



## State Deputy State of the State



Reverend Fathers, Supreme Guest, Territorial Growth Director, Visiting State Officers and other dignitaries, Oregon State Officers, Past State Deputies, ~~Vice-Supreme Master~~, District Master, General Agent, District Deputies, State Directors, State Chairmen, Delegates, Brother's all, wives and guests,

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.

This past year, Oregon has exceeded all expectations! Oregon Knights of Columbus are ON FIRE! At the start of this Fraternal Year, I expressed my expectation that we grow the Order in Faith and membership. We have done both. I am genuinely blown away and I am extremely proud of the Oregon Knights of Columbus. Each and every one of you has played a role in leading us to where we are currently at.

It is much more noble and meaningful to be on the battlefield in the middle of the action. I see Oregon Knights of Columbus on the front lines every day. In this extremely secular State, Oregon Knights of Columbus are in the breach, giving it their all. I see so many members of our Order who have the true Heart of a Knight. We need more men such as these. We need a whole army of men who each have the Heart of a Knight.

We have been hitting record intake percentages for membership this year! I have not seen anything like this since I have been a Knight. I am especially delighted to share that we have now exceeded our Statewide Circle of Honor intake goal! It was very special that we hit this goal on Easter Sunday, where we had 4 men join on that day. Easter Sunday is a very special day for a man to become a Knight and it was a very special day for us to achieve our Statewide goal! Oregon has maintained a strong lead in the Order and has remained in the top 10 throughout the Fraternal Year, currently at number 8!

Furthermore, Oregon is growing younger as we are seeing more young men joining the Order. We are also seeing more young men take on leadership positions as well. My home council Holy Rosary 15605 has grown younger since I joined the council 6 years ago. We also have a handful of younger State Directors and District Deputies.

The youth are the future of the Order. If we don't invite young men to join and we don't allow young men to take on leadership positions, the Order will die out. Furthermore, young men will not have the opportunity to provide the crucial input and information necessary to guide the Order such that it will best flourish and thrive with the needs and values of the next generation.

One of my favorite membership initiatives is the “Knight Before Christmas.” We’ve even created a promotional image for it. We welcomed 29 new Brothers into the Order through Online Membership during this time and that doesn’t include others who joined through other means. The time between Thanksgiving and Christmas tends to be a slow period of time for membership Order-wide, so it helps to give a boost with this special initiative. There is so much rich symbolism behind this initiative. This is an opportunity to give yourself and your family members a very special Christmas present this year by becoming a Knight of Columbus. Furthermore, Advent is a time of preparation and preparing our hearts for the coming of Christ at Christmastime. What better way for men to prepare their hearts by forming their hearts into the heart of a Knight by becoming a Knight of Columbus in preparation for Christmastime? Imagine kneeling before the Christ child at the nativity as a Knight. Are you ready to be a Knight for Christ?

We have run a District Deputy membership competition called “Defender of the Order.” The District Deputies have been divided into 2 teams: St. Michael and St. Joseph. This team competition has proven much more exciting and thrilling as it has made for a very close race. Unlike last year, where the OSU Beaver District Deputy team beat the University of Oregon Duck District Deputy team by a landslide, this competition could have been anyone’s game throughout the Fraternal Year. It has been so much fun to see a friendly competition between the District Deputies and to see them work as a team. I am very pleased to announce that the winner of the District Deputy team membership competition is Team St. Michael! Well done, brothers and good work!

Our top District for membership is once again District 2 under the leadership of Tom Burns. We have some extremely active and vibrant councils in Eastern Portland. I have been very excited to watch their energy. Bringing in a new council into District 2 has certainly also helped with membership intake. We are very pleased to welcome Council 18663 St. Rita’s to our ranks.

Part of District 2, we have a couple councils that have just knocked membership out of the park. Council 13700 St. Joseph the Worker is at 433% and is marching towards 500%. They are the top council in the State based on percentage of intake goal. Council 7828 St. Therese is not far behind at 300%.

