



The Magnolia Knight



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Special Vocations Issue

Mississippi Knights of Columbus
Editor- Noel Aucoin



Deacon Larry Campbell
Vocations Chairman

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THIS MONTH'S MAGNOLIA KNIGHT IS DEDICATED TO THE : MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE ANSWERED GOD'S CALLING

Prior to the creation of this issue, I had several enthusiastic conversations and correspondences with the Vocations Chairmen from both Dioceses. They were both extremely interested in getting out as much information about Vocations programs, offered by the Order, to promote and supplement commitments made, by individuals, to the Religious Life.

Every article in this issue will deal with some Aspect of the Vocations Program. I would also like to extend an invitation to all other Program Directors and/or Chairmen to contact me and plan a "Special Issue" dedicated to your particular Program.

I would like to send out my sincere thanks to Fr. Kent Bowlds, Fr. Dennis Carver, Fr. Mike O'Conner and Deacon Larry Campbell for all they contributed to this edition.

After several correspondences with Deacon Larry Campbell and trying to work out a timely schedule for reporting all the Programs and Promotional ideas offered by the Order, it became apparent the only way to do this would be to dedicate an entire issue to this cause.

VIVAT JESUS!
Noel Aucoin Jr.
State Public Relations Chairman

SEMINARIAN STATUS FOR THE BILOXI DIOCESE

The Diocese of Biloxi currently has nine men in formation at various stages:

- Marcus Johnson, philosophy, St. John Vianney Seminary in Milwaukee
- Esteban Garcia, philosophy and ESL, St. Joseph's Seminary in Covington, LA
- Christopher Hess, philosophy, St. Joseph's Seminary in Covington, LA
- David Stockstill, Notre Dame Seminary
- Ignacio Jimenez, ESL and First Theology at Assumption Seminary in San Antonio, TX
- Jose Vasquez, Third Theology, St. Meinrad Seminary
- Adam Chapman, First Theology, St. Meinrad Seminary
- Deacon Khoa Phi Vo, Internship, Fourth Theology, Notre Dame Seminary
- Deacon Thang Pham, Internship, Fourth Theology, Notre Dame Seminary

We are currently accepting applications for three additional men at this time.

Respectfully Submitted
Fr. Dennis Carver
Dir. Of Vocations, Biloxi Diocese

SPONSOR A VOCATIONS MASS

A priestly or religious vocation can be found at its heart many times in a place of worship. As Knights, what better way for us to promote and encourage the servants of God than in our own home? Speak with your diocesan vocation director, your parish priest, and/or council chaplain about sponsoring a Mass, a rosary service, or even a weekend retreat to celebrate Pope Benedict XVI's World Day of Prayer for Vocations. The key to success in any program is to get the word out...and get it out fast! Don't wait until the last minute to let everyone know that your are sponsoring a Mass. In the preceding weeks, with your pastor's permission, advertise the Mass in the Church bulletin. Keep in mind that you are trying to promote vocations, so consider hosting something in conjunction with the Mass. For instance, ask the Diocesan Vocations Director to celebrate the Mass (get permission from your parish priest first!). Or, you might have some seminarians and novices speak of their experiences. How about a Vocations Fair with different religious orders exhibiting, or a simple light reception to honor the priests of your Parish? When making plans to have a Mass, rosary service, retreat, or any other vocations activity, make sure to get the pastor's input on dates, times, and his ideas. His support of this activity is not only crucial but necessary.



Fr. Dennis Carver
Dir. Of Vocations,
Biloxi Diocese

RSVP Program - Catholic Diocese of Jackson



Fr. Kent Bowlds
Dir. Of Vocations Jackson Diocese

As we enter a new Fraternal Year, it is time to make plans and/or continue plans already in place, to support our seminarians and religious through the RSVP Program. A full explanation of this program is contained in the Grand Knights Packet mailed from Supreme at this time each year.

Essentially, the financial portion of this program offers an incentive of \$100 for every \$500 given to a seminarian or religious. Please refer to this program in the packet. In addition to the financial aspect of RSVP there is the moral support given and prayers on behalf of the individual. Moral support would

include; letters of support, birthday cards, holiday greetings, copies of local newsletters, as well as any other newsworthy items that might be of interest. Invitations to council events during the holidays would also be appropriate. Finally, and perhaps the most important aspect of RSVP, is the prayer support given to each recipient. It is the power of prayer that will help in the discernment and strengthening of a vocation.

