

State of the State:

It is my great privilege to deliver to you at this time, the State of the State Address for the Oregon Jurisdiction of the Knights of Columbus.

The State of the State of Oregon is great! Oregon Knights of Columbus are ACTIVE! Oregon Knights of Columbus are on the battlefield and engaged in the fight! Our beloved Archbishop Sample has said several times recently that the Holy Spirit is on the move in Western Oregon! We live in one of the most secular states in the nation, but the Holy Spirit is on the move here! My brothers, you are all a part of that! The Holy Spirit is doing amazing things through us. All over Oregon, the Holy Spirit is on the move. Not only that, but very soon, in a few weeks, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, will be on the move in Eastern Oregon, during the National Eucharistic Procession.

Brothers, this National Eucharistic Procession is a “CAN’T MISS” event! Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Most Holy Eucharist, will be coming from all sides of the United States and will converge on Indianapolis, Indiana. From the North, from the South, from the East, and for Brothers here in Oregon, from the West. In taking part in this National effort, we will collectively mark the Sign of the Cross on this beloved nation of ours. Brothers, our 4th Principle of the Order is Patriotism. As Knights of Columbus, we are deeply devoted to our country it love her dearly. If we do in fact love her, should we not mark her with the Sign of the Cross with the Most Holy Eucharist? I don’t know about you, but I would not want to miss this for the world!

On Sunday May 26th, Bishop Cary will welcome the Eucharistic Procession pilgrims at the Oregon/Nevada Border in McDermitt. After giving the Diocese of Baker a Eucharistic Blessing, a driving Procession will take place to Holy Family Catholic Church in Burns, where the Blessed Sacrament will remain for the night. There will be several events while there. On Monday May 27th, the driving Procession will continue East. There will be a brief time of Adoration at St. Charles Catholic Church in Juntura, then continue to St. Patrick Catholic Church in Vale for a brief respite. The driving Procession will go on to Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church in Ontario. After Mass with Bishop Cary and Bishop Christensen, there will be a walking Formal Eucharistic Procession to Fruitland, Idaho, where the Blessed Sacrament will be received by the Idaho Knights of Columbus.

Brothers, ladies, friends, if you can make any part of this event, please do! There are lots of opportunities for Mass, Adoration, driving Processions, and a Formal Procession. This is a once in a lifetime event. Let’s have a full showing of Oregon Knights and friends at all these stops.

This is what is coming up, I felt deeply thrilled to share this news with you. Now let us look at the past year.

On the State Council, we have been blessed to have had Fr. Theodore Lange continue to serve as State Chaplain for one more year before he embarks on to his next chapter in life in Florida. We

have also been very blessed to welcome Fr. Anthony Ahamefule as Auxiliary State Chaplain for the State Council. He brings with him new enthusiasm and passion. We are looking forward to having him serve as our State Chaplain next Fraternal Year.

After serving faithfully as State Deputy for 2 years, we honor Ray Prom as our Immediate Past State Deputy on the Oregon State Council. He worked very hard the last couple years and led Oregon to achieve the Pinnacle Award last year. Good job, Worthy Immediate Past State Deputy!

Our good brother, Robert Adams, has served wonderfully the last several months as State Secretary. I can say from personal experience that this job is not easy. There's a steep learning curve to keep track of all the logistical things. Imagine being Financial Secretary, Recorder, AND Deputy Grand Knight. That's what the State Secretary is for the State Council. Good job to you, Worthy State Secretary.

We welcomed another brother to the State Council this year. Brother Michael Pranger has stepped into the State Treasurer role this year and has really dived in deep. Brother Mike is really good at keeping track of every single little detail and we sure need it. Thank you, Worthy State Treasurer for taking so much initiative on the State Council. I owe you a drink. Go Beavers!

Another brother we welcomed into the ranks of State Officers this year has already been pretty active on the State level. He served as our Membership Director for 2 years and continues this 3rd year as Membership Director while also taking on the State Advocate position. Brother Chris Cummings is a man with several hats. Serving as State Advocate and Membership Director has kept him busy. Thank you, Worthy State Advocate and Membership Director.

We are also honored to have such a hard working State Warden this year. This job keeps you busy during State meetings and conventions. Thank you to Worthy State Warden Dave Judy for serving faithfully for the last 3 years. Brother Dave will be stepping down as State Warden after this Fraternal Year. We appreciate all you have done. Thank you, Worthy State Warden.

I'd also like to acknowledge someone else. You probably notice that you get a lot of emails from this gentleman. Who is this brother behind the computer? His name is Kristian Liwanag and he is our Executive Secretary. He has been very faithful in sending out emails for the State. Communication is extremely important. Thanks to the Worthy Executive Secretary.

