

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS ALL SAINTS COUNCIL 9709 NEWSLETTER



June 2024

THIS ISSUE'S HIGHLIGHTS AND MUCH MORE!



Father Son Retreat



Welcome Deb and Jay



Membership Drive



New Durham Bulls Season



OLR Food Drive



State Convention



Philanthropy



Farewell Monsignor Clay

2024 FATHER SON RETREAT



On Saturday, April 13th, our Council held our first ever Father Son Retreat on Campus here at St Francis. We had 24 Fathers and 27 Sons engage in Faith and Family activities and reflections. John Price, our Church and Faith Director, along with Dave Rahe, Tony Rivezzo and David Payne began planning this event in January with coaching from Monsignor Clay and Tim Hetzel. The guest speakers included Shawn Tenace, Mike Wrzesien, and Vince Friedman. They inspired all in attendance with their messages of God's love for us as a beacon for the family unit and how Fathers are the family Faith Leaders. A breakout session for the Sons had them assemble their own Curbside Cares packages that included a personal handwritten note by each of them. They also reflected on their own feelings of how serving those in the margins made them feel. Later on, the Fathers and Sons had one-on-one time to share their own personal feelings about each other and their families. After that, each family assembled their own "Shield", a symbol of how God's love protects us all. The shield included their own family plaque and photos taken earlier by our own Brother Shaun Bales and Tony's daughter, Jennifer. This included writing letters to each other that they would take home and share with each other at a later time. Pizza and Ice Cream was followed by an intense paper airplane contest. To end this perfect day, all attendees, speakers and facilitators attended Saturday evening mass where they were recognized by Monsignor Clay and applauded by the congregation. By all accounts and feedback, this was one special and memorable day for all who participated.

More Father Son Retreat



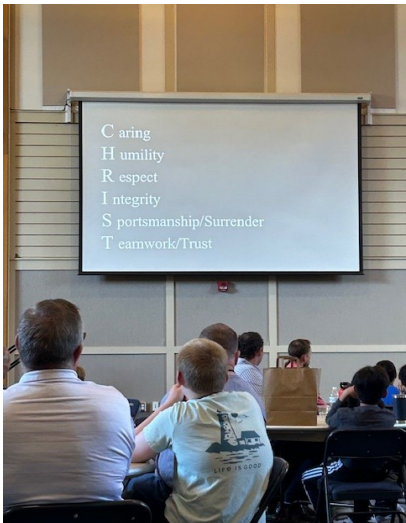
Guest Speakers Vince Friedman, Shawn Tenace, Dave Rahe and Mike Wrzesien



Son's Curbside Cares Project



Family Shield



One-on-One Reflection



Father Son Retreat, Continued



Pizza and Paper Airplane Contest



Fathers and Sons



Perfect way to end the perfect day by Celebrating
5:30 Saturday evening Mass together



FATHER SON RETREAT 2024

WELCOME JAY AND DEB LANDRY!



Welcome to our new Director of Faith Formation

Our new Director of Faith Formation, Jay Landry arrived with his wife, Deb, on April 6th Saturday afternoon from Wisconsin! Our Council Knights and other volunteers showed up to stock the fridge and help unload the truck!

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE 2024



For the first time in our Council's rich history, we received the blessing from Monsignor Clay to hold a "Paint the Campus Blue" weekend on April 13th and 14th. This was held in concert with the Father Son Retreat on April 13th and the Knights hosting donuts and coffee following the Sunday morning masses so there was already significant attention and energy. We drew in 3 Form 100's and 8 Information Cards being followed up as of this writing. Our next Exemplification Ceremony is scheduled for June 4th.

THE NEW SEASON BEGINS!



Let's Play Ball! The Knights of Columbus are preparing to take the field to serve the Durham Bulls fans for the 2024 baseball season.

- Time to warm up your arms (in order to pour draft beers)
- Time to practice eating hotdogs (to prepare for \$1.00 hotdog nights)
- Time to put on the "customer service smile" (as we serve food and beverages to the best fans in baseball)

We need you to make this fundraiser a success. The proceeds from our volunteer work for the Durham Bulls will fund the charitable giving program of the All Saints Council. By donating your time, you are ensuring a local non-profit organization will receive must-needed dollars for their mission. Your efforts make a true impact for those in need in our community. Representatives from CPO, Interact, Birth Choice, The Joel Fund, Hope Reins, Urban Ministries, The Bair Foundation, and Women's Veterans Support Services (to name a few organizations) appreciate the financial support we provide on an annual basis. Thank you for giving so generously of your time to help our brothers and sisters in Christ. Please consider signing up for at least one game per month. Also, your wife, or your adult children (age 18 or older) are welcome to help as well. Sign up below:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D45A4AF22ABFCCE9-48154562-durham#/>

Thank you in advance for your continued support of this fundraiser. The Brothers of the All Saints Council have risen to the occasion year-after-year in support of the Durham Bulls fundraiser. I extend my appreciation for your commitment of time for this important work.

