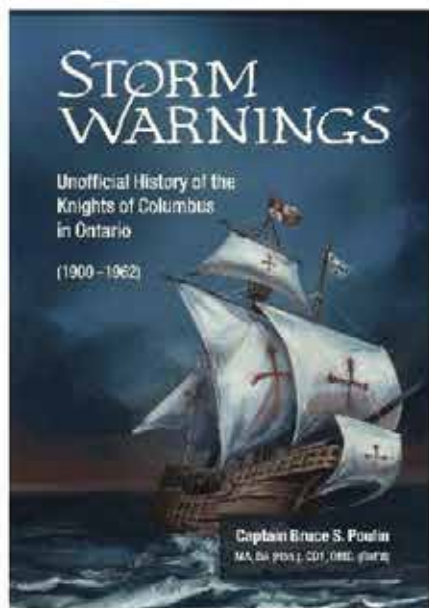
During COVID-19 Supreme Council introduced a new KofC logo design complete with a new Blessed Fr. McGivney font. It would take 18 months for Ontario to transition to the new logo. In July 2023, all promotional items were ready for display and sale. This included lapel pins, keychains, baseball caps and toques, T-shirts and golf shirts, banners, lawn signs, and redesigning all letterhead. Also include in this revamped marketing plan was the KofC licence plate available

from the Ontario Ministry of transportation.

The baseball caps, and golf shirts were extremely popular with the membership. Sales of the 125th anniversary golf shirt, for example, saw an average of ten shirts sold every week for almost 18 consecutive months. Another

popular item was the first miniature jewel designed and offered in the jurisdiction of Ontario. It is available for purchase to any brother Knight

in good standing who is a member of the Knights 2024-2025 fraternal year. This jewel is only available for a limited time. In the past two years, sales from our webstore reached an unprecedented \$100,000.



Finally, I am proud to announce the release of my Volume One: Unofficial History of the Knights of Columbus in Ontario (1900-1962). This book, published on January 28, 2025—the 125th anniversary of Ontario's first charter—is the first comprehensive chronicle of our Order's provincial legacy.

Conclusion

Reflecting on my past ten years on the State Board, my heart swells with gratitude for our incredible journey together. When I arrived in 2015, you welcomed me with open arms. Your warmth, your kindness and unwavering support have been a source of strength and inspiration. We have laughed, cried, and prayed together. We have built lasting friendships and cherished memories. As I prepare to move on to new endeavours, please know that you will always hold



Notre Dame Cemetery tombstone restoration and re-dedication ceremonial.

a special place in my heart.

As I bid you farewell, rest assured, I carry the lessons learned, bonds formed, and the love shared within this cherished organization. God Bless you all, I love you all.

Vivat Jesus!



COATS FOR KIDS IN THUNDER BAY & SIOUX LOOKOUT

By: Grand Knight Council #7332, Craig Murphy

12

For the second time in as many years the Mikinakoos Children's Fund placed an order for some \$20K of coats for Kids. Half of the order was delivered to Thunder Bay, and the other half went to the community in Sioux Lookout. In all, some 116 cases, or almost 1,400 coats were delivered. Congratulations go to Bishop Norman Gallagher Council #7332 in Thunder Bay for coordinating and supporting this effort.



Vivat Jesus!

David Gelinas

State Secretary



As we celebrate our 125th celebrations this fraternal year, we acknowledge our humble beginnings with pioneer Council #485 in Ottawa, this year certainly embraces a "Homecoming Experience" in Ottawa while recognizing our roots planted here in 1900. God was certainly looking over Ottawa and Ontario in 1900, our very birthplace. Our Lord and Father will certainly be opening wide His loving arms as He is welcoming to all of us knights and our wives in Ottawa. St. Matthew 10:40 states "Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me".



First, I thank all the delegates these past eight years for your continued support and confidence in electing me as your State Warden, Advocate, Treasurer, and Secretary. I assure you, as I ask for your vote again as your next State Deputy, that I will remain unwavering in protecting the Laws and Rules of the Charter and Constitution and to the well-being and care of the members in Ontario.

Diocesan Associations

Following the necessary massive restructuring of Districts, and Councils across Ontario for the start of July 1st, 2023, the next task was to address how these changes affected the Diocesan Associations. The other task that required my attention was to address the many non-operating Diocesan Associations following the COVID 19 lockdowns. In a span of just 18 months, we have grown from nine operational Diocesan Associations to fifteen. A great success by everyone involved including many appointed chairmen that agreed to help rebuild. This rebuilding success will result in the first time, since 2016, with Ontario State Board expecting all eight scheduled and operating Diocesan Associations to provide Supreme delegates for this year's Supreme convention being held in Washington, D.C.. Another example of our success with the Diocesan Associations over these past two years.



I encourage all councils to attend their Diocesan Association meetings. It is open to any Knight. It is not just for the Grand Knight to attend. Anyone from the council's executive should be able to attend and bring the information back to the council.



Pray for Peace Monument restoration and re-dedication ceremonial.

My final remarks are to our departing Immediate Past State Deputy Marcel Lemmen. Your empathetic qualities, genuine leadership skills and passion for the Order has certainly been a blessing for the members of Ontario and the State Board. I thank you and Charlene for the continued friendship and lasting memories. May God continue to bless you both with long lasting health and joy.

Vivat Jesus.



MOVEMBER CAMPAIGN - PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS

By: Men's Health Chairman, David Fisher

14

Once again, Sir Knight David Fisher was the Chairman of the annual Movember campaign in November of 2024. In the past two years we went from 12 brother Knights participating in 2022 to 62 participants in 2024. As to be expected there was also a significant increase in donations from \$5,000 in 2022 to almost \$30,000 in 2024. Congratulations to SK David Fisher and all those who took part in this campaign over the past two years.



Vivat Jesus!

Joseph Bodnar

State Treasurer



This year's theme "Our Father is welcoming, and this is Our Homecoming" is a gentle reminder that no matter what our frailties and difficulties are, we must trust God is listening and will always be there to welcome us home.

This year and over the past 125 years, members of the Knights of Columbus in Ontario have lived and shared their faith by assisting the less fortunate, widows and orphans in their local communities. A State Convention, or our homecoming, is an opportunity for us to once again meet with family, friends and Brother Knights to find peace trusting in God's work as we celebrate our achievements and prepare for a new fraternal year refreshed with new ideas on how to help the less fortunate and improve our local council.



After this weekend, when we return to our councils we should remember and share the words of Psalm 23:6 "Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever". Our work as Knights allows us to build a trusting relationship with God that will lead to our final homecoming with him in heaven.



Knights volunteering their time to allow close to 100 competitors compete the Regional Basketball Free Throw at Markham



District 3 & District 36 Exemplification ceremony at St. Joseph the Worker Church in Oshawa

The following is my report:

Per Capita Charges and Collection

The first week of January each active council is sent their yearly State per capita invoice for all active members according to the council membership list we receive from Supreme on January 1st. As a reminder, it is the council's responsibility to move inactive members to the Affiliate list with Supreme. Our increase of 3% (based on the annual cost of living index) considers our planned yearly budget to operate the State Council.

As a reminder your 2025 State per capita must be received by June 30th as per Resolution 17 voted and approved by convention delegates at the 2024 State convention.

50/50 Raffle

This fraternal year, the State Board will continue to use Rafflebox (www.rafflebox.ca) to host our 50/50 raffles. Our first raffle for 2025 will take place this weekend (April 27th), our second raffle will take place on September 1st and our final draw for the year will take place on December 30, 2025.

State Bursary

Each year the State Council offers five student bursaries of \$1,000 each to first year full-time students attending an accredited college or university in Ontario. The deadline is June 1st so there is still time to participate. Applications are available on the State website on the link under community/bursary. Last year after receiving a record 32 applications the committee was able to pick the five winners. Congratulations to our last year's winners: **Grace Starcevic** - Council 5073 Burlington, **Caleb Temple** - Council 5144 Thunder Bay, **Maya Clairia Blaise** - Council 3056 Hearst, **Kyle Sequeira** - Council 12706 Mississauga, and **Gabriel Gormley** - Council 1926 - Oshawa.

Columbian Squires

This year the Supreme Columbian Squire program celebrates its 100th anniversary. Having the Provincial Board host their annual convention with us this weekend is a special opportunity for you to meet the members of the Provincial Board and members of local circles.

Tricia and I would like to personally thank State Squire Director Enzo/Karen Caterina for their dedication over the past four years running the Squire program in Ontario. On June 30th they will step aside and let our new Squire Director take over this position. As a former Squire Director I know they will always remember the Provincial Board members that served under their term. We wish them both well in the next chapter of life.

In closing, I would also like to thank my wife, Tricia, for supporting me over these past six years and my fellow State Board members for their continued support over this past year.

Also, congratulations to our Immediate Past State Deputy, Marcel Lemmen, for completing his 10-year journey on the State Board serving the Knights of Columbus members in Ontario. Thank you for sharing your knowledge and all the guidance you provided me during my first six years on the Board. I will always remember the example you set as a true leader.

Vivat Jesus!