The Catholic Diocese of Jackson has six seminarians returning for

study this year. Additionally, we have the possibility of four new seminarians joining their ranks this fall. The diocese could possibly have 10 men studying for the priesthood, in addition to other religious men and women from the Diocese in formation.

Councils interested in participating in the RSVP Program for the Catholic Diocese of Jackson are asked to contact Father Kent Bowlds, Diocesan Director of Vocations. Fr Kent may be contacted at St. Richard Catholic Church, 1272 Lynnwood Dr., Jackson Ms 39206. Telephone - 601-366-2335. Father Kent will be happy to give you the name of an individual to adopt through RSVP. Please remember that more than one council may support the same individual. Now is the time to make this commitment. May God bless all who help in this manner.

VIVAT JESUS!
Deacon Lawrence M. Campbell
Vocations Chairman
Jackson Diocese

About the Christopher Fund

The Christopher Fund was established by resolution at the 2000 State Convention. The program was established by the Supreme Council to induce jurisdictions to establish an endowment for seminarian education. This program allows for every participating jurisdiction to raise up to \$5 per member. Mississippi has 6,299 members, so we can allocate up to \$31,495. The Supreme Council then sets aside an additional \$31,495 to match our total. Then they invest the money, and the interest earned is split equally between the two dioceses. Last year the fund had approximately \$25,582, so the state split equally the interest on \$51,164 at the going rate. Each

diocese then received a check for \$893. Since then, we have contributed an additional \$4503 increasing our total contribution to \$30,085. If we maximized the Fund, we could possibly earn up to \$2100 per diocese per year which would amount to the third highest contribution in the state. Presently \$24 from each Knights of Columbus license plate goes directly to this Fund. Additionally, as an incentive to help the Fund grow, one of our awards offerings is a contribution of at least \$100 to the Christopher Fund. Let's all pull together and maximize this Fund.



Vocational Scholarships Available

With a variety of scholarships available, the Order does not want financial issues to burden a potential candidate's decision to enter the seminary. The Order's scholarships include:

Father Michael J. McGivney Vocations Scholarship

It is available to seminarians enrolled in major seminaries while preparing for ordination as priests. It is an annual grant of \$2,500 per person, based on financial need, and renewable up to four years during the first four years of theology for tuition, room, and board. Scholarships are not available during the spiritual year, or the year devoted to pastoral internship. To be eligible for the scholarship, men must have been accepted, with appropriate ecclesiastical approval, at a major seminary and must be preparing for the priesthood in a diocese or religious order in the United States, its territories or Canada. Financial need must also be established.

Bishop Thomas V. Daily Vocations Scholarship

These \$2,500 scholarships follow the same parameters as the above-mentioned program, except that they are primarily merit-based. To obtain additional information on Knights of Columbus scholarships, please contact the Supreme Council Scholarship Department at (203) 752-4332.

STATEWIDE RAFFLE WILL BENEFIT SEMINARIAN EDUCATION

Drawing will take the place of the motorcycle raffle

A statewide raffle during the 2006-07 Fraternal Year, to benefit Seminarian Education in the dioceses of Biloxi and Jackson was announced by Dr. Paul N. Gospodarski and Deacon Lawrence M. Campbell. The raffle, which replaces the successful motorcycle raffle held the last two years in the Diocese of Biloxi, was approved by State Deputy Larry Tabor and has the blessing of both Bishop Rodi and Bishop Latino.

Dr. Paul will coordinate the raffle for the Diocese of Biloxi, with Deacon Larry filling the same role for the Jackson Diocese. They have negotiated an arrangement with Gray-Daniels Ford in Brandon, MS, for a vehicle.

The raffle drawing will be held at the 2007 State Convention in Biloxi, and the drawing will take place at the Saturday evening banquet on April 28. The grand prize winner will accompany Deacon Campbell to Gray-Daniels Ford after the convention to select a new 2007 Mercury Grand Marquis, Ford Mustang, Ford Escape, Ford F-150 or Ford Ranger. The vehicle selected may come from available inventory or be ordered by the dealership. The winner will be responsible for all taxes, licensing and fees.

