



knights of columbus

Msgr. Weis Council #10596

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February 2012

From the Grand Knight

Brother Knights,

A quick synopsis of our February activities:

February 11: Our Squires Circle is sponsoring a trip to South Bend for the DePaul v Notre Dame basketball game (tip-off is at 12 noon EST). Call Chief Squires Counselor Gregg Blocher at 219-902-1171 for ticket and bus information.

The 40 Days for Life Campaign (in Merrillville) begins on February 17 and continues through March 28. Four of us attended the Fall Campaign in 2011. Please consider setting aside a few hours to walk for the unborn children. More information will be forthcoming at our February 13 meeting. You can also contact our state Pro-Life Director, Mike Velasco, at 219-663-0509.

Our annual Lenten Fish Fry will be held on Friday, February 24, in the gymnasium. This is the First Friday of Lent. Please volunteer your time and talent when the sign-up sheet is passed around at our meeting.

Shifting gears to Catholic world news that you probably didn't read or see in the national media:

The annual March for Life in Washington was set for January 23. Scheduled to speak at the youth rally were Victoria Hearst, a member of the publishing family (and sister of Patty Hearst, who was kidnapped in 1974) and founder of the nondenominational Praise Him Ministries, and Julia Holcomb, who in the 1970's became pregnant with the child of rock star Steven Tyler of Aerosmith (and more recently an American Idol judge). Holcomb aborted their son, something for which both she and Tyler have publicly expressed remorse.

On December 19 Pope Benedict XVI signed a decree recognizing the miracle needed to canonize Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha, whose intercession is credited for the miraculous healing of a Washington state boy who had been afflicted with a flesh-eating bacteria. She will be the first Native American from the present day continental United States to be declared a saint. Known as the "Lily of the Mohawks," Blessed Kateri was born in 1656 in upstate New York. Her father was a Mohawk war chief named Kenhoronkwa, and her mother was Kahenta, a Christian Algonquin woman. Both her parents died in a smallpox epidemic in 1660, when Kateri was only four years old. Kateri was raised by her uncle and aunts, and was baptized on Easter Sunday in 1676. She died on April 17, 1680.

On December 2 a final report was issued by the National People's Tribunal in Orissa state, India regarding anti-Christian violence in August 2008. It stated "Christians who refused to abandon their faith and convert to Hinduism were brutally killed or injured. Local government officials played a variety of negative roles during the violence, ranging from being silent spectators to refusing to protect or assist the victim survivors."

More than 100 Christians were killed, 295 churches and 6,000 houses were looted and torched, rendering 54,000 Christians homeless. Sidheswar Pradhan, a Hindu leader, was killed for offering protection to Christians. Father Edward Sequeira, a Divine World missionary, was beaten and locked up inside an orphanage he managed during the violence. He was rescued from the smoldering building after lying unconscious for five hours.

A Christmas Day bombing at St. Theresa Catholic Church in Madalla, Nigeria killed 37 and wounded 57 Catholics. The attack was attributed to Boko Haram, an Islamic group blamed for scores of attacks. The group is believed to have ties with outside extremist groups, including Al Qaeda's northern Africa affiliates. Archbishop Ignatius Kaigama, the vice president of the Nigerian Bishops' Conference, issued a statement that said, "We continue to preach peace, hoping that all of us in Nigeria, Muslims and Christians, will be able to work and live happily together. This is our position: no violence, no retaliation. We want to live in peace."

source for the above articles: National Catholic Register, January 15-28, 2012.

On December 10, 2011, a candlelight prayer vigil was held in Orange County, California to bring attention to religious freedom and human rights issues in Vietnam. The vigil was organized by the Knights of Columbus Council 14445. Chartered four years ago, it now has nearly 120 members. The vigil was in response to the following incident that took place a week earlier: "Accompanied by hundreds of parishioners from Central Hanoi's Thai Ha Parish, Redemptorist Father Josph Nguyen Van Phuong made his way to the People's Committee of Hanoi to submit an official complaint. He wanted Vietnamese authorities to cease expropriating land that the Redemptorists had purchased in 1928. Father Phuong filed his complaint, but trouble started after he left the Peoples' Committee. Police and militiamen, with batons at the ready, surrounded the priest and his parishioners. When the mob approached the priest, a parishioner pushed herself in front of him, begging them not to harm Father Phuong. Instead, they beat her so severely that she was sent to the hospital. There are about 6 million Catholics in Vietnam, who constitute about 7 percent of the population and the largest religious minority."

source: our own Columbia magazine, February 2012.

