



PA Central District Winter 2015-16



Worthy Faithful Navigators, Comptrollers and brother Sir Knights,

It certainly has been a busy first quarter conducting installations of assembly officers and an exemplification of the 4th Degree in State College. It has been a pleasure to meet many of you during these events. I am looking forward to participating in a Wreaths Across America event on December 12 and encourage all assemblies to get involved with this wonderful patriotic activity.

I am here to serve you, so please do not hesitate to contact me for help, including conducting assembly officer training. I hope you enjoy the newsletter; it is still a work in progress.

On behalf of my wife Karen and our family, may you and yours have a merry Christmas and a happy New Year! As you enjoy your time with your family, take to reflect on the many blessings we all share as Catholic Americans.

Fraternally,
John Fitzpatrick, Master

CDC Says “Take 3” Actions To Fight The Flu

- Take time to get a **flu vaccine**. CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and older as the first and **most important step** in protecting against this serious disease.
- Take everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of germs.
- Take flu antiviral drugs if your doctor prescribes them.

All for One and One for All

Father Bernard J. Ezaki
District Friar

Whoever wishes to become great shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to become first among you shall be the slave of all.

--Mark 10:43-44--

I once had the privilege of living in a rectory with Father Joel Kiefer. Before being ordained a priest, he spent six years in the army. He tells great stories about his life as a cadet at West Point. Here's one.

Once, Cadet Kiefer and the rest of his squad had just finished a long march, and they were hungry. They all filed into the mess hall and sat down at their places, obediently awaiting permission to eat. Father Kiefer describes what happened next:

Our squad leader baited us by asking the whole squad at the table, "Who's hungry?" We all responded in the affirmative. Then he said, "Who's really hungry?" This time, three of us answered positively. The others who didn't respond had, by this time, caught on to his "formation" tactics. Our squad leader asked a third time, "Who's hound-dog hungry?" (In other words, "Who's really, really, hungry?") Only I, Cadet Kiefer, responded in the affirmative. He gave me alone permission to eat. After a number of huge mouthfuls, he asked me how the food was and proceeded to tell my squad mates how "special" I was. I was the last to notice his technique of "ratting out the pig." I ordered arms (put my fork down) and refused to eat, even though he told me to do so. A few mouthfuls of grub taught me the lesson of team.

Cadet Kiefer got the message. He should never have allowed himself the privilege of eating a meal without making sure the rest of his squad was given the same opportunity. Each member of the company must look out for the wellbeing of the others. That's how battles are won. That's how soldiers survive. The next time Joel was given permission to eat while the rest of his company looked on, he responded: "Sir, I will not eat until the rest of the men are allowed to eat, Sir!"

Many people today believe that it's a wimpy thing to be a Catholic. Yet a confirmed Catholic is nothing less than a soldier of Christ. The Church on earth is rightly called the Church Militant, because we are fighting the battle of earthly life and combating the forces of evil. That's why, in the Rite of Confirmation prior to Vatican II, the bishop gave the person who was being confirmed a slap on the cheek. This was a reminder to be a faithful soldier of Christ, to be brave in the fight against evil.

Not surprisingly, the same rule that Cadet Kiefer learned at West Point applies also to us as members of the Army of Christ. We are not to seek our own comfort, glory, or safety at the expense of others. Instead, we must look out for one another. That's how evil is conquered. That's how souls are saved.



Assembly Membership Action Plan

Dec 15 – Mar 16

- Publicize your patriotic activities and make sure your Color Corps is active and visible.
- Schedule your assembly officers to visit affiliated councils each month. Let the council GKs know they wish to speak during the Report of the 4th Degree. Promote the Patriotic degree and the upcoming exemplification of the 4th degree on June 11.
- Encourage 2nd Degree Members to take their 3rd Degree (see below). Offer to drive the candidates to the degree.
 - Feb 21 – Cathedral, Allentown
- Conduct an open house during the early to mid Spring for prospective candidates. Make sure you have applications and information available.

Congratulations!

**Exemplification of the 4th Degree
October 25, 2015**

**Honoring
Rev. Father D. Timothy Grimme
State College, PA**

82 New Sir Knights joined our ranks!



Save the Date!

**Exemplification of the 4th Degree
June 11, 2016**

**Honoring
Sir Knight Thomas Rafferty
for his service to our
Country &
the Knights of Columbus**

**Holiday Inn Conference Center,
Fogelsville, PA**

The biennial meeting will be held on April 10, 2016, location TBA

Fraternal Survey (Form 1728c) Due January 31

- Form found @ http://www.kofc.org/un/en/forms/assembly/fraternal_survey1728_p.pdf. May also be submitted online.
- Include copies to Master and Vice Supreme Master (see directory for email addresses)

Miniature Jewels

I continue to observe inconsistencies in the order and placement of miniature jewels. The following is taken directly from our Color Corps manual and should serve as a guide to ensure uniformity among Sir Knights.

PAST AND FORMER MINIATURE JEWELS

AUTHORIZED DISPLAY OF MINIATURE JEWELS ON REGALIA:

1. Miniature past and former jewels in the order of precedence is detailed below. They are worn upon the formal tuxedo jacket, centered on the left front panel between the lapel and the left armhole seam with the bottom edge of the jewel(s) ¼ inch above the top of the pocket.
2. A maximum of four medals may be worn on a single row with the left edge of the holding bar aligned with the left edge of the pocket.
3. If a second (or multiple) row(s) of medals is worn, the bottom edge of the ribbons on the top row of medals will extend down to the top edge of the MEDALS on the bottom row. When the upper row contains 4 medals the left edge of the holding bar will be aligned with the left edge of the pocket. When the upper row contains less than 4 medals it will be centered above the lower row (see pictured diagrams).
4. No medals of any other group or organization are allowed to be worn in regalia, whether social or color corps.