We also have some other councils that are on the front lines for membership. It has been exhilarating to see their energy and drive (their membership drive). Our top council in the State based on number of new members is Bend Council 1872. They are just on FIRE! I have been very excited watching those “A New Brother Knight” emails coming in and seeing another one for Bend, and another one, and another one. Way to go brothers! And this is all while they were helping put on a State Convention too!

Council 1594 in Medford has also been on fire this year! The Holy Spirit is moving here in Southern Oregon as a new Hispanic Round Table was formed this past Fraternal Year and has

been alive and growing. Our Regional Growth Director Pona Magana has enjoyed frequently travelling to Medford to help this round table continue to thrive.

We have so much Hispanic potential here in Oregon. We have so many Hispanic Brothers in Christ who would benefit so greatly by joining our Order. Council 16934 San Jose Council at St. Joseph's and Council 5060 St. Vincent's in Salem have made a joint effort to develop some strategic plans to grow the Order in Faith and Membership in this region, especially for Hispanic men and their families. District Deputy 2 Tom Burns has also been active in helping Council 7729 St. Anne's in East Portland also thrive. Council 3378 in Milwaukie has also made efforts in expanding their Hispanic opportunities, with the help of RGD Pona Magana. There have been many other Hispanic opportunities from around the State as well.

Brothers, I would now like to acknowledge the 3 councils that are now a full Star Council. Please stand if you are a member of these councils: Council 13851 Tualatin, the very first Star Council in the State, Council 1261 Coos, and finally, the first 3-Star Council in our Jurisdiction, front and center Council 1872 Bend! Let's give them a round of applause! Thank you, please be seated. Brothers, we need to get 13 Star Councils to earn Circle of Honor. We have several that are so close, you can do it!!!

I want to acknowledge and thank everyone who has been involved on the membership team this Fraternal Year. If you personally have recruited one new member this Fraternal Year, YOU are part of the membership team! Thank you! As Oregon marches daily towards the Pinnacle Award, it is you who deserves all the credit. This is YOUR award! Oregon would not be able to achieve this without all the hard work of the councils. From the bottom of my heart, thank you, each one of you.

I have also enjoyed seeing the working relationship between the Fraternal side of the Order and the Fraternal Benefits side of the Order. We have held many wonderful Fraternal Benefit Events throughout the State, thanks to our General Agent Cicero Seisdedos and the Field Agents as well. The Knights of Columbus has incredible Fraternal Benefits to offer and the agents have been very enthusiastic to share about those benefits in a very passionate way. Whenever I attend a Fraternal Benefit put on by General Agent Cicero Seisdedos, I am very inspired. I see his enthusiasm and passion as he shares Blessed McGivney's story, his personal story, and the benefits of being a Knight of Columbus. Thank you, Brother Cicero, for all your help and effort. We've enjoyed working with you.

The Oregon State Council has had an incredible State team. The State Officers have all been very hard working and have a great deal of passion in everything they do. We have been blessed to have Fr. Anthony Ahamefule join our team as State Chaplain. Whenever you see him, he just radiates with joy and it is incredibly inspiring. Immediate Past State Deputy Ray Prom has managed the Oregon State KofC Charities. State Secretary Bob Adams and State Treasurer Mike Pranger have worked very well together in tandem to ensure our finances run smoothly. Brother

Chris Cummings is a man of many hats. He has served as State Advocate and helped with various council issues, Safe Environment, council health, etc. He has also been continuing in his Membership Director role and continues to send out engaging and inspiring membership messages. I encourage everyone here to be inspired by these messages too. If that wasn't enough, he decided to take on the Evangelization and Faith Formation Director position too and has been on the forefront of promoting Cor, which we will talk about later. We also welcomed a new Brother to the State ranks: Duane Morris, who has stepped into the State Warden position. He has been very active in setting up new equipment to enhance our meetings. Although he is not officially a State Officer, we have had another Brother really step up this Fraternal Year and take an active role in helping the State. Nick Guenther has done an absolutely amazing job as Online Membership Director and has far exceeded expectations. Thank you Brother Nick!