Vivat Jesus,

Brother Goz

From the State Deputy



February 2012

Monthly Newsletters and Communications

We need your help and participation in order to improve our communications and hold down the costs of our mailings. We have a monthly mailing this month, but in the next two months I want us to confirm the email addresses for every Grand Knight and/or Council.

Mark Glodowski, our webmaster, will set up a collection point on the State Web site for all councils to turn in their council's and/or Grand Knight's email addresses. I know, most of you did this earlier for the directory info, but we need to make sure they are all up to date.

Please check the website, www.indianakofc.org, and check the 'Email Collection' and follow instructions.

All District Deputies, Regional Directors, Wardens and Team Members, Directors and Chairmen are asked to do the same. I have asked Paul Zielinski and Jerry Brown to find a way to reduce the number of letters being mailed out. So make sure you look on both sides of each letter.

Have you elected Delegates to the State Convention, April 27, 28, 29, 2012? You need to do so now!

Interested in being a Delegate to the Supreme Convention, Aug 2, 3, 4, 2012 with a Lady of Guadeloupe Festival the weekend before? It is in Anaheim, CA. Check the Supreme website, www.kofc.org.

God Bless All,
F.R.O.G.

Thomas Gawlik
State Deputy
Indiana Knights of Columbus
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From Your State Chaplain

February 2012

By the time you receive this, we will have said goodbye (not good riddance) to the thousands of visitors who were here in Indianapolis for *SuperBowl XLVI*. Hoosier hospitality was on great display as you might have guessed. You may have heard the story about Fr. Rick Nagel and the parishioners of St. John the Evangelist parish. Their church was located right in the heart of what was dubbed Super Bowl Village. They saw this as a "holy opportunity" to open their doors and to bring Christ to people and to "have a good time with it." Father Nagel was planning to ride the Zip Line, too!

Since the Knights are consistent proponents of strong families, I want to bring to your attention two special observances this month. February 11 is *World Day of the Sick* designated by Pope John Paul II. It is a special day of prayer for the sick and of sharing some time with them. What a wonderful witness we Knights can give here. World Marriage Day is observed February 12. Some of our parishes will have the blessing of married couples that day.

We had a very productive *Winter Meeting* last December. You may have heard by now about some of the restructuring that is being considered. This would include the creation of Six Regional Directors and their teams (including a chaplain). As State Chaplain I would be able to work with the regional chaplains to more fruitfully disseminate information regarding prayer/spirituality/faith formation to the local councils.

February 20 is *Presidents' Day*. For some of us, to even hear the word "president" conjures up some rather negative feelings. And the public discourse (discord?) of the current Republican Presidential Primary only adds to this negativity. I have been one who has always said that we have the right to debate issues (and we can violently disagree). But to attack others-regardless of party-is certainly unworthy of us as citizens, as Catholics, and as Knights. In the end, we need to get back to prayer. For whoever holds this most important office is deserving of our prayer.

On a happier note, I bring your attention to a delightful book by Father James Martin entitled *Between Heaven and Mirth*. Father Martin invites us to rethink the importance of humor and laughter in the life of believers. He asks: "If joy is an obvious outgrowth of a life-giving faith, why does it seem absent from so many religious settings? Why do church services seem so devoid of humor? Why are religious people so often (fairly) characterized as gloomy?" There are many jokes scattered throughout the book to lighten your spirits.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22. Let us pray for one another that we may have a spiritually-renewing Lent that will lead us to be stronger in virtue and more holy in God's sight.

State Chaplain
Fr. Stephen Jarrell
statechaplain@indianakofc.org

HAPPY BIRTHDAY ONE & ALL!

February Birthdays

- 1 Antonio Cisneros
- 2 William Jarvis
- 3 Michael Jasinski
- 5 James Wachel
- 7 Joseph Liszka
Fredrick McCraw
Barney Zagrocki
- 8 Sam Maravilla
- 9 Paul Capriglione
William Zematis
- 10 Norman Bajda
- 12 James Marmalejo, Jr.
- 14 Arthur Giannini
Clement Kobus
Adam Kocal
- 15 James Schaum
- 16 Edward Strbjak, Jr.
- 18 James Pietraszak
- 20 Michael Martinelli
- 23 Joseph Cwiok

March Birthdays

- 3 Joseph Mistarz
- 4 Peter Wujek
- 6 Kevin O'Neill
Al Pala
- 11 Konstanty Pieczykolan
- 12 Gregory Sudicky
- 17 Kevin Kish
Brent Spence
- 20 Peter Dalessandro
- 21 Alex Vargas
- 23 Daniel Buksa
Joseph Olejnik
- 27 Justin Lindner
- 31 Richard Bona
Kenneth Kors
Michael Toney, II

From Your Council Chaplain

LENT IS COMING — ARE YOU READY?