-Brother Mike Wrzesien

OUR LADY OF ROSARY FOOD DRIVE 2024



For many years, the generous community of St Francis of Assisi has conducted Food Drives for our sister Parish, Our Lady of the Rosary in Louisburg, NC. Over 20% of the population of that area live below the poverty level so this is a critical campaign to ensure food security for that region.

This spring was once again an exceptionally generous drive producing 8,000# of food and dry goods along with over \$6,000 in cash and checks! Our Worthy Treasurer's wife, Theresa Baumgartner, organized the weekend volunteers assigned to collecting and sorting the food into the truck bins. Then on the Monday April 29th, PGK David Payne delivered the bounty to the OLR food pantry in Louisburg where they assist the OLR volunteers in offloading the collection and sorting it for future distribution to the community.

Once again, the drive was so successful that we overloaded their pantry shelves with food having to be stored on the ground and surrounding tables. This truly was a special, rewarding experience for Dave, who has been driving these trucks up to OLR for the past 7 years. Roseanne Anderer, OLR Food Pantry Director said this will keep them going until September, just shy of our next SFA food Drive. Thank you St Francis for making this upcoming summer season special for many families in Louisburg, NC!

104th NC KofC State Convention



The State Convention was held on May 3-5 at the Imperial Sheraton Hotel in Durham. For the past four years, your All Saints Council #9709 has been well represented at the NC State Conventions. Past awards include Membership, The Columbian Award for service hours and charity work, Family of the Year, and the highest individual award, Knight of the Year. This year was no exception! We did it again securing those awards in 2024! In addition, 2024 individual awards went to Will Austin for Rookie of the Year and our grand statesman, Tony Rivezzo, for Knight of the Year! Both Will and Tony had their wives, Stephanie and Judy respectively, and Tony's daughters, Jennifer and Jessica were also present as a surprise for their dad.

This is the fourth year in a row that our Council has produced the "North Carolina State Knight of the Year." As the highest individual award, it is saved as the final award of the Saturday evening banquet and is the most dramatic moment of the entire convention. All of our previous winners were present. For 2021, PGK, Steve Becker. For 2022, it was our Faithful Navigator, Mike Wrzesien. And for last year, it was our Worthy Grand Knight, Shawn Bayle.

Since it was held locally, your Council was well represented with the highest individual attendance by any of the 130 State Councils. In addition to those already mentioned, our Grand Knight's wife, MaryBeth, Chancellor Tommy Dalton, Director Wes Evans, Worthy Treasurer, Mark Baumgartner, PGK and future GK, Bryan Kozak, and PGK David Payne were all present to support past and present winners. PGK (and holder of many, many Council and Assembly officer roles) Tom Dupree and Elaine were also in attendance to once again staff the Convention table in support of our Veterans.

Also present were our Council Brothers who make us proud by serving at the State and District levels including State Treasurer Elect, Joe McCarthy and his wife, Anne Marie. James Davisson, NC State Financial and Procedure Training Administrator, and his wife, Britta, along with their children were there to enjoy the weekend family activities. Our Worthy District Deputy, George Beserock and his wife, Shirley, were also with us to celebrate the many awards and recognitions for our Council.

Another highlight this year was the presence of Fr. Chris Koehn. Not only is he our incoming Pastor at St Francis but is the Associate State Chaplain for the NC Knights of Columbus. He joined us following the Banquet to recognize our Council and this year's Award winners. Welcome Father Chris!

Our Worthy Grand Knight, Shawn, was indeed a proud papa during a weekend that seemed all about Council #9709. Now that this one is in the books, we cannot wait to see what you all accomplish for this coming year! Congratulations, All Saints Council of St Francis!

104th NC KofC State Convention

NORTH CAROLINA STATE ROOKIE OF THE YEAR, WILL AUSTIN!



Surprise!



Well Deserved Award!



Biggest Fan!



Proud Father Chris!

Criteria for Rookie of the Year....

:As a Council recruits new members, often one of these new Brothers seems to get very involved as soon as they join. Each Council can submit one (1) candidate for consideration of this award. This is an excellent way to give that brother some very special recognition.

A candidate for this award must be a member in good standing and joined the Order no more than eighteen (18) months before January 1.

The Rookie of the Year should be a Knight who is actively involved in the works of the Order, his Church and his community. All of these areas are to be described in detail."

As we read the criteria for "State Rookie of the Year," Brother Will was an easy choice - both for our Council and the State Officers as they reviewed dozens of submittals. Will came aboard a little over a year ago and began making an immediate impact through his role as Director of Youth for our Council. After starting Soccer Challenge and Free Throw Contest back up a couple of years ago, Will jumped in and made it bigger and better than ever. Participation grew enthusiastically and word spread about these fun and exciting events. Will involves his wife and daughter making these events truly consistent with what the Knights are all about-Family!