For more information,
please visit our website at
ontariosquires.com



Henry Miller

State Advocate



It has been a great joy, blessing and privilege to serve as Ontario State Advocate during our 125th anniversary year. No doubt, our brothers, in 1900, as now, were fascinated, as I am, by always learning and understanding more about the subtle intricacies of operating our order both at the local and provincial levels and appreciating the connections between the two. As Catholics, we have the advantage of over two thousand years of Church teaching to help guide us in this endeavour.



An important element of this teaching is Catholic Social Teaching rooted in, among other sources, Pope Leo XIII's masterful 1891 encyclical, *Rerum Novarum* ('of new things').

Part of this encyclical's genius is its profound understanding of the principles of solidarity and subsidiarity. Solidarity emphasizes the common good and safeguards the wider community, e.g. the church or the Knights of Columbus, as a whole. Subsidiarity safeguards the unique needs and internal life of local communities, e.g. parishes and councils. Both principles are key to the ongoing success of our order. It is your State Board who must always be mindful of and safeguard both principles. In turn, as State Advocate, it is my responsibility and privilege to support you in understanding and effectively using some essential tools, as elaborated below, that safeguard the integrity and good reputation of our order as whole, while allowing your councils to operate in and serve your parishes and local communities as effectively as possible.

Charter, Constitution and Laws (the "CC&L") of the Knights of Columbus

Generally updated annually after the Supreme Convention, the CC&L is the master set of rules for the good governance of our Order. In turn, the By-laws Online application, available on the Supreme website, supports our local councils in ensuring that they have their own sets of by-laws that are consistent with the CCL. In the CCL and council by-laws Roberts Rules of Order is specified as the parliamentary authority or set of meeting procedures that governs our order. Over the past year, it has been very interesting and personally fulfilling to assist both my State Board colleagues and local councils with understanding and applying the rules to the facts and circumstances at hand.

Safe Environment Program

Supreme's Safe Environment Program protects the most vulnerable members of our community, in particular, youth, by stipulating the order-wide requirements for both mandated training and background checks for specific positions at both the State and council level, including my own as State Advocate. Supreme has worked hard to focus and continuously improve the training and make the background checks process as simple and straightforward as possible. In assisting councils with understanding Safe Environment requirements, I am always grateful for the support I receive from the dedicated staff in Supreme's Office of Youth Protection.

Ontario Knights of Columbus Risk Management Protocol and Abuse, Discrimination, Harassment Prevention Policy (the “P&P”)

Consistent with the requirements of the Safe Environment Program, Ontario’s P&P addresses the unique needs of Ontario’s councils. It sets out the requirements for background checks for council members participating in programs involving youth, in addition to the background checks required for specific positions under the Safe Environment Program. It is mandatory that council members annually attest to their familiarity with the requirements of the P&P. Supported by David Gottlieb, Account Executive with our Ontario State liability insurance broker, Jones DesLauriers, we continue in striving to ensure that complying with P&P requirements is as straightforward as possible. Two successful innovations supporting this are the P&P slideshow and the one-page ‘traffic light’ guide to additional background check needs.

Liability Insurance

Councils must have liability insurance. Not having liability insurance could result in catastrophic consequences not only for councils but for individual council members. Councils may obtain liability insurance through brokers of their choice. In doing so, however, they must ensure they have proper and adequate coverage. Most Ontario councils obtain their liability insurance through Jones DesLauriers. David Gottlieb works with individual councils to determine the specific coverage and pricing that is best suited to them. As of February 2025 three-quarters of Ontario’s active councils have renewed their liability insurance with Jones DesLauriers. We expect that all active councils ensure that they have liability insurance in place.

Council Database Repository

Legal action can arise many years after the alleged matters concerned. Ontario State’s Council Database Repository was created to support successful council legal defence by providing for secure long-term storage of council liability insurance documents and other key information, e.g. attestation of council members’ familiarity with P&P requirements. The repository was designed and created through Councils’ consideration of a resolution concerning essential document retention repository at the 2022 Ontario State Convention, an excellent example of positive State and Council collaboration.

Resolutions

Safeguarding both solidarity and subsidiarity, resolutions are our means of ensuring that we best meet the evolving needs of our order and our councils and their parishes and communities. When, at our convention, we discuss and adopt resolutions, we have a powerful and practical way to inform and influence our order, e.g. through recommendations that, in turn, may be adopted through resolutions considered at the Supreme convention. We also have a powerful and practical means of influencing various other elements of society, through being attuned to both the local and broader societal concerns that inform the resolution crafting process.

I am immensely grateful for the assistance I have received from and the friendships I have made with so many people in fulfilling my responsibilities, including staff at all levels at Supreme and members of our Resolutions Committee. Friendship is one of the treasures of our order. In that vein, I thank my wonderful wife, Lynn, for all she does to support me as a Knight.

Vivat Jesus!

Earle DePass

State Warden



As my term as your State Warden comes to an end in June 2025, I wish to report on the honour it has been for me to serve you for the past two consecutive fraternal years.

Hospitality Suite

My primary task has been to manage the hospitality suites during the District Deputy workshops and the annual State Conventions. Beyond that, however, our State Deputy entrusted me with several important projects to further develop my leadership skills as I progress through the various positions on the State Board.



Tombstone Restoration project



Six past state deputies are buried at the Notre Dame cemetery in Vanier. Thus unique feature about this cemetery has been promoted by our State Deputy with a special flyer and a special remediation ceremony of the tombstones in August 2024.

Again I take great pride in helping with this project to restore these tombstones as they all showed signs of neglect and benefitted from some "tender loving care" during this, our 125th anniversary Jubilee year. Even Columbia magazine featured a story about this event for the benefit of the entire Order.

125th anniversary dinner

Every Jubilee year (25-year increments), the Knights from across Ontario celebrate our achievements and reacquaint ourselves with our proud legacy in Ontario.

This celebration always coincides with the anniversary of pioneer Council #485 in Ottawa, established on January 28, 1900. This year, I was tasked to help with and emcee the 125th anniversary Banquet dinner held at the Westin Ottawa hotel on January 25, 2025. More than 200 people attended this milestone in our history and I feel privileged to have been a part of it.



Veterans' House Canada, Ottawa



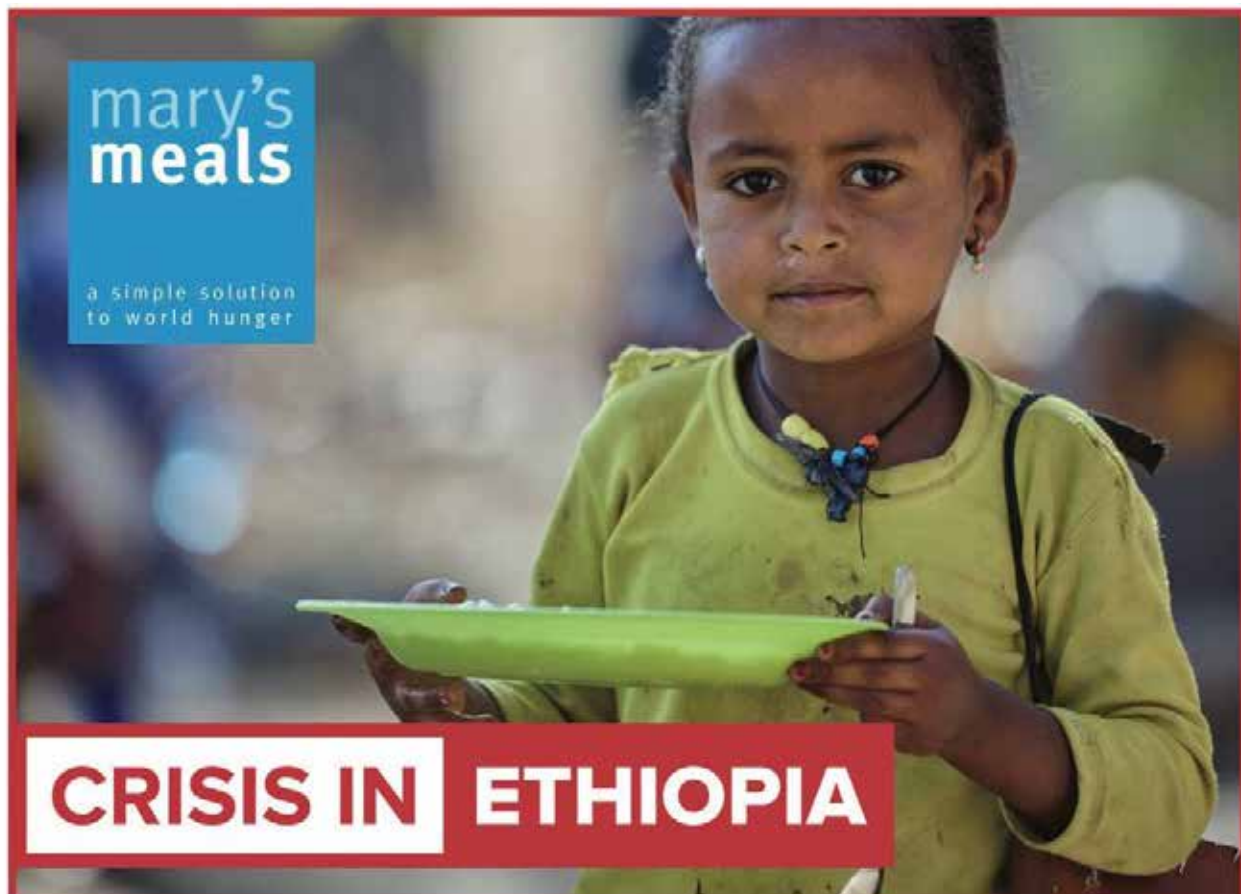
Our State Deputy also tasked me to be the lead for the purchase, inscription and installation of the KofC cenotaph at Veterans' House Canada. It is hoped that this site will become the annual Remembrance Day ceremony for our brother Knights in the greater Ottawa area moving forward.