It is really kind of hard to imagine. After all, we have recently celebrated Christmas and we are already looking toward Easter.

Lent begins in a few weeks. Ash Wednesday is February 22nd.

Remember, the laws of Fast and Abstinence apply for Ash Wednesday, the Fridays of Lent, and Good Friday. To refresh your memory, they are as follows:

Ash Wednesday is a day of Fast and Abstinence.

Fast: Allows for only one full meal to be taken during the day. Two smaller meals are permitted, if necessary, to maintain strength according to one's needs. Eating solid foods between meals is not permitted. **Fasting is to be observed by all Catholics who are 18 years of age through to those who have not yet celebrated their 59th birthday.**

Abstinence: The practice of refraining from meat and meat products. **Abstinence is to be practiced by all who are 14 years of age and older.**

Fridays of Lent are Days of Abstinence

Additionally, throughout the season of Lent, we give an opportunity on a couple of weeknights for the faithful to come to church, either for Mass or for Stations of the Cross. **Lenten Masses** are Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.

Stations of the Cross are Fridays at 7:00 p.m. The school students also do Stations of the Cross on Fridays at 2:15 p.m. (except on March 30th. There are no afternoon Stations on March 30th due to Spring Break). On March 16th, the 8th grade will do the Living Stations at 1:30 p.m. (instead of 2:15 p.m.) and then again at 7:00 p.m.

Remember, **Fridays in Lent are days of Abstinence.**

Please keep our third grade school and Religious Education students in your prayers. They will celebrate their First Reconciliation on Saturday, February 18th.

We have a Parish Mission from Sunday, February 26th through Tuesday, February 28th. The speaker at this year's Mission is the Vocation Director of the Diocese of Gary, Fr. Mick Kopil.

Our Parish Penance Service will be on Monday, April 2nd at 7:00 p.m. The school children will have an opportunity to go to confession that morning beginning immediately after the 8:30 a.m. school Mass. Any parishioner is free to come to confession during the morning as well. There will be several Carmelite Fathers helping Fr. Rick and me during the morning confessions.

Lent is coming. Be prepared for Easter!

Fr. Mike



DIOCESE OF GARY

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Bishop of Gary

January 27, 2012

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I write to you concerning an alarming and serious matter that negatively impacts the Church in the United States directly, and that strikes at the fundamental right to religious liberty for all citizens of any faith. The federal government, which claims to be “of, by, and for the people,” has just dealt a heavy blow to almost a quarter of those people – the Catholic population – and to the millions more who are served by the Catholic faithful.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced last week that almost all employers, *including Catholic employers*, will be *forced* to offer their employees health coverage that includes sterilization, abortion-inducing drugs, and contraception. Almost all health insurers will be *forced* to include those “services” in the health policies they write. And almost all individuals will be *forced* to buy that coverage as a part of their policies.

In so ruling, the Administration has cast aside the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, denying to Catholics our nation’s first and most fundamental freedom, that of religious liberty. And as a result, unless the rule is overturned, we Catholics will be compelled either to violate our consciences, or to drop health coverage for our employees (and suffer the penalties for doing so). The Administration’s sole concession was to give our institutions one year to comply.

We cannot – we will not – comply with this unjust law. People of faith cannot be made second class citizens. We are already joined by our brothers and sisters of all faiths and many others of good will in this important effort to regain our religious freedom. Our parents and grandparents did not come to these shores to help build America’s cities and towns, its infrastructure and institutions, its enterprise and culture, only to have their posterity stripped of their God given rights. In generations past, the Church has always been able to count on the faithful to stand up and protect her sacred rights and duties. I hope and trust she can count on this generation of Catholics to do the same. Our children and grandchildren deserve nothing less.

And therefore, I would ask of you two things. First, as a community of faith, we must commit ourselves to prayer and fasting that wisdom and justice may prevail, and religious liberty may be restored. Without God, we can do nothing; with God, nothing is impossible. Second, I would also recommend visiting www.usccb.org/conscience, to learn more about this severe assault on religious liberty, and how to contact Congress in support of legislation that would reverse the Administration’s decision.