Stay tuned Brothers! You will be hearing and seeing more from Brother Will Austin in the Future of All Saints Council #9709!

STATE MEMBERSHIP and CHARITY AWARDS to #9709

State Criteria for Membership Award

*"Membership is the key to continued success and survival of a Council. New members provide new opportunities for the financial viability of your Council as well as new innovative programs that better serve our families, our Church, and our community. For that reason, the **North Carolina State Council recognizes and awards those Councils that are growing in membership.**"*

State Criteria for Service Award

"The service programs performed by Councils within North Carolina are judged against a standard based upon the size of the Council. Those Councils that meet the required goals are rewarded."

Charity is the highest level of performance

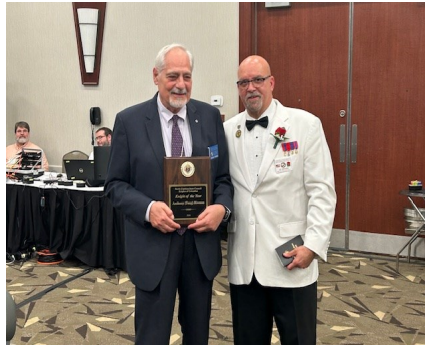
See that man in the mirror? Yes, you! Congratulations for all that you do to grow our Council with like-minded Catholic gentlemen with the goal of growing our local organization even beyond it's already amazing accomplishments! And serving at Bulls games, dinners and breakfasts to raise critical funds for our Charities. You are an inspiration!

104th NC KofC State Convention

NORTH CAROLINA STATE KNIGHT OF THE YEAR, TONY RIVEZZO!



The Announcement



Well Deserved Award



Our 4th year of Receiving "the pin" and all are present



Humble and Proud"



Tony and his Family celebrate



Father Chris too!



Proud WGK Shawn with this year's winners

STATE CRITERIA FOR KNIGHT OF THE YEAR:

*"Each Council can submit one (1) candidate for consideration of this award. **Every Council has at least one Brother Knight who stands out.** This is an excellent way to give him some special recognition.*

A candidate for this award must be a member in good standing and must have been a member of the Order for a minimum of one (1) year by January 1.

The Knight of the Year should be a Knight who is actively involved in the works of the Order, his Church, and his community. All of these areas should be described in detail in his submission."

Those of us active in the Council know just what a force of nature this Gentleman presents in his everyday life of service to our Community, Parish and Council. It would take a book to cover all of his accomplishments but his tireless efforts to support all the various programs we become involved in would wear down the common man. He is in constant contact with his directors and has his finger on the pulse to update anyone who asks. He is a confidante for our Worthy Grand Knight, Shawn, and loyal to his family, fellow Knights and Officers. Congratulations, Tony, and thank you for all that you do to make life better for all those you serve!!

104th NC KofC State Convention

More Highlights from the Convention!



Our Worthy Grand Knight, Shawn Bayle, proudly accepted the Awards for Charity and Membership. Shawn was also asked to be the MC during the Saturday Awards Luncheon.



Your Council Representatives for the 104th NC State Convention this year included DD9 George Beserock, Worthy Grand Knight, Shawn Bayle, Worthy Chancellor, Tommy Dalton, PGK David Payne, PGK and incoming Grand Knight, Bryan Kozak, Director Wes Evans, General Agent, Chris Mahoney, Program Director and NC State Knight of the Year, Tony Rivezzo, PGK and Faithful Navigator, Mike Wrzesien, Worthy Treasurer, Mark Baumgartner, and PGK, Steve Becker. Not shown are PGK and State VAVS Representative, Tom Dupree, and Director and Rookie of the Year, Will Austin. Also missing are wives Elaine Dupree, Shirley Beserock, MaryBeth Bayle, Judy Rivezzo and Stephanie Austin.

PHILANTHROPY

Charity is at the heart of our mission and faith. The All Saints Council 9709 has built its legacy on how we support a number of local and state charitable organizations. Brother Mike Wrzesien has established a solid relationship with the Durham Bulls to ensure a steady stream of income to support these inspiring charities. In addition to raising funds, thousands of hours of time and talent is also applied by our generous Council. These are but a few examples.

Message from Cathy Smith, **St. Vincent DePaul**, Director:

“The mission of St. Vincent de Paul of St. Francis of Raleigh is to share God’s mercy by personally serving those in need of assistance for any acute financial burden that is currently affecting their lives. References for other assistance, services and counseling may also be provided. Our goal is to keep families in their homes with the lights on. Thank you to the Knights of Columbus for assisting us in this work.”



State Treasurer elect, Joe McCarthy, and Tony Rivezzo delivering a \$500 donation to Cathy Smith.

InterAct is the only provider of domestic violence and sexual assault protection services in Wake county---saving lives, rebuilding lives and securing safer futures for individuals and families in our community.