More and more councils are taking on our top Faith initiative: Cor. This is wonderful to see! This is where the breach is, brothers. This is where society is painfully lacking. There are so few resources and organizations out there that help men be formed into the authentic Catholic men they are called to be. The Knights of Columbus are poised to meet this high demand. Cor is an initiative that every council can take on, regardless of their size. Moreover, it is an initiative that every council needs to take on.

Cor is not a program, it is a way of living. For this reason, there is a need for the Knights of Columbus Order-wide to not just implement Cor, but develop a Cor culture. This is why it is not a program. Oregon has been moving more in the direction of adopting a Cor culture throughout the State at various levels.

Cor has been showing itself to bring in more young men. More and more young men have expressed a desire and interest in Faith formation activities. It's what they need in a world full of debauchery. Young men want to know how to be good husbands and fathers, whether they already are or are hoping to be in the future. We are seeing this as men are wanting to join for this reason. More young men will join the Knights of Columbus as the Order continues to adapt a Cor culture. The more that the Order is known for its ability to form men to become who God is calling them to be, the more young men will flock to the Order.

Due to the necessity of Cor, there have been a broad variety of resources opened up and made available. Through KofC Supplies Online, CIS, and others, booklets and pamphlets can be ordered for both prayer and formative material. Into the Breach and Mission of the Family videos have been made available. To further aid councils in executing their Cor initiatives, Grand Knights and council EFF Directors have access to Formed for free through the Knights of Columbus. This opens wide the doors to limitless video resources.

The State Council is also ready to assist with any Cor sessions by setting up Holy Hours, agendas, etc. The State Officers are eager and ready to help and get involved. The vast majority of State-level gatherings have incorporated Cor into the agenda in some capacity. Every State

Organizational Meeting has included Cor. The reason why this top Faith initiative is called Cor is because we are meant to commit this initiative to our hearts and to allow our hearts to be fully transformed in the process. I see this happening with many councils as they launch this initiative.

To aid us in embracing Cor and a Cor culture in our hearts, the Order has launched its newest Pilgrim Icon, the Sacred Heart of Jesus. If ever there was a heart that we should imitate and look to as a role model, it is His. Oregon has circulated these Icons throughout the State and many councils have already had meaningful events with this Icon. Council 1594 in Medford leapt on the opportunity to have the Icon at their local Parish: Sacred Heart Catholic Church. This Icon would be a wonderful resource as well for Cor sessions. At the State Mid-Year Meeting, we conducted a Cor session where the prayer component was a “Visio Divina” with this Sacred Heart image. A Visio Divina consists of silently prayerfully gazing at a holy image and allowing the Holy Spirit to speak to you through it.

I would like to personally encourage all councils to launch Cor. It is incredibly easy to implement, it’s possible regardless of how many participate, and it meets the biggest need of our day. Brothers, you have in your hands the means to change the world!

The other top priority in the State has been Holy Hours. Once again, each and every council is able to implement and promote Holy Hours. As with Cor, this is something that can be done regardless of how many participate.

Consider for a moment just how noble and authentically masculine it is for a Knight to kneel before Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. If anyone wants to know how to be a man, this is one of the best things you can do. Consider the 2025 State Convention logo. Take a moment to really take in just how powerful this image is! A knight is full of prestige and honor. He is a mighty warrior and is looked up to by many. With all this nobility, he is kneeling down reverently and wholeheartedly before the Blessed Sacrament. A knight is a man of prayer. This is what gives him his honor. A knight cannot have honor without a top notch prayer life.

I have seen several councils promoting good Holy Hours. Our flagship council for Holy Hours is Council 1748 St. Joseph as they conduct a monthly Holy Hour on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month. Council 15605 Holy Rosary also does a monthly Adoration together as a council. At St. Joseph the Worker in East Portland, the Parish started up a 40 Hours of Adoration program to run from 1pm on the First Thursday of every month to 7am on the following Saturday. Hosted by Council 13700, all of District 2 has rallied to help support and promote this program. This is an excellent example of Brother Knights working together, truly an inspiration.

At the Oregon State Council level, we have made efforts to incorporate a Holy Hour into every event and activity we do. Each Summer and Winter Meeting as well as our State Convention incorporates a Holy Hour. We have also had other various events throughout the State. In an effort to be ready to serve at Mass for any priest anywhere, the State Officers met in Bandon and went through an Altar Serving Training with State Chaplain Fr. Anthony. It was a very beautiful

and special event which also incorporated a Holy Hour. This was an opportunity to strengthen and foster the relationship and fraternity between the Knights of Columbus and the clergy. The Knights of Columbus are always ready and willing to help assist our priests and bishops. This includes serving at Mass.

All in all, the Oregon State Council has conducted 5 Statewide Holy Hours this Fraternal Year and may conduct more before the Fraternal Year has concluded.

Speaking of the Eucharist, the Oregon Knights of Columbus, along with many other pilgrims from Oregon, traveled to McDermitt, Nevada, right along the border with Oregon, to greet the Blessed Sacrament along with the Eucharistic pilgrims participating in the National Eucharistic Procession over Memorial Day Weekend. We waited for 2 hours in Sacred Heart Catholic Church in the small border town as the pilgrims underwent repairs. This was a time of joyful anticipation. I would compare it to the Advent season when we know that Jesus is coming and we are allowing the excitement and anticipation to build up within us. When the pilgrims arrived with the Blessed Sacrament, we were all full of excitement. It was the moment that we had all been waiting for!

Once the Eucharistic pilgrims arrived, we took a 2 hour driving procession to Burns. This was an opportunity for Jesus to lead us through the desert and it was quite the retreat. When we arrived to Burns, we were greeted by many others who didn't make it as far as McDermitt. There were Knights of Columbus from all over the State: Bend, Redmond, Burns, Klamath Falls, Corvallis, and many others. The Burns Council 5003 put on a very hearty dinner and breakfast for everyone. Good job to Burns! These pilgrimages are places where unexpected things can happen. A District Deputy got appointed during this trip as well.

The pilgrims drove across Eastern Oregon into Ontario where Mass was celebrated with all the priests of the Diocese of Baker. This was truly a site to see. After Mass, where Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church was completely packed full, we did a walking Procession around the Parish grounds. We then drove across the border to Idaho and entrusted the accompaniment of the pilgrimage to the Idaho Knights of Columbus, who were ready. This was a once in a lifetime experience!

In addition to Cor and Holy Hours, Knights of Columbus in Oregon have done countless other activities to promote Faith Formation. This year, the Knights attended in full force, the Annual Holy League Catholic Men's Conference in Advent. In addition, the Holy League held an unprecedented second Catholic Men's Conferences in Lent. Faith Director Deacon James Thurman has been so faithful in putting on these amazing events. Many Knights from around the State attended both Conferences. I usually see our regular District Deputies at these conferences: Tom Burns, Mike Miller, Mike Dec. It's good to see these District Deputies setting a good example, this is a true leadership quality. So many others were there as well. Good job to you.

The Oregon Knights of Columbus fully supports any programs or events that help men become the men God is calling them to be. The Holy League Catholic Men's Conference is one of those.

We also conducted a Statewide Consecration to St. Joseph. As our Order seeks to help men become the men they're called to be, we should look to St. Joseph as an example. He was the ideal husband and father and an exemplary role model in virtue. Now is the time for St. Joseph! One of the chapters discussed the invitation to consider St. Joseph as the very first knight for Our Lady. He exemplified knightly virtues by protecting and defending the Holy Family. He was also very devout in his prayer life, another virtue of knighthood. This was an opportunity for spiritual growth and fraternity throughout the State. Iron sharpens iron. Ite ad Joseph!

Once again, the Silver Rose has been a wonderful success in Oregon. In Late June and Early July, the Silver Rose made it all over the State. It started from the East in Idaho coming into Ontario, traveled West to the I-5 Corridor, down to Ashland. Then it went on to Nevada. Thank you to Brother Darin Silbernagel for helping make this an incredible event. Let's see the Silver Rose be even more successful this year.

Oregon also has a large contingency of Knights on the front lines for the Respect for Life initiative. Considering that Oregon is one of the most pro-abortion states in the nation, we have Knights of Columbus that are going above and beyond to combat this and to advocate for Life. My home Council 15605 Holy Rosary is an incredibly pro-life council that is full of members that are particularly passionate for the issue. They have been running a sippy cup drive the last few years to fundraise money for the Aid and Support After Pregnancy program. Council 6266 in Beaverton is also a very pro-life council. They pray the Rosary weekly on Saturdays in front of the Beaverton Planned Parenthood.

We have also had 3 councils this year install ultrasound machines. Council 3302 in Scappoose, Council 1430 in Eugene, and Council 9257 in Milwaukie all installed ultrasound machines. With Council 9257, Brother Ed Andolino gave out bread after Mass at Christ the King with a free will donation and was able to raise enough money to install a portable ultrasound machine in the Holy Family Catholic Clinic. These are lifesaving machines, Brothers, ladies. Funding 3 is absolutely incredible.

We have had very overwhelming support for the 40 Days for Life Campaign among Knights as well. Whenever I went to Lilith in Portland to campaign, I would always see Brother Matthew Klump and his wife Jill. I would also always see Brother Matthew Bennett from Council Seventeen Thousand Five Hundred and Thirty Six.

We've seen another new pro-life initiative recently "take off," our pro-life ACE Wings. Any member who participates in 10 public pro-life activities within one full year earns their wings. I heard about this program from Texas at the Supreme Convention in Quebec City as we were heading back to our hotel rooms. This was very literally an "elevator speech." He pitched it very well and as a result, this program has now "landed" in Oregon. The first recipient has been our

former State Pro-Life Director Patrick Parson. This was awarded while Albany Council 1577 sponsored a table at the Options Pregnancy Resource Center dinner. This dinner was activity number 10 for District Deputy Isaac Schrader, who shortly thereafter earned his. We've had several other recipients. Let's see more Oregon ACE's.

Speaking of District 7, Lebanon Council 3184 hosted a wonderful Prayer Breakfast. District Deputy Isaac Schrader invited me to an Oregon Agriculture Prayer Breakfast back in September and we both decided that the Knights of Columbus should put on a similar event geared more towards the Order. Lebanon made this a reality in January where our former State Chaplain Fr. Theodore Lange, currently in the neighboring Sweet Home, gave an inspirational speech. Let's see some more prayer breakfasts throughout the State in the near future.

We've seen another new program find its way to Oregon: Build-A-Bed. Supreme contacted me a while ago and asked if a council in Oregon would be interested in piloting the new program. Council 12656 St. Pius X stepped up to the challenge and did a build in late September. After giving a hands-on demonstration at the State Mid-Year Meeting, several districts expressed interest in doing a district-wide Build-A-Bed event, such as District 2. More news on this will come soon.

We also had a record year for Coats for Kids. Including the 50/50 match, we put 350 coats on kids this year! Wow! We're well under way to reach our 2 million milestone Order-wide in record time! Thank you to all Oregon councils for making Coats for Kids a major program in Oregon.

Coos Council 1261 has continued to support their food basket program as well. This has been a program they have done faithfully for a long time and it continues to be a success. I think awarding them Council of the Year last year gave them even more energy and drive. Good job Council 1261.

There's more good things coming from Council 1261. State Secretary Bob Adams expressed passion and interest in being the State Chairman for the Jubilee Year of Hope. Since St. Monica in Coos Bay is a pilgrim site itself, that sparked more drive and determination for Brother Bob to promote various activities and events Statewide. This is huge brothers, this only happens every 25 years. I would also like to encourage each member of the Knights to try and visit every pilgrim site during this year. Remember that you get a plenary indulgence for visiting a site, along with the other usual conditions of a plenary indulgence. Councils are encouraged to support their Parishes as they put on various events for the Jubilee Year.

Knights of Columbus in Oregon have proven themselves time and again to step up when natural disaster ensues. This year was no exception as wildfires raged in Los Angeles. Knights of Columbus all over Oregon stepped up and expressed desire and interest to provide support and many did. Thanks to Immediate Past State Deputy Ray Prom, we promoted this through Oregon State KofC Charities. The Knights of Columbus are always ready to assist others.