The raffle will include three consolation prizes - a major home appliance, a Coby Portable Widescreen DVD player and a basket of cheer.

Profits earned in each Diocese will go to Seminarian Education in the respective Diocese.

"This is both an ambitious and major endeavor and will require a lot of hard work in promoting and selling," Dr. Paul and Deacon Larry said in announcing the raffle. They emphasize that the raffle is not intended to interfere in any way with any Seminarian Education project that a Council or Assembly is currently working on or planning for the future. "Please do not relax efforts on these programs. This raffle is meant to supplement other programs already in place or planned," they said.

The organizers are hopeful that each Diocese will earn a minimum of \$20,000 in addition to other programs.

The cost of tickets is \$2 for 1 ticket; \$5 for 3 tickets; \$10 for 6 tickets; \$15 for 10 tickets; \$20 for 14 tickets; and \$25 for 20 tickets.

Tickets and a flyer to promote ticket sales are being printed. Dr. Paul and Deacon Larry plan for sales to begin prior to, but no later than, the July 7-9 Summer Organizational Meeting in Biloxi.

"With the ever-escalating cost of educating a man for the priesthood, our bishops truly need our additional financial support," Dr. Paul and Deacon Larry said. "We have every confidence that the membership will make this new statewide raffle a tremendous success. We encourage all men and women in the Knights of Columbus Family to make this endeavor one of their top priorities for the 2006-07 Fraternal Year.

STATE CHAPLAIN'S THOUGHTS *Fr. Mike O'Conner - State Chaplain*



Brother Knights and coworkers in God's service, it is with great fraternal respect that I greet you and ask you this question. What is the most common vocation in the Church? While you think a moment about that question, I will address the question, what is a vocation? The word vocation is derived from the Latin verb *Vocoare* - which means to call, to invite or summon. We all share in the universal call to holiness, but when one talks of a particular "vocation" in the Church most often he means serving God as a priest, brother or nun. Yet priest, nun nor brother is the most common vocation. Remember, marriage is a vocation - a call and means to holiness. Your marriage is supposed to be a

means of growth in holiness! It is the most common call from God to a life of service. Sadly, today marriage, even among many Catholics, is no longer rooted in the giving of oneself in a call to holiness. Marriage is no longer lived as a vocation from God. Marriage, like priesthood, calls for one to give of himself or herself in a way that requires real, and at times very difficult, self surrender and sacrifice. Marriage- lived as a calling to holiness requires sharing, forgiveness, consideration of another, prayer, worry, and trust in God - especially when a couple remains open to life even when another child would be a real challenge to afford emotionally or financially.

We all know there are seven sacraments. Two of these sacraments are called "sacraments of service," they are Holy Orders (ordination) and Matrimony (marriage). These two sacraments must complement one another. It is from Holy Orders that the other sacraments spring, but it is from marriage that new life comes forth. Without sacramental marriage, lived as a vocation, there would be very few if any priests.

Without new priests all the other sacraments would fade away. T

Today we talk mostly about the "vocations crisis" in regard to the priesthood, but I call to your attention that we have a terrible vocations crisis in marriage as well. There are far too few husbands and wives that live their marriage as a religious vocation of service to their spouse, children, grandchildren, the Church and all of society. There are far too few couples who are truly open to life in their marriage as an aspect of their vocation to "go forth and multiply" and "build up the kingdom of God" as well as bringing forth new life to glorify God through his Church. I encourage those of you who are married to remember that marriage is a vocation and the most fundamental good of marriage is new life. It is from good Catholic marriages that most religious vocations have come. The shortage of priests and nuns reflects a shortage of marriages lived as a vocations. The shortage of priests encouraging men and women to faithfully follow the teachings of the Church regarding the great gift of life and that children are the highest blessing of marriage, these are the deep roots of the shortage of priests.

As Christians our goal is to do God's will, that is to hear his "call" and respond to the vocation he gives us. We are all called; we have a vocation to holiness and service - to building up the Kingdom. We should pray often that we live our vocations well and that we encourage others by deed and word to do the same.