Chennelle Miller, Communications Manager and Rhonda Raney, Executive Director receiving the \$500 donation from Program Director, Tony Rivezzo



St. Joseph Primary Care provides health care primarily for people who don't have or can't afford health insurance. A single membership care program which for only \$1,000 a year (less than \$85 month) provides unlimited office visits with a board-certified physician requiring no co-pay, same or next day appointments and much more.

Mike Rock delivers a \$500 check to Peter Le, Executive Director.

PHILANTHROPY



Healing Transitions provides help for people suffering from alcoholism and other drug addictions while treating these abuses as a healthcare issue. HT's services include an emergency drop-in shelter, non-medical detox center, long-term recovery program and family support classes.

Mike Rock is delivering a \$500 donation to Andrea Borden, Chris Budnick, Executive Director and Harris Gregg.

Cystic Fibrosis is a progressive, genetic disease that affects the lungs, pancreas, and other organs. While the CF Foundation is the world's leader in search for a cure, it also provides guidance on how to treat and live with this chronic disease. Close to 40,000 people in the U.S. have cystic fibrosis. Mike Rock is delivering a \$500 donation for the CF Foundation.

Receiving the check are Jamie Bockover, Development Director and Michelle Smith, Senior Development Director.

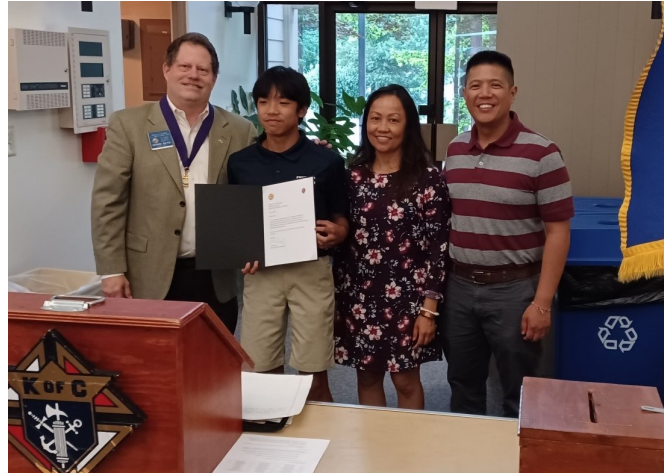


The Bair Foundation is a multi-service organization that provides care and aid to children and families. Foster Care=TBF helps connect a child with a loving family. Family Service=TBF offers a family-focused intervention so children can remain safely in their home. Adoption Service= TBF facilitates the very complex adoption process of foster children.

Tony delivering a little joy along with a \$500 donation. TBF so grateful for our generosity!

AND THE ESSAY CONTEST WINNER IS,,,,,

GABRIEL DIMANLIG!



It is reassuring to know that the future of this great nation is secure when an 8th Grader like Gabriel is able to capture and express such a profound display of faith and awareness of today's challenges in reaching a broader population to spread God's word. Will Austin, another great job in reaching out to TFS to coordinate this renewed Essay Contest event!

Mrs. Dellasega
ELA 1st Period
7 February, 2024

How the Church can Evangelize in the Digital Age

In the digital age, the church faces both chances and challenges in successfully spreading and evangelizing the Word of God. The invention of being able to talk and communicate to each other through technology has changed the way people all over the world connect with one another, making it possible for the church to outreach and spread the word of God like never before!

One successful way that the church can evangelize in the digital age is by using social media. This way has already been used by many people, churches, and communities all over the world! Apps and platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and even Tik Tok can offer wide and extensive reach to different audiences from different parts around the world, varying from age, where someone comes from and their nationality. Churches can create uplifting and feel good content such as posting motivational and inspirational quotes and other things to spread the word of God, they can also post content for people part of the church or new to take part and participate in while also building a community on line. Adding on to this, they can target people who don't know a lot about the church and make them learn even more about it, however there can be some disadvantages to this way of spreading the word of God through this way.

Another way for reaching a bigger audience is live streaming. Churches can stream the different events and even masses that they do (like here at St Frances every Sunday as well as many other churches. This can enable people who want to attend mass to participate at home or on the go. This not only helps people that can not attend in real life, but it also spreads the church's reach to people in different surrounding areas. Adding on to live streaming, the church can also do podcasts. These podcasts can post sermons, talks, or interviews with people who work, help out, or even just take part of the church. They both can give an easy and accessible way for people to connect with the church on the go and at their own time. Websites like YouTube and Twitch can more can provide channels for sharing content related to religion.

The church can also use online forums and groups like reddit and can create a community with members part of the church as well with new ones who would like to learn more the Catholic faith. Websites and places like these can give a place for people to ask questions, share different experiences and significant talks about the faith. The church can take part in these talks, they can answer questions and help others. These various ways to help evangelize in the digital age can really help out the church in many different ways, whether it's showing positive and helpful content about the Catholic faith, broadcasting the events that the Church is hosting or using forums to help others, these can help the Church evangelize very well!

COMMUNITY HEROES

Appreciation for Brian Van Norman, Owner, Daylight Donuts!