The other task associated with this project is the individual bricks that may be purchased and will be installed around the cenotaph. This project is ongoing and will be a source of founding for Veterans for many years to come. You can purchase a brick by visiting our website.

To conclude, I continue to be thankful for your confidence and hope that you will see fit for me to continue serving you while promoting our Cardinal virtues of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism. Thank you to my State Board officers for your support and especially our State Deputy for his mentorship and for believing in my leadership skills by allowing me to help him manage several major portfolios.

I have truly felt welcomed as a State Board officer and hope to convey this pride during this homecoming State Convention.

Vivat Jesus!



Marcel Lemmen

Immediate Past State Deputy



Welcome to the 2025 Ontario State Convention celebrating 125 years of the Knights of Columbus in our province. I hope you enjoy the weekend.

This is my second year as Immediate Past State Deputy and my last term as a member of the Ontario State Board. My journey on the board started in 2015 when I was elected State Advocate



and the past ten years have flown by. It has been a great pleasure travelling the province, meeting and aiding our members and their councils in all the Officer positions I have held over those years. My loving wife, Charlene, supported and accompanied me the entire time. I am very grateful to her and couldn't have done it without her. I am blessed with many treasured memories.



This Fraternal Year, in addition to Immediate Past State Deputy, I have also been serving as Director of Evangelization and Faith Formation, Director of New Council Development and maintaining the daily membership and reporting Leaderboard on the Ontario State website.

Evangelization and Faith Formation

The primary focus of the Evangelization and Faith Formation Directorship is the implementation of the **Cor** initiative in Ontario. Essentially, Cor is regularly scheduled men's groups that explore our faith in a social setting. The name **Cor** is Latin for Heart and is taken from St. John Henry Newman's episcopal motto "*Cor ad Cor Loquitur*" which means "Heart Speaks to Heart". Cor meetings consist of three elements: prayer, formation, and fraternity. **Cor** meetings are held separately from regular Council meetings, are conducted at least monthly, and should be open to all men of the parish. There is detailed information about **Cor** on the Supreme website: www.kofc.org/cor.

Cor has been enthusiastically received by our Councils in Ontario. Based on the annual report of our District Deputies, which is due every September, 66 Councils implemented **Cor** in their parish in the previous Fraternal Year and another 44 indicated that they would implement it this year. My correspondence with Councils indicates that that number has grown significantly over the past few months.



Last October I was honoured to be invited to present Cor to the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario (ACBO) at their Fall Plenary Session in Toronto. The presentation was well received and I had the opportunity to speak with many of the Bishops afterwards.

New Council Development

New Councils not only increase membership, but they also extend the reach of the Knights of Columbus into parishes that were not previously being served by us. Last Fraternal Year we achieved the quota set by Supreme and formed four new councils in Ontario: Council #18384 at St. Alphonsus in Toronto, Council #18496 at St. John the Baptist in Burlington, Council #18495 at Holy Trinity Croatian in Oakville, and Council #18397 at Sacred Heart in Paris.

Once again this Fraternal Year, the quota set by Supreme is four new councils in Ontario. As of the writing of this report, we have formed three so far: Council #18571 at St. Boniface in Scarborough, Council #18583 at St. Monica in Nepean, and Council #18671 at St. Michael the Archangel in Waterloo. I am confident that we will exceed our quota because there are several prospects in the pipeline: five are actively recruiting and another six are being investigated.

Supreme has raised the bar and now require thirty members to start a new council, rather than twenty. Supreme feels that more charter members are required to ensure that a new council is successful. These members can be either new recruits or transfers. It is primarily the responsibility of the District Deputy to form a new council, and I have been promoting New Council Development to them at the District Deputy meetings.



Vivat Jesus

David Fisher

State Program Director



Over the past year, our provincial programs have continued to support and strengthen the Councils across Ontario, fostering, faith, fraternity, and service. Our Faith in Action directors have led various initiatives, each contributing to the mission of the Knights of Columbus in meaningful ways. A detailed summary of these programs and their impact are provided in the individual reports submitted by each Faith and Action director and need not be covered here.



District Deputy Workshops

DD WORKSHOPS	
# Participating DDs	Date
89	July 2023
86	December 2023
81	July 2024
81	December 2024

Our workshops underwent a complete overhaul to encourage more participation and engagement. Even the ladies program, under lady Zoye, underwent a significant review. The result was a 90 per cent increase in the number of DD's participating in the workshops and the ladies saw 100 per cent increase in participation.



Innovations included a DD workbook, practical leadership exercises, feedback surveys, and a 90 per cent reduction in the use of PowerPoint presentations and "Death by slides." Presenters were kept to their allotted times and all presentations were vetted prior to them being distributed for consistency of messaging and promoting our State Deputy's Québec+1 Strategic Action Plan. More specifically these sessions covered:

- Understanding and implementing faith in action
- Strategies for council growth
- Membership development and retention

- Administrative and financial responsibilities of District Deputies
- Effective communication and conflict resolution

Recognizing the importance of continuous learning and open communication, we have also introduced ongoing virtual leadership training opportunities. These sessions provide a platform for our provincial leaders to connect, share best practices, and seek guidance directly from the Faith in Action Program Director. This initiative ensured that district deputies and council leaders have ongoing support and the necessary resources to implement successful programs at the local level.



Thank you and Support

My term as your Program Director will end in June so I wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all of our District Deputies, Grand Knights, Program Directors, and Council leaders who have worked tirelessly to serve their communities, advance the mission of the Knights of Columbus in Ontario and support of our State Deputy's vision.



On a personal note, Lady Margie, and I feel extremely proud to have been a part of this incredible journey these past two years. Our State Deputy's vision has been both refreshing and inspiring at a time when these skill sets were needed most. The experience gained and new friendships developed will be treasured forever.

If you require any additional guidance, resources, or support, please do not hesitate to reach out. Together, we continue to build a strong foundation for faith, charity, and leadership within our councils.

Vivat Jesus!

Dem Magmanlac

State Membership Director



The Québec+1 Strategic Action Plan we adopted under State Deputy Bruce S. Poulin was both ambitious and innovative. There were many parts, but our focus, under membership, may be parsed three ways: First, our State Deputy and his Membership Team looked at the data for the past 17 years and determined the monthly averages and used these to get the monthly growth requirements to meet Supreme's target. Second, we reached out to our subordinate Councils and their members who were still recovering from the COVID-19 lockdowns and inspired them to get moving again. Finally, we increased our efforts at converting online members to regular membership within local councils.



State Deputy Monthly Visit Calendar

There are 12 Membership Information Officers, so it was easy for our State Deputy to assign one month to each MIO. The purpose was to bring the resources and leadership of the State Board officers and directors to a specific MIO for a specific month.

2024		2025	
Month	MIO & Area	Month	MIO & Area
July	London East (MIO#8)	January	Eastern Ontario (MIO#1)
August	North-Western Ontario (MIO#4)	February	Toronto East (MIO#12)
September	London West (MIO#9)	March	Northern Ontario (MIO#5)
October	Toronto Central (MIO#11)	April	Ottawa (MIO#2)
November	Peterborough (MIO#3)	May	Hamilton (MIO#6&7)
December	Toronto West (MIO#10)	June	OPEN

State Deputy monthly visit calendar.

They mentored and trained council executive officers during that specific month. The results were as expected: the month our State Deputy and his team visited the assigned MIO saw an increase in recruitment.

Monthly Membership Growth Goals / Actuals

From here, we set our own monthly goals that were more realistic and achievable because they were based on 17 years of data. The results are in, and we have managed, with few exceptions, to meet our monthly targets every month for the past 20 months and we are confident that we will exceed our targets again this year.

2023			2024		
Month	Regular	Online	Month	Regular	Online
July	50/5	70/82	January	63/95	87/112
August	54/20	76/90	February	75/102	105/98
September	50/47	81/111	March	88/83	122/143
October	63/47	87/127	April	84/85	116/145
November	96/97	134/132	May	75/75	105/132
December	80/78	110/82	June	109/116	151/110

2023-2024 Monthly Membership Growth Goals / Actuals

2024			2025		
Month	Regular Goal/Actual	Online Goal/Actual	Month	Regular Goal/Actual	Online Goal/Actual
July	58/24	82/64	January	68/52	94/153
August	54/20	75/94	February	81/37	113/174
September	63/33	87/161	March	95/48	131/199
October	68/51	94/232	April	90/50	125/139
November	103/67	144/216	May	81/xx	113/xx
December	86/31	118/89	June	117/xx	161/xx

2024-2025 Monthly Membership Growth Goals / Actuals

Fraternal Year	Membership Total	Yearly Intake
2024-2025	56,312	n/a
2023-2024	55,709	2,184
2022-2023	54,688	1,871
2021-2022	54,653	1,348
2020-2021	55,121	1,875
2019-2020	55,292	1,731
2018-2019	55,548	1,962
2017-2018	55,478	1,601
2016-2017	55,726	2,073
2015-2016	55,635	1,808
2014-2015	55,560	2,024
2013-2014	55,452	1,833
2012-2013	55,785	1,674
2011-2012	56,198	1,826
2010-2011	56,530	1,925
2009-2010	56,765	2,085
2008-2009	56,924	2,141
2007-2008	57,104	2,216
2006-2007	57,136	2,272

Membership Statistics (Effective March 31, 2025)



Council #7873 Membership Drive Divine Infant Parish in Orleans.

