

## **State Chaplain's Message for Regional Seminars – Fall 2016**

Dear Brother Knights,

Vivat Jesus!

We are beginning an exciting new time of preparing - not only for the year ahead of us, but especially for the changing world all around us. We want to renew in our hearts and souls the lessons that we learned and the commitments that we made as we moved through the degrees of our Order. Charity, Unity and Fraternity and also a truly Catholic love for our homeland in Patriotism.

We also want to plan the typical year for our own council. Every council has a particular situation as to the parishes and area that it serves. Each council has a tradition. There are the events that each council hosts every year. There is a certain way that each district and each council becomes involved in the parishes and communities from where they draw their members. This might mean annual fundraisers, charitable works, prayer events, the march for life, some other pro-life effort, etc. God bless us in all these noble efforts! May we ever review the effectiveness of these events

and efforts as to how they serve the community, but also how they inspire those that participate to open their hearts to the Lord.

Our State Deputy Karl Brosch is bringing a team of leaders around the province to every region this fall to conduct seminars of inspiration and leadership. In the context of these seminars much information will be shared from our Supreme Council and much reflection will be made as to what is happening in the world and in the Church in our day and how we as individual councils and as individual Knights can effectively respond. As Knights of Columbus we have the wherewithal to respond in a significant way. We have at our disposal all the Sacraments and graces of the Church as does every Catholic. However, as Knights we are also surrounded by an extraordinary group of men that have dedicated themselves to live and serve in a sense “above and beyond” the typical calling of every member of the faithful. This group of brothers is local, but it also extends around the earth as the largest Catholic fraternity in the world. That’s a lot of brothers that each of us has!

The Lord has given each of us the gift of faith. What we have done and what we will do with that gift depends on each of us. Like the men in the Gospel parable, we can either grow that gift entrusted to us or, God forbid, we can bury it. Growing in the faith, day by day, is obvious the desired

direction to take. But, again, we are never alone in this. We have the Church to lead and support us and we also have our brothers in the Knights with whom we work and who support us as true brothers.

The Knights of Columbus Supreme Council gives us so much material to make our planning and growth in membership so much easier. The Supreme Chaplain, Archbishop Lori, and his team also give us so much to support our spiritual lives. We simply want to take up these materials and “tools” and use them in the most effective way possible for our council. Two items in particular that must be promoted are the “Building the Domestic Church: The Family Fully Alive” and “Into the Breach: An Apostolic Exhortation to Catholic Men”. These two programs, available in a very handy booklet form, can be used by each council as an internal “formation program” at your monthly meetings. However, they can also be shared outside council meetings with the parish or the wider community. “Into the Breach” is a program for men. But “The Family Fully Alive” can and should be organized for every parish - with the blessing and collaboration of the parish Priest, of course. Where this has been tried – first at council meetings – it has inspired a lot of reflection and discussion. You will love it as will your council as will the people of your parishes.

Finally, I would encourage all Knights to promote the grace of the Jubilee Year that will soon be over in the third week in November. The Holy Father, Pope Francis, saw the Jubilee Year of Mercy as a time for personal and Church-wide renewal. It is a time for us to realign our intentions and our lives with the Will of God. It is a time for us to spread truly mercy in our local communities and throughout the society in which we live. The Holy Year of Mercy also offers each of an extraordinary opportunity for personal spiritual renewal by making every effort to obtain the Plenary Indulgence. We do this by performing a work of mercy and/or by making a pilgrimage to one of the 10 Holy Doors established for this year around the province. In connection with work of mercy or a pilgrimage, we fully reconcile our selves to God with a good Confession and by worthily receiving the Lord in Holy Communion. There are a few more details that have surely been made available in home parishes. But every Knight should strive to do this at least once before the end the Jubilee Year. Invite all members of your family and the whole parish to do the same (maybe organizing a mini pilgrimage to a Holy Door, or a half-day of renewal that involves the performance of one of the 14 Works of Mercy). This Plenary Indulgence can be obtained for oneself or for a deceased soul that depends on us to pray for them. See the website for more information ([www.im.va](http://www.im.va)).

Just imagine how energized and in tune we would be with the Lord and with each other if every brother Knight within our local council made the effort to totally renew himself through the Jubilee Year as we begin this new year of activity! Talk to the Brothers of your council and maybe organize a Jubilee Day when the whole council will make the effort to make a mini pilgrimage if a Holy Door is nearby or to perform some Work of Mercy as a group or personally. Then go to Confession (on that day or before) and attend a Mass and receive Holy Communion as a Council. Of course have some fellowship afterward to which the local Priests are invited. What a powerful event of Charity, Unity and Fraternity that would be!

God bless! Vivat Jesus!

Fr. Michael Kwiatkowski,  
State Chaplain, Manitoba