Major Charles Whiter, Salvation Army
Awards Brian with Special Plaque



Brian recognized by Meg Sink, Oak City Cares,
Major Whiter, and Faithful Navigator, Mike Wrzesien

The Sir Knights of the St. Francis of Assisi Assembly recognized Brian Van Norman, the owner of Daylight Donuts, at the May 9th membership meeting. Brian was invited to join the Knights for dinner and for formal recognition of his generous spirit in serving those in the community. Local non-profit organizations have been the beneficiaries of Brian's commitment to helping our brothers and sisters of Christ who are living on the margins of society or serving in the military.

For the past decade, members of the All Saints Council and the St. Francis of Assisi Assembly have been picking up donuts donated by Brian Van Norman and delivering the donuts to the following organizations in Raleigh: Oak City Cares, Salvation Army, Shepherd's Table, USO at RDU Airport, and the Women's Center. Each week these non-profit groups serve meals, provide clothing, offer a place to shower and refresh, and provide a sense of community and self-value for those struggling in their daily life.

During the presentation of a plaque to Brian for his service, he mentioned he worked in the donut industry for 15 years when the owner of Daylight Donut decided to retire. Brian was offered the opportunity to purchase the business and he became the owner of Daylight Donuts in 2012. He immediately saw the need to help those in the community. Waking up at 4:00 am each day to make donuts for his customers, he also finds energy to bake a few more donuts for the non-profit organizations.

In appreciation of Brian's donations, the Assembly invited two guests to share their stories of the impact of Brian's generosity. Meg Sink of Oak City Cares shared information about the services her organization provides to the homeless community and how significant Brian's contribution has been to her clients. Meg mentioned how excited her clients get over having the opportunity to choose what variety of donut they select. In their day-to-day world, Meg's clients – many of whom are homeless – are rarely giving an opportunity to make a selection about food choices.

Also, in attendance at the dinner and recognition was Major Charles Whiter from the Salvation Army. Major Whiter presented Brian with a framed letter of appreciation and thanked Brian for making a difference in the lives of some many people who need our help and compassion. The Salvation Army has committed to only purchasing donuts from Brian and Daylight Donuts for all their future events.

Over the past several years Brian has also provided countless donuts (and donut holes) to St. Francis for many campus events. As Brother Knights we have worked many hours in Fellowship Hall serving Brian's donuts to our fellow parishioners. May we continue to be blessed with Brian's generosity and commitment to help those in need.

~ Brother Mike Wrzesien

FAREWELL, MONSIGNOR CLAY!



Appreciation for Monsignor Clay's Service to St. Francis of Assisi

Once again, proving that God always has a plan for us, the parishioners of St. Francis of Assisi were blessed with the leadership of Monsignor Michael Clay. In the Spring of 2020, while many parishioners were concerned about the loss of our Franciscan Friars, the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic, and the uncertainty of new parish leadership, Monsignor Clay walked into our lives and immediately made a positive impact with his love and compassion for all members of our society. His confidence and calm demeanor helped the parishioners realize we were in good hands with our new spiritual leader.

Now, four years later, Monsignor Clay is embarking on a new journey. God has called him to serve as a caregiver to his 93 year old mother in New Bern, North Carolina. What a beautiful story, where the son can serve his Mom with his love and compassion, while offering his protection and steady hand of care.

While he will be missed, we, as parishioners of St. Francis of Assisi, and as Brothers in the Knights of Columbus, are truly appreciative of his service and support. Monsignor Clay cultivated a seamless transition from the Franciscans to the diocese leadership at St. Francis -- Including fully embracing the Franciscan spirit of our parish. He let the Holy Spirit guide him as he stepped into the role as Pastor to a church with over 15,000 parishioners. With a focus on listening to the parishioners, Monsignor was able to quickly grasp the heartbeat of the parish, and he ensured our parish would continue to serve those in the community, care for God's creation, and remain open to the inclusivity of all people.

Under his leadership, and with his formal training as an educator, Monsignor created numerous opportunities for parishioners to deepen their understanding of our Catholic faith and our church's history. During the pandemic, when many parishioners were unable to come to Mass or attend education sessions, he had the insight to create an on-line program – To Know, To Believe, To Live (KBL) – a series of modules for our lifelong faith journey. Small Christian groups, and members of the Knights, attended the KBL sessions to deepen our faith and understanding of the Catholic Church's teaching and sacraments. Also, under faith and education, Monsignor encouraged the Knights to plan and host a Father – Son Retreat, where Dads and their sons could experience an opportunity to discuss their faith and how God is present in everything we do with our families and friends. The program was a success, thanks to the assistance and guidance provided by Monsignor Clay. (cont'd next page)

FAREWELL, MONSIGNOR CLAY!