Conversion of Our Online Members

While registering online is a relatively new phenomenon with the Knights of Columbus, which began in 2018, it has become the largest component of our new members. Averaging 75 per cent of all new members, the Québec+1 Strategic Action Plan needed to address this reality and seek out new ways to convert online members into regular members in subordinate councils.

To that end an additional member was added to the team. While Rorry Facca was the Online Chairman, he was helped by Chris Dunn as our new Online conversion coordinator. In the past two consecutive years our online conversion went from roughly 26 per cent on June 30, 2023, to 50 per cent by March 2025 – almost double!

Moving Forward

As this is my last report under the current State Deputy, I wish to thank him for his trust in my abilities and as a valued contributor to his senior leadership team. From past Grand Knight to the State Online Chairman to the State Membership director in two short years, it has been a remarkable experience under a unique, energetic, and gifted leader, with outstanding communications skills. I have learned much, laughed lots, and Flo and I wish our State Deputy much success in whatever capacity the good Lord sees for him and Zoye in the future – both will be sorely missed.

Vivat Jesus!

Joseph Remedios

State Faith Director



As we conclude another successful year, we take this opportunity to reflect on our accomplishments under the Faith Pillar of our Faith in Action program. Our commitment to fostering spiritual growth and devotion has been evident through various initiatives that continue to strengthen our brotherhood and faith.



Second Saturday Rosary Devotion



The Second Saturday Rosary Devotion has now completed its sixth year and continues to grow in strength and participation. This program underscores the importance of communal prayer, reinforcing that prayer is our most powerful spiritual weapon in defending and deepening our faith. A true symbol of our dedication, this devotion is further highlighted during our exemplification ceremonies, where members are presented with a rosary as a sign of our shared commitment to prayer.

Eucharistic Adoration & Holy Hour

Knights have been encouraged to spend time in silent reflection with our Lord, and one of the most profound ways to do so is through participation in Eucharistic Adoration and Holy Hour. Many parishes hold Holy Hour on the First Friday of each month, providing a sacred space for contemplation and prayer. At the state level, our council has organized three Eucharistic Adorations: two at the District Deputies



Organizational Meetings and one at the State Convention. Additionally, numerous councils have partnered with their parishes to organize Eucharistic Adoration processions, further strengthening the faith within their communities.

Spiritual Reflections

This year, our theme focused on The Seven Wounds of Our Lord, providing a deep and meaningful exploration of Christ's suffering and sacrifice. Brother Knights and their families participated in a Day of Reflection, led by Fr. Dominic Borg, a distinguished Biblical scholar. His passionate and spiritual teachings illuminated the deeper meanings behind Christ's words.



The event included Holy Hour, the recitation of the Divine Mercy Rosary, and an opportunity for the sacrament of confession, as it coincided with the Lenten season. The day concluded with the celebration of Holy Mass, enriching the spiritual lives of all attendees.

Sacred Heart Pilgrim Icon



We are pleased to announce the launch of the Sacred Heart Pilgrim Icon Program across the province. With twelve icons traveling throughout our councils and parishes over the next year, this initiative aims to deepen devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, particularly in this Jubilee Year of the Church. Families are encouraged to participate in this devotion and consider enthroning their homes to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, fostering a sacred space of faith and love within their households.

State Chaplains

Under this administration, our State Deputy appointed an Associate State Chaplain, Bishop Bryan Bayda. He also took another unprecedented step by making the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy, His Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk, an honorary State Chaplain for the jurisdiction of Ontario upon his visit to this province in February 2025 and hosted by Council #1388 in Toronto.

As we look back on these achievements, we are reminded of our mission to strengthen our faith and bring our community closer to God. Thank you to all who have contributed to the success of these initiatives. May we continue to grow in faith and service in the coming year.

As another term as your Family Director comes to an end, Bernadette and I wish to thank our State Deputy for providing me the opportunity to serve the Order in this capacity for the past two years and to my brother Knights for their commitment to our Faith Pillar.

Vivat Jesus!



*Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy,
His Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk (center)
after receiving his honorary
Ontario State Chaplain jewel.*

Follow us on **Facebook**



**Knights of Columbus
Ontario State Council**

<https://www.facebook.com/OntarioStateCouncil>

Jaime Libaque

State Family Director



It is my pleasure to present to the Ontario members, highlights of the Family Service Program for the Fraternal Year 2024-25. The Knights of Columbus has been a Catholic Family organization since its inception. The protection and well being of families is at the core of the Knights' mission. Families are - and ought to be more - engaged in various (if not all) Service Programs. This perspective is relevant to our theme of "Our Father is Welcoming and this is our Homecoming."



Homecoming is associated with moments of connection and joy; Family Homecoming usually has components of shared meals and lasting memories. Our upcoming 125th anniversary presents a unique opportunity for a large Ontario families homecoming.

On an-ongoing basis, Families Homecoming occurs at the following Family Programs:

- Thanksgiving – Food for Families programs (collecting items and donating to Food Banks).
- Keep Christ in Christmas activities – poster competitions, nativity scenes.
- Family Week
- Family Fully Alive

"The Father is Welcoming" brings images of the return of the prodigal son to his family. This image relates to the following Family Programs:

- Family prayer
- Good Friday promotion
- Family of the Month / Family of the Year.

During 2024-25, we have seen a significant increase in the participation of Councils in various programs (more than 30% in some cases). This increase in participation is the result of a team effort (with Chairmen, District Deputies, State Office) and a concerted effort in communications (numerous articles, presentations at District Deputy meetings and one-to-one sessions). I remain optimistic that, with proper support, this trend can and should continue.

Family of the Month (FOM)

We have seen an increase in Councils' participation (30 submissions in the period July 2024-Jan 2025 compared to 22 submissions in the same period in 2023-24; a 36% increase). The following is the list of Family of the Month recognized at the Ontario State level, during the current fraternal year 2024-25.

YEAR	2004						2005
Month	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN
Name	Matthew LeCollier	Melville Buddel	Danny Roy	Winston McIntosh	Michael Beaton	Carlos Samayoa	Ivor Franke
Council	#1626	#1626	#1626	#1926	#1626	#1626	#1626
	#1926	#1926	#1926	#13417	#1926	#1926	#1926
	#13417	#12099	#13417	#17065	#6361	#13417	#17065
	#17065	#13417	#17065		#13244	#17065	
		#17065			#13417	#18571	
					#17065		

Keep Christ in Christmas (KCIC) Poster Contest

We have seen an increase in participation (56 entries compared to 42 the previous year, a 33 per cent increase. In 2025, we have 20 Councils participating across Ontario).



04

Food For Families (FFF)

We have seen an increase in Councils' participation in response to food insecurity issue in Ontario. For the first time, we have been able to collect data from all Councils submitting forms to Supreme for the period 2023/09 to 2024/02, and therefore have a baseline:

Total funds donated \$226,865

- Total food donated 96,430 pounds
- Total reimbursements to Councils \$29,400
- Total # of councils participating: 71 (+3 Assemblies)



St. Mary Catholic church at Barrie (Council #1626 coordinating) donated \$9,300 and 5,500 pounds to a local Food Bank.

Thank you for your support of the various Family Programs during 2024-25. The Family Pillar is alive and I can say, in good conscience, that it is in "a better state than found".

As I finish my term as Family Director, I wish to thank our State Deputy for providing me the opportunity to serve the Order in this capacity.



Vivat Jesus!

Alex Schadenberg

State Life Director



The past two years has been a harbinger for my portfolio and I am very happy to submit my report for this period because it is replete with significant achievements in this 125th anniversary of our homecoming to Ottawa after an absence of more than 50 years.



Ultrasound machine



Nowhere were these significant milestones more visible than with our ultrasound machine program.

Last fraternal year, we raised enough money to purchase and donate an ultrasound machine to a pro-life clinic in Brampton. This doubled the number of machines we have donated in our history. But we did not stop there. This fraternal year, we purchased another ultrasound machine and donated it to a pro-life clinic in Hamilton.

Sudbury is now seeking our help for an ultrasound machine, and it is our belief that, if the current trend continues, we will be able to

make a donation before the end of this fraternal year.

As many of you know, Abby Johnson is our keynote speaker at the state banquet dinner and we believe that her fundraising Plea will be sufficient to raise the outstanding funds needed for the purchase of a second ultrasound machine this fraternal year.