It is truly inspirational to see so many Brother Knights step up immediately when called upon or when a need arises. That's what we do as Knights. It's what we're called to.

As the previous Fraternal Year was coming to a close and this Fraternal Year was unfolding, our Beloved Archbishop Sample received pushback because he chose to stand firm in Catholic teaching and doctrine. As many secular schools are adopting this "gender ideology," secular society has put a lot of pressure on Catholic schools to abandon their principles and assimilate.

But our courageous Archbishop Sample affirmed that Catholic schools in Oregon will continue to promote and teach true Catholic doctrine that our society's concept of "gender ideology" is contrary to God's Plan for humanity. Amid all these times, countless Knights of Columbus from all over the State rose up to defend and support our Archbishop. Many wrote him letters of support, many signed a petition of support that went around the State. Because of all of you, Archbishop Sample has the full and unwavering support of the Oregon Knights of Columbus. This is what we do as Knights. We stand for truth and also support our priests and bishops.

A couple months later, at the end of August, our beautiful St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Salem was set ablaze with arson. Within hours, Knights from all over the State stepped up and asked how they could help. A few days later, Knights and families gathered outside St. Joseph's for a prayer vigil. Many councils gave financially, many councils held breakfast fundraisers intended specifically for St. Joseph's.

Oregon Knights of Columbus step up when called upon.

The Oregon Knights of Columbus has continued to make Faith Formation the top priority in our State. Many councils have launched the Cor initiative. Many more have plans to. Thank you Brothers. I would like to continue to encourage ALL councils in Oregon to implement Cor. It's a simple gathering consisting of 15-20 minutes of prayer, 20-30 minutes of formation, which can consist of anything pertaining to our mission as Catholic men, and fraternity after that. It's something any council can do.

The Oregon Knights of Columbus is a group of men who are deeply devoted to the Eucharist. We have continued to prioritize Holy Hours throughout the State and held one at the State-level approximately once a month. Many other councils are doing Holy Hours as well. St. Joseph's in Salem is holding monthly Holy League Men's Holy Hours on the first Wednesday of every month. Wednesday is the day of the week dedicated to St. Joseph. Thank you, Worthy Faith Director, Deacon James Thurman, for running this.

Throughout the past 10 months, I've visited many councils and attended their meetings. As I have attended council meetings over the last 10 years that I've been a Knight, I am seeing more and more councils starting their meeting with a Rosary. This does my heart good. We are men of prayer. I would like to encourage ALL councils to start their meetings with a Rosary or to do it 15-20 minutes immediately before or after the meeting.

When I think of what it means to be a man, when I think of certain activities that true men do, I think of men kneeling down in prayer before our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. I think of men kneeling down with Rosary beads encircled around their joined hands. I think of men processing behind the Blessed Sacrament or processing behind a Crucifix. These are things that true men do. In Oregon, we have a lot of true men in our Order. We need more.

You heard the Supreme Knight say that we achieved the milestone of giving out our 1 millionth coat this year for our Coats for Kids program. Brothers in Oregon, it is because of YOU that our Supreme Knight was able to do this. Without you, Our Worthy Supreme Knight would not have had that honor this Fraternal Year. Thanks to all of your efforts and generosity, we had another record year locally in Oregon this Fraternal Year. We had 218 boxes delivered this year! Thank you to our Worthy General Program Director, Duane Morris, for all of his effort in this initiative.

Every year, we support the 40 Days for Life Campaign twice a year: once in the fall and once in the spring. Many of our members come out during those days to stand outside abortion clinics and advocate for life, particularly at Lilith Clinic in downtown Portland and Planned Parenthood in Eugene. Thank you to all of you who have come out and supported those efforts.

Recently, in the last few months, Walgreens came out and said they would offer the abortion pill, but Knights of Columbus in Oregon stood up and said they would not tolerate that. Many Knights of Columbus groups and councils stood outside Walgreens and protested this move. Special thanks to the efforts of our Worthy Life Director Eric Walter for driving this.

Although we have not yet installed any ultrasound machines this Fraternal Year, I understand Council 3302 Scappoose is poised and ready and I imagine this will materialize very soon.

During this time, I want to acknowledge many of the countless activities and programs that our councils have done this Fraternal Year. This list is by no means exhaustive as there are way too many amazing activities our councils have done to enumerate them all here.