We also welcomed the Blessed McGivney relic to Western Oregon for a Relic Tour. This was a very beautiful spiritual growth opportunity for the State. Having had the opportunity to travel with the relic for the whole tour, I can say that it felt very much like a pilgrimage. It was very memorable. We were able to bring this relic to so many people who were in need. Blessed McGivney has no doubt touched so many lives in ways we may not realize. He has brought healing to those who need it. This relic tour has also strengthened the resolve of many Knights to do more for our Founder in this Honored Order. We hope to make this happen here in Central Oregon as well very soon.

In a time when our society and culture not only allows abortion, but celebrates it, the Knights of Columbus stands firm in defense of Life. In light of government issued proclamations such as “Abortion Provider’s Appreciation Day,” the Oregon Knights of Columbus deemed the time to be right to hold a “Solidarity with Life Prayer Gathering” outside the Capitol to demonstrate our unwavering support of Life. This event was held on Saturday March 22<sup>nd</sup>. This was a very successful event with about 75 attendees throughout the State who felt the strong internal urge to speak on behalf of Life. The virtue a Knight is most commonly known for is chivalry. This is why the theme for this State Convention was chosen. Chivalry involves standing in defense of the vulnerable. The unborn children in our society are vulnerable, as we see in our times today. Therefore, a virtuous Knight will take action to protect and defend the unborn in society. This virtue of chivalry was exemplified most honorably at this event by all who attended it. This event demonstrated that Oregon is full of most honorable and chivalrous Knights.

Brothers, ladies, this is overwhelming! I am so proud of all the achievements and accomplishments within this State. The Oregon Knights of Columbus has proven itself to be a Jurisdiction in the Breach! Our members are fighting hard and doing amazing things. Thank you to all of you for everything you have done!

One of the initiatives we also promoted this year was encouraging a mindset of doing everything... EEEAAARRLLLLYYY!!! We have seen membership really take off this year as a result. Our incentives this year were around encouraging councils to get things done... EEEAAARRLLLLYYY!!! We even have 3 councils that are Star Council as of now, I’m very proud of these councils. Just as a reminder, the following are the criteria for earning Star Council: McGivney Award for meeting membership goal, Founder’s Award for meeting Fraternal Benefits requirements, SP-7 Columbian Award for programs, Safe Environment Compliant for all 4 required positions, Form 365 for council program personnel submitted, Form 1728 Fraternal Survey submitted, and all per capita assessments paid. With all these requirements due by June 30<sup>th</sup>, it’s still not too late to be EEEAAARRLLLLYYY!!! You can complete all these other tasks and criteria now.

Let us look to the future. There is so much work we have left to do. We have maintained a strong lead and accomplished so many things throughout this Fraternal Year so far, but we must remain focused. Recall the story of the Tortoise and the Hare. The hare took off full speed ahead, lost

steam, napped, and lost the race. Don't take your foot off the gas. Finish strong! Keep going forward to the end! Earn Star Council! We have so much more work to do to change Oregon and that is what we intend to do. 400 new members won't change Oregon. 4,000 will begin to. Let's change Oregon. Let's make Oregon one of the top 10 Churched States. We have a lot of work to do to get there.

Once again, thank you to all of you for all you do. The success of the Oregon State Council is simply not possible without all of you! You are the ones who have pushed Oregon beyond the limits. I am deeply inspired by the work and effort that so many of you have put forth. Oregon Knights of Columbus have been helping men become who they were born to be. You are all on your way to becoming who you were born to be. When I see all the achievements that you have made, I take great pride in being a Knight of Columbus. It is an honor to be a Knight! Finally, my closing comment is this: it is my official opinion that each and every one of you have proven through your actions that CHIVALRY IS NOT DEAD!!!

Vivat Jesus!

# Chivalry is not Dead

117th Annual Conventon  
May 2-4, 2025

St. Thomas Catholic Church  
Redmond, OR