Donation of an Ultrasound Machine at the Pro-Life clinic in Hamilton

Silver Rose

There has been a marked increase in support for this program, particularly in the GTA. Much of the credit of this uptake in popularity is based on the appointment of new district deputies in July 2023. "Changing the guard" was very beneficial to this program because we benefitted from new ideas and interest.

Senior Visitation Program

I am pleased to report that most councils have resumed their regular visitation programs after the COVID-19 lockdowns. Reaching out to our older members and widows adds purpose to their lives and adds value to the work being done by our council member

National March For Life

The annual March for life will be held on Thursday, May 8. Similar to last year, everyone is encouraged to attend the special March for life Mass held at the Notre Dame Cathedral at 10 AM on May 8 just prior to the March which is scheduled to begin at 12:30 PM. There will also be the Rose Dinner after the March at 5 PM at the Ottawa conference and event centre off the Vanier Parkway.



International March for Life in Washington, D.C., in January 2024.

As many of you know, I have been the life Director under several state deputies, but I have never seen a State Deputy who has been more committed in time, effort and resources toward the life pillar than this State Deputy. I feel privileged to have worked with him because together, we have turned challenges into opportunities and restored hope to many because we can help at a time when government programs are falling short.

Susan and I remain steadfast in our support of the Knights and the life pillar because we see how the Knights are making a difference and building a culture of life that upholds the sanctity of human life from conception to natural death.

Viva Jesus!

Ultrasound Program Saving the Unborn



Help us Bring a Message of Hope for the Unborn.

Access to abortion does not save lives; it takes lives. Providing resources for mothers and their preborn babies means saving lives. One of the most powerful tools in our pro-life arsenal is the **ultrasound machine**. It gives the mother a window into the womb, allowing her to see her baby and hear the heartbeat. Often, this is a life-saving moment.

We have a medical clinic with a pro-life doctor in Sudbury that needs our help to acquire an ultrasound machine.

Let us work together, put our Faith in Action, and give hope to the unborn.

To make donations, visit
<https://ontariokofc.ca/donate/>



Daniel Mainville

State Community Director



Councils that have many and varied community programs and activities for their members and families generally have less of a retention problem and find it easier to recruit new members. I am pleased that the community pillar has contributed to the great success we have enjoyed over the past two consecutive terms.

The key to our success is that we have provided them with a reason for staying active and prospective candidates were given a reason for joining. In other words, by spending a little money, we have made more money which not only kept our programs alive but also helped expand them.



Global Wheelchair Mission



Peter Wanzuk in Thunder Bay

attending Mass at Holy Family parish in Thunder Bay where he met Peter Wanzuk. He offered him a lighter more flexible wheelchair for him to move around. Peter was surprised by the kind offer since he was not a member of the Knights of Columbus. Our State Deputy assured him that this was not an issue and an order was placed to get a wheelchair for Peter. A few weeks later, after he had received his wheelchair, Peter joined the Knights of Columbus. He was exemplified in January 2025 and claims to enjoy attending local Council meetings!

Last fraternal year we distributed some 110 wheelchairs to Puerto Rico. For the first time in our history, our fund-raising efforts were so good that we were able to make a second donation of wheelchairs in as many years. Since this was neither expected nor budgeted, our State Deputy and our Global Wheelchair Chairman Francisco Naar Chang paid their own way to Panama where some 218 wheelchairs were donated on behalf of the Knights of Ontario.

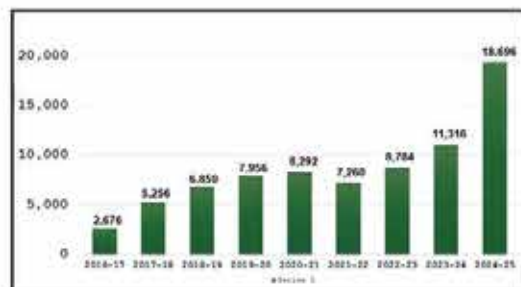
What is perhaps less well known about our wheelchair program is our donation of wheelchairs in Ontario. In August 2024, for example, our State Deputy was



Brother Peter Wanzuk with his new Wheelchair and DD #14 Bruce Sutton

Flagship Program - Coats for Kids

Echoing part of the State Deputy's report, we not only met our goal of 10,000 coats (established in 2008) we doubled the number of coats donated in the two past fraternal years. We went from 8,784 coats in 2022-2023 to almost 18,696 coats in 2024-2025.



Coats for Kids Chart.



Coats for Kids distribution in Hamilton.

The current cost of \$345 (including S&H) for a box of 12 brand new coats (or \$28 per coat). With the cost of living that keeps rising, more and more children will need our help to stay warm and go to school.

Basketball Free Throw



Brother Anthony Viresi, our Ontario State Basketball, hockey and soccer Chairman has done yeoman work with respect to our children programs. But his work with Basketball Free Throw has been truly exceptional. Almost one hundred councils took part in this year's competition.

Under the leadership of Sir Knight (SK) Dan Pergolesi as Chairman of the annual Movember campaign in November 2024, and with the assistance of past Chairmen, SKs Henry Miller and David Fisher, our participation has seen remarkable growth. The number of brother Knights involved surged from 12 in 2022 to over 60 participants during the combined 2023 and 2024 campaigns. This increased engagement led to a significant rise in donations, escalating from approximately \$5,000 in 2022 to over \$30,000 over 2023 & 2024. Congratulations to SK Dan Pergolesi and all participants for their dedication and success in this vital men's health initiative.

Our theme: "Our Father is welcoming, and this is our Homecoming" has a special meaning for me. I have registered to become a deacon, so this will be my last year as a director.

On behalf of Lady Lynn and myself, I wish to take this time to thank our State Deputy for believing in me and for his efforts to include Western and northern Ontario in his administration and for his visits to our local councils. During his visits he would often say: "I came because I care, and you matter," and we have been inspired by his example as a State Deputy. I will be forever mindful of his tremendous contribution to the Order. May God bless each of you always. Sincerely, and with fraternal best wishes always.

Vivat Jesus!

Enzo Caterina

State Squires Director



As we transition in July 2024, the Provincial Board of Squires has chosen to dedicate this centennial celebration to Brother Barnabus, the Founder of our order, under the theme "100 Fraternal Years in the Spirit of Brother Barnabas." This theme was selected to honor Brother Barnabus and to celebrate the remarkable achievement of reaching 100 years of the program.



In the current fraternal year, the Provincial Board has worked on numerous fundraising projects, organized a Remembrance Day Video and conducted four retreats: the All-Saints Day retreat in Mississauga, the Advent Retreat in Stouffville, the Lenten Retreat in Toronto, and a camp retreat in Windsor. Additionally, the Board has made visits to Stouffville, Oshawa, Mississauga, the Greater Toronto Area, and Windsor. For further information, please visit our website at www.ontariosquires.com.

This year, the Ontario State Board Theme is "Our Father is Welcoming, and this is our Homecoming". This is based on a Christian song from, Gable Price" Cory Asbury. This pertains to the quest for comfort, a sense of belonging, and a meaningful existence within the embrace of our Heavenly Father. It addresses the fundamental desire for a sanctuary, a space where we can experience complete acceptance and unconditional love.

It has been four years since I assumed the role of State Squires Director, and it has been a remarkable journey alongside our Provincial Board of Squires. Throughout this time, I have experienced numerous blessings from God, affirming my belief that this role was part of His plan for me. As I start a new chapter, I anticipate many blessings ahead. As I step down from this position in the end of June, I acknowledge the significant responsibility that awaits my successor. I would like to express my gratitude to the former State Deputy, Marcel Lemmen, and the current State Deputy, Bruce Poulin, along with his team, for their invaluable support during my tenure.



Chief Provincial Squire, Kevod Kouame (right).

I also extend my thanks to my executive team, including the Area Chairmen, the Squire Alumni Committee, Recruitment Chairman Matthew Ducharme, my convention Team members Joshua Dinshaw and Stephen Benson, past and present Provincial Board Officers, Fr Prior – Fr. Michel Quenneville, State Squire Liaison Joe Bodnar, and State Squire Advisor Narciso Rodrigues, for their dedication, hard work, and collaboration in elevating this Youth Program.

Joseph Mathews

State Special Olympics Chairman



While I have been the chairman of this program for several years, I still meet people who ask me: "What is the Special Olympics?" Special Olympics provides both community and school programs and competitions for athletes with intellectual disabilities. These programs instill confidence, contribute to a healthier lifestyle and help build lifelong friendships.



Over the years, the Ontario Knights, and their families, have been involved in a variety of community activities that are conducted by Special Olympics Ontario. This year, we have been invited to participate, be it as volunteers or sponsors, in the Special Olympics Ontario local and regional School Qualifier Games.

These Qualifier Games are competitions that provide an opportunity for student athletes to advance to the Special Olympics Provincial School Championships. To coincide with our 125th anniversary celebrations, these Championship Games will be held in Ottawa from June 3rd-5th. You can find more information regarding the various school programs by going to <https://www1.specialolympicsontario.com/schools/>.

Knights vs Flying Fathers Fundraising Hockey Game



State Deputy recruiting players in Thunder Bay.

Following this State Convention, a hockey team of brother Knights will be playing against the Flying Fathers Hockey Club as a charity fundraiser for the Special Olympics. This hockey game will be held on Sunday, April 27th at 2pm at the Jim Durrell Recreation Centre in Ottawa. The cost is \$20 per person and \$5.00 person child under the age of 12. The ticket includes a free hot dog and a pop. I hope to see everyone there!