Striving to share his message of family and faith, Monsignor embraced the importance of the young families in our parish -- as the future of our church. He placed an emphasis on family faith formation and encouraged the parents to serve as the first teachers of the faith for their children. Monsignor was actively involved in supporting programs at the St. Francis Preschool and the Franciscan School, including helping with fundraising, event planning, educating the children, presiding over children's Masses, and providing support of teachers and administrators to show appreciation for the amazing work they do every day in the classroom.

Each weekend, the parishioners of St. Francis of Assisi were challenged, and called to action, by Monsignor Clay's homilies. His messages reinforced the Gospel readings of God's love for us, while also challenging us to grow our faith, while serving as evangelists to those in the community. The message was clear -- our faith is alive, and faith requires action. Monsignor also mentored several younger priests during his time at St. Francis, serving as their spiritual leader, while also helping them to grow their parish administrative skills, preparing them for Pastoral roles in the Diocese of Raleigh.

From a business perspective -- and running a parish as large as St. Francis of Assisi is like running a huge business venture -- Monsignor Clay's 40+ years of experience of pastoral care and oversight was evident in the financial position of the parish. Under his leadership St. Francis of Assisi has retired all the mortgages (church, chapel, school, community center) and built a maintenance fund to ensure our campus buildings and grounds continue to operate in an efficient manner to serve the parishioners and the students. Our beautiful campus is a place of peace and serenity, allowing parishioners to find a place of comfort and community.

In regard to the Knights of Columbus, Monsignor Clay -- himself a Brother Knight -- was a supporter of our programs and he provided advice and counsel to the leadership teams from both the All Saints Council and the St. Francis of Assisi Assembly. He was an active participant in numerous Knights of Columbus sponsored events on campus -- Red Cross blood drives, parish breakfasts, spaghetti dinners, First Responder appreciation, Veterans Day breakfast, Memorial Day Masses and flag ceremonies, RCIA meetings, TFS Spelling Bee, Harvest Moon Festival, Stations of the Cross, Rosary Program, Essay contest, church decorations for Christmas, RSVP program, and many other programs. He shared his appreciation for the work of the Knights of Columbus and worked with the parish staff to utilize the manpower of the Knights to help with various programs on campus. He elevated our standing in the parish community to be recognized for our "service to all" and our willingness to lend our manpower, provide financial support for parish programs, and serve in leadership roles in numerous ministries on campus. Monsignor also supported the Knights recruitment activities, stating our best recruitment effort is to wear our name badges to allow the parishioners to witness the Knights at work in the parish and local community. He believed our actions of service throughout the campus and the community served as our calling card to men in the parish that they too can serve the Lord while also serving those in need of our love and compassion.

We offer our appreciation for Monsignor Clay and his leadership over the past four years. He is a blessing to our community, and we will miss his presence. However, his spirit will continue to guide us and drive us to serve the Lord as members of St. Francis of Assisi parish and as members of the Knights of Columbus.

-Brother Mike Wrzesien





VETERANS TO LOURDES



No one knows the value of peace better than those who have endured war. The Knights of Columbus and the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA are honored to be able to support — and accompany — soldiers and veterans who come to Lourdes to pray for peace and healing with those in uniform from around the world.

Our own Assembly #3552 is proud to support local veterans making this pilgrimage by serving a meal and prayers as they depart from the RDU USO facility.



MEMORIAL DAY MASS



As a proud tradition, our St Francis Assembly #3552 has honored those brave souls who have served and passed away, either in their service to our country or since serving. We had amassed 992 names thus far, adding 172 names to our military roll this year. Monsignor Clay presided at the Mass where we sang America the Beautiful at the beginning and end of mass.



CONGRATULATIONS FATHER CONG LE!

Deacon Dave Wulff stood at the ambo and said, "Let those to be ordained priests come forward." Upon hearing his name, Cong Viet Le rose from a wooden chair and stepped forward. He stood with their families and friends in pews behind them. Priests who have been part of their journeys sat near the altar in front of them, and to their left in a transept. Visitors hailed from countries such as Vietnam and the United Kingdom, and states such as Hawaii, Georgia, New York, Arkansas and Wisconsin.

Next, Father Jeffrey Bowker approached the ambo and asked the bishop to ordain them. The actions, known formally as the presentation of the candidate and election by the bishop, are part of the Rite of Ordination, which was held Saturday, June 1 at Holy Name of Jesus Cathedral.

The rite included the promises of the elect, litany of supplication, laying on of hands, prayer of ordination and anointing of hands. Father Cong was vested with a stole and chasuble, clothing given to newly ordained priests to wear for the celebration of the Eucharist. "He is a joyful man, and he has a lot of energy. It's a great way to inspire others and it's very contagious," said Father Duy about Father Cong. "The people he serves will gain a lot ... the joy of knowing the Lord."

Choirs from Our Lady of La Vang, St Francis of Assisi, and St. Michael the Archangel shared their gifts of music that touched the hearts of many.

"In terms of the care and love that a Christian is supposed to show ... she represented to me that sort of care," said Father Ross.