Asking God’s blessings upon you, I am

Sincerely yours in the Lord Jesus,

Most Reverend Dale J. Melczek
Bishop of Gary



United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

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The HHS Mandate for Contraception/Sterilization Coverage: An Attack on Rights of Conscience

How important is the right of conscience in American tradition?

It has always been of paramount importance: “No provision in our Constitution ought to be dearer to man than that which protects the rights of conscience against the enterprises of the civil authority” (Thomas Jefferson, 1809).

In the past, has the federal government respected conscientious objections to procedures such as sterilization that may violate religious beliefs or moral convictions?

Yes. For example, a law in effect since 1973 says that no individual is required to take part in “any part of a health service program or research activity funded in whole or in part under a program administered by the Secretary of Health and Human Services” if it is “contrary to his religious beliefs or moral convictions” (42 USC 300a-7 (d)). Even the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, which requires most of its health plans to cover contraception, exempts religiously affiliated plans and protects the conscience rights of health professionals in the other plans. Currently no federal law requires anyone to purchase, sell, sponsor, or be covered by a private health plan that violates his or her conscience.

How has the Department of Health and Human Services departed from this policy?

By issuing a mandate for coverage of sterilization and contraceptives (including long-lasting injections and implants, and “morning-after pills” that may cause an early abortion) in virtually all private health plans. In August 2011 HHS included these procedures in a list of “preventive services for women” to be required in health plans issued on or after August 1, 2012. On January 20, 2012, HHS reaffirmed its mandate while deferring enforcement against some religious employers until August 2013.

Is it appropriate to require coverage of these as “preventive services”?

No. The other services on HHS’s list seek to prevent serious disease – breast cancer, lung cancer, AIDS. Pregnancy is not a disease. The Institute of Medicine committee that compiled the “preventive services” list for HHS said in its report that unintended pregnancy is “a condition for which safe and effective prevention *and treatment*” need to be more widely available – setting the stage for mandated coverage of abortion as the “treatment” when prevention fails. Note that women who suffer from infertility, which really *is* an illness, were ignored in this mandate.

Didn’t HHS include a religious exemption?

Yes, an incredibly narrow “religious employer” exemption that fails to protect many, perhaps most, religious employers. To be eligible an organization must meet four strict criteria, including the requirement that it both hire *and serve* primarily people of its own faith. Catholic schools and hospitals would have to eject their non-Catholic employees, students and patients, or

purchase health coverage that violates their moral and religious teaching. Jesus and his apostles would not have been “religious enough” for the exemption, since they healed and served people of different faiths. The exemption provides no protection at all to sponsors and providers of health plans for the general public, to pro-life people who own businesses, or to individuals with a moral or religious objection to these procedures.

Isn't this an aspect of the Administration's drive for broader access to health care for all?

Whether or not it was intended that way, it has the opposite effect. People will *not* be free to keep the coverage they have now that respects their convictions. Organizations with many employees will have to violate their consciences or stop offering health benefits altogether. And resources needed to provide basic health care to the uninsured will be used instead to facilitate IUDs and Depo-Provera for those who already had ample coverage. This is a diversion away from universal health care.

But won't this provide “free birth control” for American women?

That claim is false for two reasons. First, the coverage will be mandatory, not a matter of free choice for any woman. Second, insurance companies will not be able to charge a co-pay or deductible for the coverage, so they will simply add the cost to the standard premium everyone has to pay – and among those being required to pay will be people who oppose it on conscience grounds. That is no victory for freedom.

By objecting to this coverage, is the Catholic Church discriminating against women?

Not at all. The Church's teaching against early abortion is based on respect for all human life, male and female. Its teaching against contraception and sterilization is based on respect for the power to help generate a new human life, a power held by both men and women – so health plans in accord with Catholic teaching do not cover male or female sterilization. It is the HHS mandate that shows disregard for women, by forcing them to purchase this coverage whether they want it or not.

Do religious employers violate the consciences of women who want birth control, by refusing to cover it in their employee health plans?

No, they simply decline to provide active support for procedures that violate their own consciences. If an employee disagrees, he or she can simply purchase that coverage or those procedures elsewhere.

What solution to this dispute would be acceptable?

Ideally, HHS can leave the law the way it has always been, so those who provide, sponsor and purchase health coverage can make their own decisions about whether to include these procedures without the federal government imposing one answer on everyone. If HHS refuses, it will be especially urgent for Congress to pass the “Respect for Rights of Conscience Act” (HR 1179/S. 1467), to prevent health care reform act from being used to violate insurers' and purchasers' moral and religious beliefs.