Hillsboro Council 1634 stepped into the breach when they offered to hold a Blue Mass on September 11th for first responders. They also went above and beyond and held a Holy Hour afterwards. St. Pius X Council 12656 in Portland has continued to utilize their St. Joseph's Toolbox program to help with basic maintenance projects. Likewise, Lebanon Council 3184 has conducted their handyman program which does the same. This is an exceptional example of imitating the example of St. Joseph. As men, we should all look to St. Joseph as our role model. Also from District 7, in the heart of the mid-Willamette Valley, Sweet Home Council 8624 held their Chili Cook-off where they raised money through raffles for charity. This was a wonderful example of the community all coming together and working together. Individuals provided their own unique chili and the items raffled off were donated from the attendees as well. This was a collective effort to maximize results.

Coos Council 1261 is at it again with their Food Basket Program, where they deliver food to those in need ahead of Christmastime. They delivered 1,200 food baskets which each also had \$45 in food vouchers! Thank you for your long and faithful dedication in this effort, keep it up!

We have several councils that hold annual crab feeds every year. Hillsboro Council 1634 and Canby Council 3484 are a couple among many others. We also have some woodsmen among our ranks! Hillsboro Council 1634 and Veneta Council 17889 have been hard at work delivering cut

and split firewood to those in need. Please invite your Worthy State Deputy to future logging events. I'll bring my maul.

My home council, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary Council 15605 has continued to run their "Sippy Cup" drive, which is their rendition of the baby bottle campaign. They collect money from Parishioners for pregnancy resource centers. Council 15605 is full of members that are adamantly and passionately pro-life.

All in all, 1,540 hours of Faith activities were reported and 22 members were recruited as a result. 314 hours of Family activities were reported and 9 members recruited. 5,409 hours of Community activities were reported and 32 members recruited. 1,101 hours of Life activities were reported and 3 members recruited. Brothers, does this speak to you? When we put on good programs, other men will want to join! When other men see what we do, they will want to be a part of it.

The Saturday after Ash Wednesday, Salem held an annual pilgrimage procession, in which many members of the Salem Knights of Columbus participated, including some from St. Joseph's Council 1748. From Queen of Peace to St. Edward's in Keizer, it was a wonderful procession led by our very own State Chaplain, Fr. Theo Lange. As I have spoken with other young Catholic men, they have affirmed that these types of activities is what they want to see the Knights of Columbus do. We need more outdoor processions so that the community may see our evangelization efforts. Thank you, St. Joseph's Council 1748, for your excellent example.

As we currently speak, Hillsboro Council 1634 is actively supporting and promoting a Eucharistic Pilgrimage in their Tualatin Valley Vicariate. This is a true example of promoting devotion to the Eucharist. I would like to encourage all Brothers in the Portland area to visit the Blessed Sacrament at one of the Parishes it's visiting.

We also have an Our Lady of Fatima pilgrim statue traveling around the State as we speak. Yesterday it was with my very first council, Corvallis Council 1785. Knights from all over the State have stepped up to honor this beautiful pilgrim statue. Thank you Brothers.

Brothers, I wish to sincerely apologize for any activities of note that I did not explicitly mention. Even if I didn't include it in this State of the State address, your hard work and effort is greatly appreciated. The amount of good work we do in this State is truly overwhelming.

Membership is on the rise. March and April were dynamite months for membership as we brought in 50 members during March and 44 members during April. We need more months like that. We had several councils during these months switch from 0 membership to Star all in a weekend! Some even 0 to Double-Star! Thanks to your recruiting efforts during these past 2 months, we only need 96 more members by June 30th to meet our State Circle of Honor Goals. This is doable. If each council would recruit just ONE more member, we'd be there! REACH! Reach Beyond the Stars! Push yourselves just a little bit more. The State is here to help.

It is amazing to me to see so many active councils in the State who are strengthening men, the Church, and communities. It is truly an inspiration.

But what of the future? If we are to continue thriving as an Order for years to come, we must be invested in the long-term success of the Knights of Columbus. There is too much at stake in this world. Without the Knights of Columbus, who will defend the Church and defend the world against the attacks of the devil? Who will encourage other men to become better men? Who will help engage men in worthy activities rather than leave them to fall into unbecoming ones? To invest in the long-term success of the Knights of Columbus, we need MORE men to STEP UP! We need more men to take initiative and take action. The more men step up, the more we can do. We need more members of the Knights of Columbus and we need more younger men to help carry the torch for years to come.

In conclusion, the State of the State of Oregon is great! We have continued to make the world a better place in a mission field of a State. We have helped those in need, we have given men the chance to become better, and we have grown in our love and devotion for the Most Holy Eucharist. The State of the State is great, and we must look to the future to continue to be great for generations to come.

Vivat Jesus!