Father Cong's decision had similar reasoning. "I have this [vocation] today because Tri Luu, my mother, who guided me," he said. "She's a super woman to me. It's a special time for me and I want to give a special time back to my mom."

Through an interpreter, Luu told NC Catholics that she believes her son will make a good priest because of his kindness, long-time dedication to the Church and prayer life. Father Cong, who will serve at St. Mark in Wilmington, said he's looking forward to visiting people in nursing homes and celebrating the sacraments, such as reconciliation.

"God is always waiting for us," said Father Cong, who came to the United States and learned English as an adult. "Without God, I cannot do anything. English is [my] second language ... I see how God worked on that. I prayed, 'God, if you're calling me, please help me.' I'm here and you see how he worked on that."

For each new priest, graduation from St. Vincent De Paul Regional Seminary in Florida and ordination to the priesthood has been a time for reflection. Milestones were present, and so were firsts. For example, the new priests were the first from the Diocese of Raleigh to graduate from St. Vincent De Paul. And their reception was the first priestly ordination event held in the new parish hall at Holy Name of Jesus Cathedral.

-Diocese of Raleigh

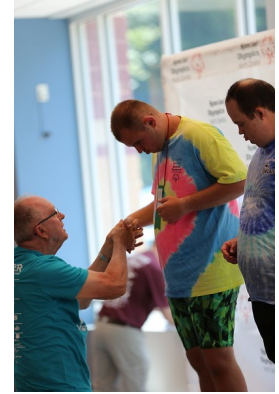
Also present were many Knights from our Council to celebrate Father Cong's Ordination and Father Jairo who served for two years at St Francis while Cong Le served as seminarian-elect was also present at the Ordination and Father Cong's first mass. Saturday night, Father Cong Le conducted his first mass at St Francis that was well attended and followed by a Knights of Columbus Spaghetti Dinner in Fellowship Hall. Our Council proudly supported Father Cong Le financially as a seminarian through our Life RSVP program and was able to purchase a full set of vestments to help launch his priestly, spiritual journey.

CONGRATULATIONS FATHER CONG LE!



SPECIAL OLYMPICS 2024

For over 20 years, Council 9709 has managed the Swimming Awards for the North Carolina Special Olympics! Many familiar faces back to support in 2024!



This year's Special Olympics was an incredible display of dedication and teamwork. With over 50 shifts of work completed over two days, we were able to support over 350 athletes in their pursuit of excellence at the Special Olympics event.

The spirit of charity and brotherhood was alive and well, with a diverse group of amazing volunteers, including our enthusiastic youth volunteers, seasoned Knights of Columbus volunteers, and the amazing Boy Scout volunteers. Each played a pivotal role in making this event a success.

The commitment to service and the positive impact we made on the lives of these athletes is truly inspiring. It is because of your selfless contributions that we can continue to provide such meaningful experiences for our community.

Together, we have shown that when we come together for a common cause, there's no limit to what we can achieve.

-Jason Riddle, Life Director

SPECIAL OLYMPICS 2024



Volunteers stand ready as the score keepers record the results. Medals are sorted by event and trays delivered for awards to the athletes. Celebrations and support among the athletes are as rewarding as the medals!



Dave teaching the backstroke!



SPAGHETTI DINNER AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!



Saturday, June 1st, was a very busy and challenging day for our brother Knights who managed to take part in several events, some occurring simultaneously. The day started with our brothers volunteering for the morning and afternoon sessions of the Swimming Special Olympics. Later in the day, our own Brother Cong Le was ordained at the Holy Name of Jesus Cathedral. Continuing on with the day, Father Cong Le celebrated his first Mass at St. Francis. Then finally our council prepared and offered a Spaghetti Dinner for the parishioners following Father Cong Le's inaugural Mass. Being a part of these events would not have been possible without the volunteer commitment of our brothers, the leadership of Brother Jason Riddle for the Olympics and Brother Scott Rees, our master chef, who not only ran the kitchen cooking pasta and preparing the salad but also managed to get the pasta, sauce, meat and salad donated. The food serving team of Knights kept the hungry parishioners moving quickly through the line while filling their plates with the spaghetti, meat sauce, salad, and a slice the garlic bread. The dinner was topped off with servings of sheet cake decorated with the words, "Knights of Columbus, Council 9709, Honors Cong Le." A day to be remembered!

WELCOME NEW KNIGHTS!



In November, 2019, then Supreme Knight, Carl Anderson introduced the revised Exemplification Ceremony that would remove the past secrecy and invite families and friends to attend the new, open ceremony. Here are his opening statements of the changes:

A new generation of Knights

"We must forge a new generation of Knights — men who see in our principles of charity, unity and fraternity a path to leading a Catholic way of life that can strengthen their families, their parishes and their communities. We must reach a new generation of men by the witness of our charity, our brotherhood and our ceremonials."

Inspire the men of our day

"Just as our forefathers rallied to meet the challenges of their day, we must inspire the men of our day. We must reach out to meet these men where they are. And when we do, we must show them that they are called to be men of Charity, Unity and Fraternity. Because of this we are acting to make our Order more inviting and more accessible."

Why the change

"In recent decades, we have found it harder to bring men, especially young fathers, into the Order. When we ask them why, they tell us three ceremonies are too time-consuming and too difficult to attend. They tell us that secrecy is unnecessary."

-Carl Anderson, Supreme Knight

Change can be difficult but as we accept the process and trust our leadership, it does start to come together. Not all Councils have Exemplification Teams. Our Council is blessed to have one of the best, most dedicated teams perhaps in the entire country. Under the leadership of Brother Tony Anello, our team is always prepared and runs with military-like discipline. Rounding out the team, we are proud to have Bryan Kozak, Tommy Dalton, Bob Caron and Ralph Guenther. We may see changes in the near future as Tony begins to step back allowing Brother Kozak to step into the lead role. We also have Brothers David Payette and Sandy Gayle in the wings ready to take on new responsibilities when the time is right.

We held a new ceremony on June 2nd that saw us bring in seven new members to our Council! As our Council continues to grow, we have even more opportunities to serve our charities, our parish and our community.

Welcome Frank McNally, James McMillan, Adam Norwood, Mark Wilcox, Charles Marciano, Bill Horne, and Jack Perry! We look forward to knowing you better and learning of your interests to grow in your participation in Council 9709 activities.

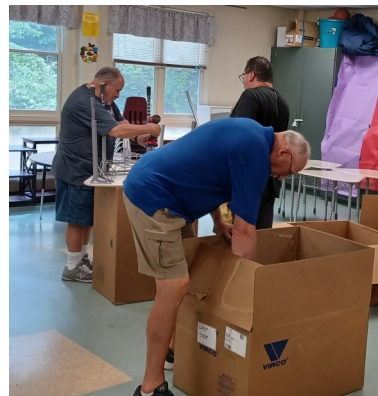
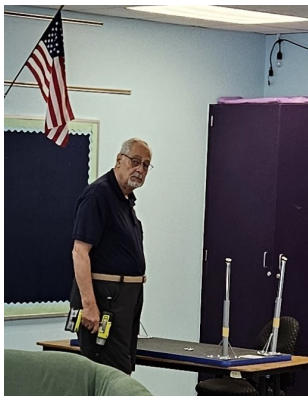
Every Fraternal Year we are challenged to grow our Council by a certain number of new Brother Knights. This class of new Knights helped us exceed that number! Keep up the great work of recruiting by spreading the good works of Blessed Father McGivney.

NEW DESKS FOR TFS!

On June 12th, at the request of TFS principal Dawn Smith, volunteers from our council helped unload a shipment of new desks and tables for the school and began their assembly. One week later, the team of 10 council handymen returned with their power screwdrivers and Allen wrenches to continue building the new furniture. After two trips and several hours of work each day, the large shipment of 78 desks and numerous tables required a third trip to complete the project.



UNLOADING AND DISTRIBUTING TO THE CLASSROOMS ON JUNE 12TH—GREAT JOB, BROTHERS!



WORLD CLASS ASSEMBLY TEAM TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS—ALWAYS WITH A SMILE!

GRAND KNIGHTS REPORT

GK Newsletter Column June, 2024

It Takes a Village and We Are that Village

Many Gospel stories illuminate life in Judea where Jesus and his disciples enter villages and find support, lodging, and food from strangers. This generosity is returned 1000-fold with miracles, fulfillment, and teachings. Our mission as Knights is to provide unselfishly, and we find similar rewards for our service.

As I reflect on the past year, I am inspired by the generosity and friendship of my Brothers, and I find abundant gratitude all around me. I feel plentiful gratitude and pride to be a part of something so meaningful; I see gratitude in my Brothers for the many gifts God has bestowed, not the least of which is our fraternity, and for the fruits of our labors and the rewards we receive from God now and later.

The amazing synergy of a group of candles illuminating the dark places in our world is palpable. The engagements we have are never singular; the results we gain are never achieved individually. We are that village and together we have done and will do amazing things for strangers and for each other. We, together, are that shining light beckoning our Savior to join us at table and teach us his Truth.

To the Officers and Directors who served this past year, I thank you for your commitment and leadership. To the Brothers of the Council, I thank you for your service and support which turned a candle of our Council's vision into a powerful beam of light for so many. Most of all I give thanks to God for the opportunity to be a part of this outstanding group of men and their families.

We achieved many firsts and record-breaking accomplishments this year. I look forward to doing so again. I encourage all members to get engaged and add your light to our mission and multiply our effort and result.

In our new Grand Knight Bryan and his leadership team, I see clear vision lighting a path before us. One that builds on our past successes and will expand our reach and results. Your Council together will do great things, being that village building God's kingdom.

Vivat Jesus,

Shawn D. Bayle

(now) Past Grand Knight, Council 9709