Flag Relay Program

The Knights of Columbus and Columbian Squires, from across Ontario, continue to be very active supporters of the Special Olympics movement through our Flag Relay program, which serves as an umbrella for all the activities and events that we do for Special Olympics.



Members signing the Special Olympics banner in Timmins.

The purpose of this Flag Relay is to gather as many signatures as possible on these flags, along with raising both public awareness and funds for local Special Olympics programs. We also continue to have our virtual Flag Relay where anyone can sign a virtual flag and donate to Special Olympics by going to kocflagrelay.com.



Flag Relay at Arnprior District High School.



Fundraising Breakfast by Council #1679 in Brantford.

This year, in conjunction with the Pilgrim Icon Program for the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we will be holding our province wide Knights of Columbus Flag Relay in which twelve Special Olympics flags will accompany the twelve icons so that the two programs can be held at the same time while they are in your area.

During the Flag Relay, you can conduct a flag raising

event, invite Special Olympians to your Free Throw Competition, hold a fundraiser, such as a bottle drive, donate to the Special Olympics, or organize any other activity.

In closing, Lady Ruby and I would like to thank the Brother Knights, the Squires, along with their families and friends, for their help and continued support of the Special Olympics and for helping to make the experience such a memorable one for so many Special Olympians and their families.

Vivat Jesus!

Follow us on Twitter



**Knights of Columbus
Ontario State Council**

<https://twitter.com/KofCOntario>

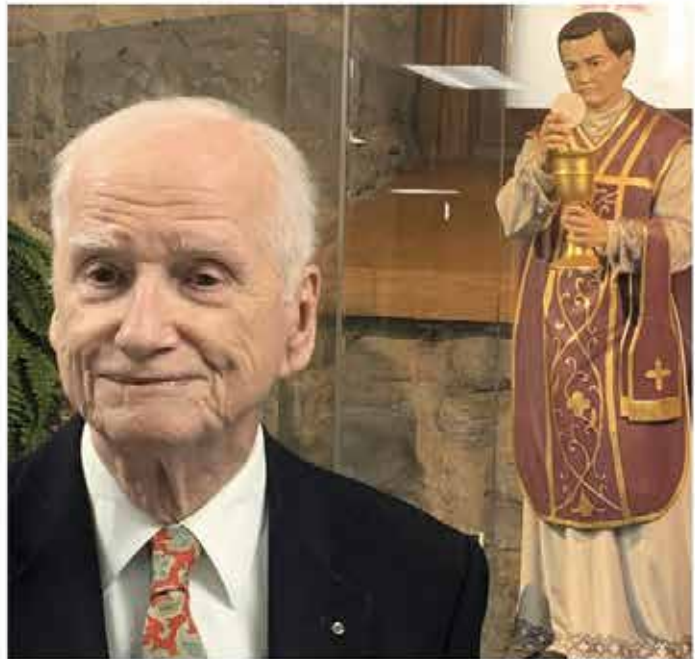
Michael O'Neill

*Blessed Michael J. McGivney Honoris and
Guild Chairman*



In addition to his role as parish priest and spiritual founder of the Knights of Columbus, Blessed Michael J. McGivney has embarked on a post-modern journey toward sainthood since 1996. On March 15, 2008, Pope Benedict XVI declared him venerable, and, on October 31, 2020, the Venerable Michael J. McGivney was beatified.

Blessed McGivney's ability to intercede in our daily lives has been recognized at the only Honoris in Canada located at the Spiritual home of the Knights of Columbus in Ontario at St. Patrick Basilica. Here, a "Request for favours box" has been installed. This is a very private and confidential part of The Honoris, but it is made available to the faithful who may wish to send a request for favours. You may send a request by mail or via email which will then be printed and placed in the box.



*Brother Michael O'Neill of Council 485 with the statue of
Blessed Father Michael J. McGivney at the Honoris in Ottawa.*



*(L to R) Treasurer of Council #485, Joe Prince;
State Deputy, Bruce S. Poulin; and PAC Marshall, Wayne Watts,
after installing the mannequins as part of the
renovation project for the Honoris.*



*A view of the Blessed Michael J. McGivney Honoris
with the new mannequins.*

The Honoris, which was established in 2013 and includes a first class relic of Blessed McGivney, is co-located with the pioneer Council of the Knights of Columbus in Ontario, St. Patrick Basilica Ottawa Council #485, as well as the first Fourth degree Assembly in Ontario, Cartier Assembly #860.

On July 1, 2023, a new fundraising initiative was launched whereby seven-day candles, which features a picture of Blessed Father McGivney along with the prayer for his canonization on the other side, are available for purchase. Our State Deputy also led a renovation profit which saw two KofC manequins beside Blessed McGivney to promote our patron of the Knights.

Blessed Michael J. McGivney Guild Chairman – Michael O'Neill



Every fraternal year, the Blessed Michael J. McGivney Guild embarks on an annual subscription drive aimed at promoting the canonization of our beloved founder. It is a time when we renew our commitment to spreading the word about Blessed McGivney's remarkable life and virtues. The Guild organizes numerous activities, including celebrations on his Feast Day, August 13, and throughout Founders Week in March, in addition to offering free subscriptions to the Guild.

Our records suggest that approximately 3,565 of more than 56,000 members in the Ontario jurisdiction have joined the Guild. This number reflects a significant gap in our collective support and underscores the need for increased participation among our members.

On behalf of the 185,000 members of the Guild worldwide, I extend a heartfelt invitation to each one of you to join us in this noble cause. Your support is crucial, especially at this pivotal time when another miracle attributed to Blessed McGivney is under investigation by the Vatican. Such a development brings us one step closer to his canonization, a momentous event that would not only honor his significant contributions but also illuminate the path of faith and service that he envisioned for Catholic laymen.

The canonization of Blessed McGivney goes to the very core of what we do in the Knights of Columbus. He envisioned a community of Catholic men not hiding their faith but living it vibrantly and publicly. Through his inspiration, we are called to put our faith into action, a mission that continues to guide our work and ministry. By supporting his canonization, we affirm our commitment to this mission and honor the legacy of a man whose vision gave birth to our fraternal order.

To register for the Guild, please visit
fathermcgivney.org/en/ssl-join-the-guild.html



Francisco Naar

Global Wheelchair Mission Chairman



There are so many reasons for this homecoming celebration, on this, our 125th anniversary in the province of Ontario. Many great men over the years have made the jurisdiction of Ontario one of the best in our Order and I would like to think that the Global Wheelchair program has contributed to that success.



Since 2006, Brother Knights have donated wheelchairs. For more than 12 years, I have been blessed to serve as your Global Wheelchair Mission Chairman. Working with six state deputies has given me the chance to help restore the dignity of mobility for many people living in Panama, Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Costa Rica, Syria, Ukraine and Puerto Rico. In all, I am pleased to report that, since 2006, we have donated approximately 3,600 wheelchairs.



Last month, at no cost to the membership, our State Deputy, Lady Zoye and I visited Panama and delivered 218 wheelchairs

to men and women, old and young who had been deprived of the freedom, liberty, and the dignity of mobility. No matter how many wheelchairs I have donated on your behalf, my eyes still perspire when I see the appreciation on all those who have received one of your donated wheelchairs.

Looking back, I can safely say that delivering wheelchairs has been a significant emotional event in my life that I will soon not forget. I am grateful to Christiana Flessner, the Executive Director of the Canadian Wheelchair Foundation and Joy Kilback, Assistant Administration, for their support and mentorship over these many years working together on this great program.

Likewise, thank you to all the councils and members for taking this program seriously and for understanding the simple joy of mobility can bring to a person. As I finish my term as District Deputy and Global Wheelchair Chairman, I wish to thank our State Deputy for providing me the opportunity to serve the Order in these capacities as well as for his leadership and friendship.



On behalf of my wife Benny and my family, God Bless you all.

Vivat Jesus!

Hikmat Dandan

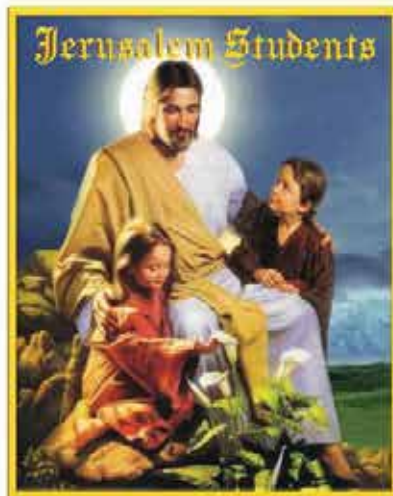
Christian Refugee Relief Holy Land and Persecuted Christians



In the last fraternal year, the members of the Knights of Columbus in Ontario raised \$450K for Christian Refugee Relief for a total of \$1.23M in the two years of this Administration. What better way to ponder this year's theme "Our Father is Welcoming and This is Our Homecoming" than to celebrate the innovative restructuring that was adopted almost two years ago and reflect upon the successes of our programs in the Holy Land.



Initiatives



Following the launch of www.christianrefugeerelief.org, Deputy Supreme Knight Arthur Peters and Archdiocese of Toronto generous donors provided significant support. Key initiatives included supporting the Christian villages in the Melkite Catholic Diocese of Tyre with food, medicine, healthcare and aiding Catholic education for St. Sauveur School of the Salvatorian Basilian Order with student scholarships, computer lab, student transportation and mitigate the main school's annual deficit.

The Melkite Catholic Patriarchate school in Beit Sahour near Bethlehem was also supported by the award winning successful www.jerusalemstudents.org project \$45,000 in educational scholarships as well as \$50,000 for establishing a Patriarchate Nursery thanks to a generous Toronto Archdiocese donor.

Compassionate Care for Orphans

We founded www.orphansforjesus.org to continue the message of our founder and support orphanages from Ukraine, Lebanon, the Holy Land, to Syria and will eventually grow to orphanages all over the world. Hikmat has made new transfers each to the joint Caritas Knights of Columbus orphanage in Poland, to The Holy Family Children's Home, known as Bethlehem Creche, in the Holy Land, and to other orphanages.






The remarkable efforts of the Ontario Knights of Columbus Christian Refugee Relief have created hope because we have helped. Each contribution for initiatives like Diocese of Tyre, Jerusalem Students, Orphans for Jesus helps those in dire need, supporting orphans and fulfilling the will of our Lord and the wish of Blessed Michael J. McGivney. It is only through these acts of charity, sometimes called Holy Moments, that we can change the world!

In closing, I have had the pleasure of working with our outgoing State Deputy. I saw him before and after his heart attack and incredible recovery followed by his commitment to the Order in Ontario. His example has been nothing short of inspiring. As his term comes to an end, let us enshrine his legacy even further by standing in solidarity with persecuted Christians in the Middle East.

Vivat Jesus!






WHY NOT SUBSCRIBE TO THE ONE AND ONLY
CANADIAN MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO SAINT KATERI
TEKAKWITHA, THE LILY OF THE MOHAWKS ???

- 36 COLOR PAGES;
- PUBLISHED THREE TIMES/YEAR;
- IN PRINT SINCE 1948;
- EDITED BY 3 FORMER VICE-POSTULATORS

\$16 / YEAR (CANADIAN / U.S. CURRENCY)

PLEASE MAKE YOUR CHEQUE PAYABLE TO: **KATERI CENTER** AND MAIL IT TO:
KATERI CENTER - P.O. BOX 1809 - KAHNAWAKE, QC - CANADA - J0L 1B0
 WEBSITE: WWW.KATERICENTER.COM ••• YOUTUBE.COM/KATERICENTER
 e-mail: katericenter@hotmail.com




Mario Duguay Executive Secretary



Three years ago, when I agreed to join the Hamilton office staff as the Executive Secretary, I was excited at the opportunity to work with an excellent team and a great State Board. As my commitment to serve the Order until the Spring of 2025 nears, I must say that everything I had hoped to experience has come true many times over.



I think everyone will agree with me when I state that the last two years have been particularly exciting times as we prepared for and executed our State Deputy's Québec +1 Strategic Action Plan - including our 125th anniversary celebrations. In fact, the Hamilton State Office has never been so busy. From more membership engagement to new members, more expenses, more diversified revenue streams (including 125th anniversary swag), were only a few factors that have contributed to a significant increase in the Hamilton State Office workload.

Added to this workload were the District Deputy Workshops which, for example, saw a 90 per cent increase in attendance and a 100 per cent participation increase in the Ladies' program. To diversify our revenue streams, we also opened the Saturday night banquet dinners to local Knights, which also saw a 30 per cent increase in attendance. There were also the office renovations precipitated by the departure of the Neil Bouvier KofC insurance bureau to whom we had sub-rented some office space.



Coats for Kids kick-off in Hamilton, October 2024.

Our new flagship program, Coats for Kids, morphed to include coats for Veterans. Moreover, donations of coats more than doubled under this administration in the past two years from some 8,784 coats in 2022-2023 to almost 18,696 coats in 2024-2025.

Anna Kocmarek excelled as the lead for our Coats for Kids program and her efforts will be sorely missed at the provincial level moving forward.



Finally, we created booklets for all events as a means of selling advertising space and to encourage sponsorships. This workload became very taxing and required new innovative approaches to the management of the Hamilton State Office - including the hiring of one new employee in February 2024 just to keep up with our State Deputy (a.k.a. "Busy Bruce").

As my contract draws to a close in May, I remain steadfast in my appreciation for all the support and guidance I received from my team at the Hamilton State Office: Liane, Ani, Godwill, and Anna. They provided excellent support and guidance to our State Board officers, directors, chairmen and subordinate council members and I am proud to have worked alongside each and everyone of them. Likewise, I speak on behalf of all staff members at the Hamilton State Office when I say thank you to our Knights of Columbus "customers" and wish everyone a very successful 125th anniversary - including my new replacement.



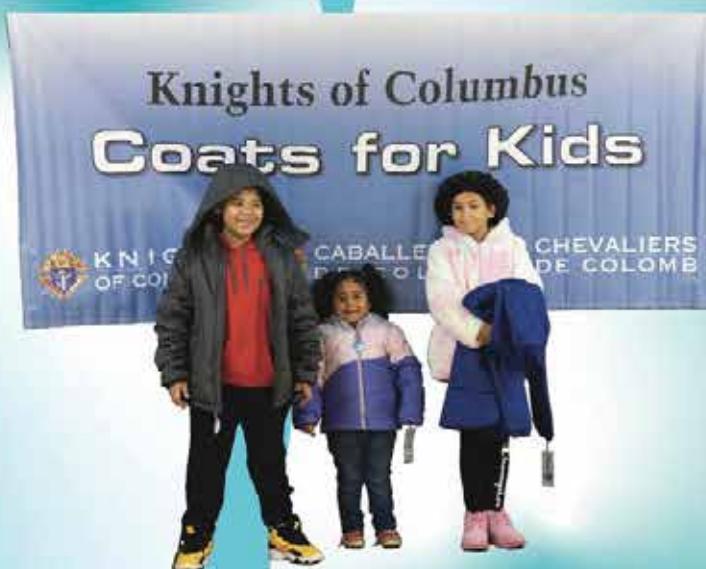
L-R: Ani Kaluzny, Godwill Tengen, Anna Kocmarek, State Deputy Bruce S. Poulin, Liane Dumas, and Mario Duguay,

Vivat Jesus!

Ontario Coats for Kids *Spreading the Warmth*

Our goal is to ensure that no school kids in Ontario go without a warm coat during winter.

For more information, visit
ontariokofc.ca/coat-for-kids
or contact your General Agent



Joseph Mathews

Vice Supreme Master



This fraternal year has been an exciting one for the Patriotic Degree.

Moore's Clothing for Men

We learned early in the year that Moore's Clothing for Men was selected as the official Canadian supplier of the Fourth Degree uniform, whereby a Sir Knight simply goes to any Moore's store to order his uniform. This announcement has been well received by the Sir Knights from across Canada and more than five hundred uniforms have already been ordered.



Veterans



Installation of the Ontario District Masters, September 2024.

The Cardinal McGuigan Province continues to support our veterans through various Patriotic programs, such as our Remembrance Day lawn signs; participating in the Ontario State Council's Veterans' House Canada – Ottawa, initiative and our census to identify and recognize those Brother Knights from Ontario who have served in the Canadian Catholic Army Huts program (1914-1918) and the Canadian Army Huts (1939-1945).

Helping Hands in the Philippines

We also introduced a new program called "Helping Hands Philippines" where we collect food and clothing, that are sent to our Brother Sir Knights in the Philippines, who in turn distribute these items to victims of natural disasters, such as a typhoon that recently hit the island of Luzon. Since September, the Assemblies in Ontario and Manitoba have sent more than twenty large boxes to the Philippines and have raised thousands of dollars for this worthwhile cause.



Boxes of aid scheduled for the Philippines.

125th Anniversary of the Fourth Degree

On February 22nd the Knights of Columbus celebrated the 125th anniversary of the Fourth Degree by holding the new U. S. version of the Exemplification at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, N.Y.. There were approximately seven hundred new Sir Knights exemplified with close to two thousand people in attendance. The Canadian version of the Exemplification should be available early next year.

During my term as Vice Supreme Master, I have enjoyed a close working relationship with our Ontario State Council officers concerning the celebrations for the 125th anniversary of both the Knights of Columbus in Ontario and the formation of the Fourth Degree.



125th Anniversary at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, N.Y., February 2025.

They also added Fourth Degree items to the Ontario State webstore, which was truly appreciated by the Sir Knights. For this, I would like to thank our State Deputy SK Bruce S. Poulin for his steadfast support of the Fourth Degree.



Special Lenten Mass at Father Michael McGivney Catholic Academy in Markham, March 2025.

This is my last report as your Vice Supreme Master, and Lady Ruby and I would like to express my deepest gratitude to our district masters and to my brother Sir Knights for your continued support over the past four years. We wish you a very successful convention and continued success in your future endeavours.

Vivat Jesus



After 50 Years, Annual State Convention Returns To Ottawa

By: State Deputy, Bruce S. Poulin

Hundreds of delegates from across the province convened in Ottawa from April 25 and 27, 2025 for the 122nd annual State Convention of the Knights of Columbus in Ontario. Highlights of the extensive program included:

CENOTAPH UNVEILING

Even before the jam-packed two-days of business and fellowship began, delegates, their ladies and guests arrived on April 24, 2025, for a special unveiling ceremony at Veterans' House Canada in Ottawa. The cenotaph—conceived, designed, funded and constructed by the Knights of Columbus—is only the third monument sponsored by the Order in Ontario.



The first was the Carhagouha Cross in Midland (1922); followed by the Pray for Peacemonument in Windsor (1967). Now, this new cenotaph honours our Veteran Community—both serving and retired—in the nation's capital.

The project was fully funded by February 2025 through donations. The unveiling ceremony also included a proclamation from the Mayor of Ottawa, declaring April 20-26 as Knights of Columbus Week.

Ottawa was chosen to host this convention—the first since 1974—in recognition of its historic significance as the birthplace of the Order in Ontario. Pioneer Council #485, established in Ottawa on January 28, 1900, also had the largest contingent of members in attendance at the convention.

MEMORIAL MASS & HOLY HOUR

Friday, the official opening day, included committee meetings, a Memorial Mass, and a Holy Hour—both of which were filmed by a crew hired by the Supreme Council. The adoration chapel at the convention featured three first-class relics: St. Jean de Brébeuf, St. Kateri Tekakwitha, and Blessed Carlo Acutis, who is soon to be canonized.

As a sign of mourning for the late Pope Francis, members were encouraged to wear purple ribbons on their labels and golf shirts. This sign of respect will continue until May 25, 2025.



After 50 Years, Annual State Convention Returns To Ottawa

Continued

OPENING CEREMONY AND AWARDS

The Opening Ceremony was held Friday evening at the Westin Ottawa hotel. Supreme Knight Patrick E. Kelley offered introductory remarks, followed by a year-in-review address by our State Deputy. Awards were then presented across multiple categories including Basketball Free Throw Championship, Soccer Challenge, Keep Christ in Christmas Poster Contest, Catholic Citizenship Essay Contest, Canadian Wheelchair Foundation Award, Trillium Awards, Council Bulletin Awards, Raffle Awards, Membership Awards, and Faith in Action Awards.

BUSINESS SESSION

Registration indicated 247 voting delegates, representing 492 councils and 56,443 members. They were joined by 80 observers and guests. Delegates heard reports from State Board officers and directors before voting to elect the 2025-2026 State Board. Brother Donny Thivierge of Council #12494 (Windsor) was elected as the new State Warden.



In the afternoon, the business session resumed with discussion of 24 resolutions. Delegates approved an increase of \$5 to the State per capita fee, effective in the 2026 calendar year. Another approved resolution allowed a portion of the Christopher Fund to be invested in a Canadian financial institution rather than an American one.

SATURDAY MASS

The Saturday Mass was celebrated by the State Chaplain at Notre Dame Cathedral Basilica, located near the convention hotel. The Mass featured a procession of 46 Sir Knights, four bishops, and 12 concelebrating priests. Nearly 1,000 people were in attendance.

STATE BANQUET DINNER

No convention is complete without the formal State Banquet Dinner. This year's dinner, held on Saturday evening, was one of the largest in more than 50 years, with 670 delegates, spouses, and guests in attendance.

The banquet featured 125th-anniversary-themed centerpieces with fairy lights, commemorative regional song booklets, and printed programs. Each guest received a complimentary bottle of wine donated by the State Deputy to mark the Order's 125th anniversary in Ontario.



After 50 Years, Annual State Convention Returns To Ottawa

Continued

The State Deputy also presented major awards including:

- Best Council Award – Council #7969 (Stoney Creek)
- Family of the Year Award – Brother Paul Martin and wife Cindy (Council #6361, Bowmanville)
- Ontario Field Agent of the Year – Jean-Pierre Ricard (Eastern Ontario)
- State Deputy Awards – Brothers David Fisher, Gerard Gonsalves, & Narciso Rodrigues

The keynote speaker was Abby Johnson, bestselling author and subject of the pro-life film *Unplanned*.

Thanks to her inspirational presence, more than \$30,000 was raised for the Knights of Columbus Ultrasound Initiative. With matching funds from the Supreme Council, another ultrasound machine will soon be donated. To close the evening, the State Deputy and Supreme Director from North Carolina, Colin Jorsch, performed a spirited duet of Neil Diamond's *Sweet Caroline* to the crowd's delight.

LADIES' PROGRAM

A special program for the delegates' wives included a decorative door ornament workshop, luncheon, and a shopping trip to the Rideau Centre.



SQUIRES CONVENTION

Reviving a tradition that began in 1948, the Columbian Squires held their annual convention concurrently and on-site. Approximately 150 Squires, area chairman, and family members attended the centennial event, which included the exemplification of 14 Squires into full Knighthood.





After 50 Years, Annual State Convention Returns To Ottawa

Continued

HOCKEY GAME

The convention concluded as it began—with a memorable public event. More than 400 spectators attended the first-ever hockey game between the Knights of Columbus Ontario State Council and the Flying Fathers on Sunday afternoon at the Jim Durrel Recreation Centre. The event raised more than \$5,000 for Special Olympics.



FINANCIAL OUTCOME AND LOOKING AHEAD

Following the convention, the Westin Ottawa hotel manager informed the Executive Secretary that the Knights would receive a refund of approximately \$30,000. This marked significant progress in the financial management of the State Convention. By contrast, the Knights were fined \$42,000 in 2022 in Niagara Falls because of unfulfilled contractual obligations (rooms rented and meal orders). The following two years saw a break-even result, and this year saw a surplus!

50

Preparations are already underway for next year's State Convention, which will again be held at the Westin Ottawa hotel.

IN CONCLUSION

As the echoes of fellowship, faith, and fraternity fade from the halls of the Westin Ottawa, we are left with a renewed sense of purpose and unity. This convention was more than a gathering—it was a celebration of our legacy, a witness to our unwavering commitment, and a powerful reminder of the good we can achieve together. With gratitude in our hearts for the blessings of the past and hope burning brightly for the journey ahead, we return to our councils re-energized—ready to serve our Church, our communities, and one another with courage, compassion, and conviction.

Vivat Jesus!



NEW EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

By: State Deputy, Bruce S. Poulin

As many will recall, brother Mario Duguay agreed to be our Executive Secretary for three years and help us celebrate our 125th anniversary at our annual State Convention in Ottawa in April 2025. This event has come and went, and we must now look forward to the next fraternal year. It is with this thought in mind that the Office Committee of the State Board began its search for a new Executive Secretary. We are pleased to report, with the blessing of the State Board elect that brother Todd Cowan has been hired with an effective date of May 20, 2025.



Born and raised on the family farm in Tilbury East, Kent County, Todd grew up with strong roots in community, hard work, and service. After completing his studies at the University of Guelph, he began his career in the agricultural industry, where he developed a deep appreciation for the land, the people who work it, and the vital role agriculture plays in our society.

His career path eventually led to Queen's Park and into the world of politics and public service. For nearly 20 years, he worked in both provincial and local government, gaining valuable insight into the inner workings of policy, governance, and the importance of strong community leadership.

In 2016, he followed a long-standing dream and founded a weekly newspaper in the Waterloo Region, where he operated for just over seven years. The paper served as a voice for the community, shining a spotlight on local issues, people and events. Sadly, like many small businesses, he had to close due to the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing government sanctioned lockdowns.

For the past 16 years, he has been a proud and enthusiastic member of the Knights of Columbus. Through his Council and Assembly, he has held numerous leadership roles including Grand Knight and Faithful Navigator, and he joined the Poulin Administration where he has served as a District Deputy for the past two consecutive years.

He lives in Tavistock with his beautiful wife Jill. Whether through public service, community work, or faith, Todd remains committed to making a difference and will be a boon for our State Office in Hamilton and the Order in the jurisdiction of Ontario. Welcome Todd!

Vivat Jesus!



Sudbury Area Councils Raises Funds with a Cash Calendar

By: District Master #3, Don Larocque

The Maison Inner-City Home de/of Sudbury provides emergency food bank services to approximately 1,200 households a month throughout Greater Sudbury; it also offers life skills programs and support for clients and their families; it has long been supported by local Councils.

Thirteen Sudbury area Councils, from the English and French Districts, decided to support Maison Inner-City Home with a 2025 cash calendar (daily prizes). Since 2025, is the 125th anniversary of the Knights in Ontario, with the support and help of Council #485 in Ottawa, the calendar was also designed to both celebrate and be a souvenir of the anniversary. This has truly been a community project, with the calendar designed and printed in Sudbury, local sponsors, and primarily local sales.

The cash calendar, with a prize board of \$21,750, has been overwhelmingly supported by the community in terms of sponsorships and sales (sold out 4,500 copies). The calendar is fully bilingual; per the communities we serve. When completed, the project will yield a donation to Maison Inner-City Home of more than \$60,000.

This project brought 14 councils together in unity, fraternity and charity, and provided the opportunity for many knights to get to know and work with members of other councils. It is an excellent example of putting our faith into action, a project for the community, that impacts families in thier time of need.



52

Vivat Jesus!