VOCATIONS PROGRAM SUGGESTED OUTLINE

- A. Knights of Columbus has always been a strong defender of the priesthood and religious life, and a generous supporter of seminarians and religious in formation.
- B. Council vocations chairman:
 1. He must be a leader and call others together; inspire them to share prayers, ideas and plans; and then reach out beyond the group.
 2. He must convene committee meetings at least four times a year. The chaplain should be present if possible. The meetings should follow a standard Knights of Columbus committee meeting format. Schedule meetings so that work can begin early in the fraternal year.
 3. Items to be covered - the primary responsibilities of the council's vocations committee - at the meeting should include:
 - a. Proper and complete implementation of the Order's Refund Support Vocations Program (RSVP);
 - b. Planning programs to promote vocations awareness to young people as well as council members and their families;
 - c. Promoting vocations through activities and organized prayer to promote vocations, especially Holy Hours;
 - d. Effective distribution of Knights of Columbus and Catholic Information Service vocational materials, especially the three new DVDs on vocations— *The Vocation to Marriage*, *The Vocation to the Priesthood*, and *The Vocation to the Religious Life for Women* (available from the Supreme Council) in parishes, Catholic schools and retreat houses;
 - e. Promoting Knights of Columbus vocations efforts through the local media;
 - f. Effective publicity to encourage attendance at vocations events;
 - g. Establishing and maintaining a good working relationship with the local pastor and other priests; and
 - h. Getting information on religious vocations into the hands of young people who will be future religious leaders.
- C. Promoting religious vocations to council members and families
 1. Distribute packets of Knights of Columbus vocations materials to all members:
 - a. the *Vocations Prayer Card* (#1874)
 - b. the *Vocations Table Prayer Card* (#4175)
 - c. the booklet *Not to be Served, But to Serve* booklet (#827)
 - d. the *So You Think the Lord Might be Calling You?* flyer (#4215)