PRECEDENCE OF MINIATURE JEWELS

The order of precedence for the wearing of Papal Orders and Knights of Columbus miniature medals is as follows:

- > Papal Orders (Knight of St. Gregory, Knight of the Holy Sepulchre, Knight of Malta, etc.)
- > Former Supreme Director
- > Past State Deputy
- > Former Vice Supreme Master
- > Former District Master
- > Former District Deputy
- > Past Grand Knight
- > Past Faithful Navigator



Diagram 1

Past Grand Knight



Diagram 2

Past Grand Knight
Past Faithful Navigator



Diagram 2

Former District Deputy
Past Grand Knight
Past Faithful Navigator



Diagram 4

Former District Master
Former District Deputy
Past Grand Knight
Past Faithful Navigator

Some men become legends after their deaths and others become legends while they are alive. Lewis Burwell Puller, forever known as “Chesty”, was in the latter category. Enlisting in the Marine Corps in 1918 he would rise in rank from private to lieutenant general. Throughout his career he led from the front, never asking his men to go where he would not go. For his courage he was five times awarded the Navy Cross, a Silver Star, a Distinguished Service Cross, and a Bronze Star with a v for valor, along with numerous other decorations. In World War II and Korea he became a symbol of the courage that Marines amply displayed in both conflicts.

Puller was an Episcopalian. However he made no secret that he greatly admired Navy Catholic chaplains who served with the Marines. His reasons were simple. The Catholic chaplains were without fear, always wanted to be with the troops in combat, and the men idolized them for their courage and their willingness, even eagerness, to stand with them during their hour of trial.

After he had retired, Puller complained to his Episcopal bishop: “I can’t understand why our Church sends such poorly prepared men as chaplains when fighting breaks out. The Catholics pick the very best, young, virile, active and patriotic. The troops look up to them.” Small wonder that Puller sent his own kids to Catholic parochial school.

The Angel Tree by Matthew Manion

The year was 1944. America was at war and everything that year was rationed or in very short supply – including Christmas trees. My father was four-years-old and earlier that year; his mother had a very difficult pregnancy. The baby was born, but did not survive. Three days later, on Good Friday, his mother died from complications associated with the delivery. It was a very difficult year for my dad, his father, and his five brothers and sisters.

My grandfather, John, worked for the post office and was, as usual, extremely busy as Christmas approached. He would work the midnight shift, come home and do his best to care for his six children, get some rest, and start over again; all while working through his own grieving process. In prior years, he always took off on Christmas eve. The family would buy a Christmas tree and decorate it together in the afternoon. They would have dinner and then go to bed early so they could make it to the solemn 5:30 am Mass to celebrate Christ's birth. Given the shortage of workers caused by the war, John had to go to work on Christmas Eve morning, 1944.

By then, dad's older brothers, Jack and Franny, realized that they needed to go shopping if the family was going to have a tree. They scoured the town, but all of the lots were empty. There was not a tree to be found in all of Philadelphia. Discouraged and sad, they returned home empty handed. They put on a brave face, so that their four-year-old brother would not realize what was going on. It was going to be hard enough to face Christmas without Mom and the empty space in the tree stand was just another visible reminder of the void they all felt. When my grandfather came home from work, Jack and Franny gave him the bad news about the tree. He told them not to worry, that he was going to Church for confession. "Confession?" they thought. "How in the world is that going to get us a tree?"

My grandfather walked the three blocks to St. Barnabus feeling very distraught. He had no idea how he was going to find a tree. He talked to his wife, Catherine, in heaven, and asked her to talk to God and find some way to help him out.

The pastor, Father LaRue, heard his confession and at the end could tell something was still wrong. "Is there something else, John?" he asked. My grandfather told him he was without a tree for his children and he didn't know what to do. Well aware of John's loss of his wife, he was immediately overcome with a sense of "we can't let this happen."

Fr. LaRue left the confessional telling John to follow him. He took him to the entrance of the church and said, "Take one of these." Guarding the entrance to the Church were two evergreens, standing like great sentinels 15-foot tall. Father LaRue helped John cut one next to the Church and drag it to the sidewalk. He then returned to the confessional.

While their dad was at confession, the older children helped put the younger ones to bed, with their heads full of the normal Christmas expectations. Jack and Franny were sitting in the living room, when their older sister, Mary, shouted from the front door: "Come quick! It's Dad and he's carrying something big!" They sprang up and ran out to meet him. The three of them then dragged the huge tree the rest of the way home. They had to cut it just to get it into the house. The giant tree filled the void in the stand and covered the living room in Christmas green! The older children set about decorating the tree and after they had hung the last ornament, their Dad got out a special box of angel hair. Everyone remembered how Mom always put the angel hair on last, putting a clump on the tree to tell the younger children that Santa's beard must have gotten caught in the tree while he was leaving gifts.

That year, as my grandfather hung it, he could not help but think of his angel, his wife Catherine in heaven, and the role she must have played in getting a tree for her family. That Christmas tree in 1944 told John, Mary, Jack, Franny and the others that even without Mom, things were going to be all right. It was clearly a message of hope. Our family continues the tradition of hanging angel hair as the last tree decoration on Christmas Eve. As we place it, we remember Catherine and John and all of our family and friends in heaven – the angels we believe are praying for us in heaven.

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Standing Firm in Support of the Order

Knights of the Patriotic Degree are dedicated to the personal development and continued honor of brother Knights. We are always there to offer leadership, guidance, and encouragement.

Proudly Serving the Country

Knights of the Patriotic Degree glorify God by serving our communities and nations as though Christ were the one being served.

“If we ever forget that we are One Nation Under God, then we will be a nation gone under.”

Ronald Reagan