2. Distribute copies of the *Message of Pope Benedict XVI for World Day of Prayer for Vocations* (#4211).
 3. Display vocation awareness posters in the council's meeting place:
 - e. They Answered the Call. Is There One for You? poster
 - o one featuring young men (#2959)
 - o one featuring young women (#2960)
 - f. Father Michael J. McGivney Vocations poster (#4173, larger size—18 inches by 24 inches; #4174, smaller size — 11 inches by 17 inches)
 4. Include a "Prayer for Vocations" in your council bulletin.
 5. Make available to every Catholic school and parish in your area a supply of the Order's vocational materials, especially the DVDs *The Vocation to Marriage*, *The Vocation to the Priesthood* and *The Vocation to the Religious Life for Women*.
 6. Begin every council meeting with a prayer for vocations and ask families to have a similar prayer at mealtimes.
 7. Hold an open meeting for members and their families, and ask a seminarian or novice your council supports through the Refund Support Vocation Program, or a representative from a local seminary or religious order, to speak about vocations.
 8. Ask your chaplain to speak on vocations at council meetings and activities.
 9. Ask your chaplain, a seminarian or novice your council supports through RSVP, or a representative from a local seminary, to prepare a column on religious vocations for your council's newsletter.
 10. Establish a program in which council families take turns hosting a seminarian or novice for dinner during holidays or other times these individuals have off.
 11. Invite seminarians or novices to speak at council events or to be guests at socials.
- D. Promote vocational awareness among young people.
1. Distribute packets of K of C vocational materials to parishes, parochial schools, college chapels, and youth groups.
 2. Offer a forum where all parishioners, religious education students, parochial school pupils, youth group members, etc., can discuss discovering and pursuing a religious vocation.
 3. Request that special Masses for religious vocations be celebrated on a regular basis.
 4. Sponsor an annual assembly for students on religious vocations.
 5. Organize summer workshops, open houses and retreat weekends at local seminaries and religious orders.
 6. Hold a "social awareness" program at a local parochial high school. Invite priests, religious, seminarians and novices to discuss human needs programs that they are involved in (such as adoption services, Catholic Charities, medical services, ministering to people with AIDS, etc.).
 7. Arrange for seminarians and novices to speak with parochial school and religious education classes preparing for Confirmation.
 8. Hold an event to show the Order's two newest videos, *The Vocation to Marriage* and *The Vocation to the Religious Life For Women*, and a discussion on each.
 9. Conduct an evening movie, possibly the video on priesthood available from the Knights of Columbus titled *The Vocation to Priesthood*, and a vocational discussion for teenagers.
 10. Distribute vocations prayer cards and pamphlets at each Mass on selected weekends.
 11. Place vocations posters in parochial schools and around your parish. Keep a stock of pamphlets and prayer cards in your church's vestibule. Offer the *Columbia* vocations ad reproductions (#4193A-F) to your parish to be stuffed in the bulletin, and to schools and college chaplains for distribution to students.
 12. Hold a vocations awareness day at a Catholic elementary or secondary school.
 13. Conduct a vocations awareness theme poster or essay contest for students in Catholic schools or religious education classes.
 14. Arrange for a tour of a nearby seminary for young men in your parish.
 15. Celebrate a "Vocations Day."
- E. Councils can enhance their vocations-support efforts by utilizing some of the vocations- related materials available from the Supply Department:
1. A listing of vocational materials is in the *Supply Catalog* (#1264).
 2. Vocational materials are available at no charge when ordered in reasonable quantities.
 3. *Vocations Handbook* (#1942)
 - a. Included in the *Surge Kit* forwarded to each Financial Secretary in May/June.
 - b. This booklet includes information on vocations in general, promoting awareness and a positive climate for fostering vocations, setting up a vocations committee and conducting its meetings, the Refund Support Vocations Program, and vocations scholarships. It also discusses vocations programs for councils
 4. *Columbia* magazine vocation advertisements
 - a. Councils are welcome to copy *Columbia* ads for nonprofit use in parish bulletins and flyers.
 - b. For permission to reproduce an ad or ads in a professional advertising campaign (newspapers, billboards, etc.), write: Director, Catholic Information Service, Knights of Columbus Supreme Council, 1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510-3326.
 - c. Packets of six back cover ads (#4193A-F) are available.
- F. Knights of Columbus Refund Support Vocations Program (RSVP)
1. Local councils or assemblies agree to make an annual contribution of a minimum of \$500 or more to an individual seminarian or novice to help with his expenses.
 2. Councils and assemblies can sponsor more than one seminarian if their resources permit.
 3. RSVP Program refund regulations by region:
 - a. United States and Canada
 - i. For every \$500 given to an individual, the Supreme Council will refund the council or assembly \$100. The maximum refund a council or assembly can receive is \$400 per individual supported.
 - b. Mexico
 - i. For every \$250 given to an individual, the Supreme Council will refund the council or assembly \$50. The maximum refund a council or assembly can receive is \$400 per individual supported.
 - c. Philippines
 - i. For every \$250 given to an individual, the Supreme Council will refund the council or assembly \$50. The maximum refund a council or assembly can receive is \$400 per individual supported.
 4. Along with financial aid, the assistance through this program also encourages prayer and moral support, including letters and visits (at least four letters and one personal contact per seminarian in every fraternal year) to qualify for a moral support sticker.
 5. A recognition plaque is awarded to councils, assemblies, and circles that satisfy the requirements (financial and moral) and demonstrate their eligibility on the RSVP and Plaque Application Form (#2863), the RSVP report form found on the Order's website and in the *Council Report Forms Booklet* (#1436).
 6. For more information on the RSVP program see the *Vocations Handbook* (#1942).
- G. Vocations Scholarships
1. The Order's scholarships include:
 - a. Father Michael J. McGivney Vocations Scholarship

Available to seminarians enrolled in major seminaries while preparing for ordination as priests. It is annual grant of \$2,500 per person, based on financial need, and renewable up to four years during the first four years of theology for tuition, room and board. Scholarships are not available during the spiritual year, or the year devoted to pastoral internship. To be eligible for the scholarship, men must have been accepted, with appropriate ecclesiastical approval, at a major seminary and must be preparing for the priesthood in a diocese or religious order in the United States, its territories or Canada. Financial need must also be established.
 - b. Bishop Thomas V. Daily Vocations Scholarship

These \$2,500 scholarships follow the same parameters as the above-mentioned program, except that they are primarily merit-based.
 2. For more information on scholarships contact: Department of Scholarships, Knights of Columbus Supreme Council, 1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT