



**Knights of  
Columbus®**



## **Centennial Council No. 8079**

### **Report from 121st Annual State Convention of the Knights of Columbus Washington State Council May 17-19, 2024**

I was reminded at this weekend's convention by State Chaplain, Reverend Kenneth St. Hilaire, of the alarming trends of increasing secularism, decreasing family values, and the increase in selfishness. The church is not insulated from the world like a cocoon. Rather, it is like yeast that makes dough rise just as the soul is to the body. She goes out to proclaim Christ and preaches how the Gospel is relevant in every situation.

The message is relevant today just as how the orders came to be as a divine response to human need. They arose to meet the needs of the time, an expression of God's desire to meet human need. The Knights are a response to the needs of the world today. With its values of charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism, we combat the hatred and selfishness in the world recognizing the dignity of every person.

Knights are not just do-gooders but show the greatness of God through the countless volunteer hours that have moved hearts bringing the light of Christ to dark places. We are people transformed due to love of God. We take courage in Christ who has overcome the world. The first mission is to remain in the heart of Christ through faith and charity. The real battle is not between faith and no faith, but faith in Christ and faith in something else. We must remain faithful to Him to win the battle for the heart.

At Pentecost Sunday's Mass, Bishop Tyson of Yakima preached, "Peace be with you." Those were the first words from Jesus to the disciples who feared people coming for them. In those times of the first century, there was a superstitious belief that those who rose from the dead would avenge their murderers. Jesus speaks, "As the Father sends me, I send you." He forgave his disciples for betraying him. Forgiveness must come first. "Forgive them for they do not know what they do." Usually, we forgive after an offense, magnifying others faults rather than our own.

“Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” Wounds, however, can run deep. We cannot forgive on our own. It is God who is the source and author of all forgiveness. It starts with God who pours out the Holy Spirit as missionaries of mercy, embodying God’s mercy for us.

In his keynote address the Supreme Territorial Growth Director - West, Robert Kish emphasized today’s turmoil in our country’s political division, fear of the future for our children, and the health of the church. We must follow Christ and keep working to show our good works making them visible outside the church with our state’s 17,000 members.

In the current post-Christendom culture, many have gone away from the truth that Christ proclaims. It is literally dead in Europe and mainly in maintenance mode. It is easy to recall our grandfathers and fathers who were Catholic, but today’s children do not practice the faith. At the same time, we should look back in history during the time of the apostles when they made disciples of nations filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.

At that time, there was no mission statement, no objective, no resources, no deacons, no theologians, no orders, no seminarians, no buildings, no schools nor universities, no Gospels, but 11 priests and a few hundred believers. They weren’t discouraged in their confidence in the Lord to grow the church. Being Christian would often end in being killed.

Two millennia later, we are called to have the same courage those apostles had, despite attacks on the family and the faith. The Lord of the Rings story where the fate of the world rests in the hands of a Hobbit named Frodo illustrates that example. Evil follows him everywhere he goes, but he continues on. The wizard Gandalf implores Frodo that the most important thing is “What to do with the time given us now.” Forces are at work in deciding what you will do with this time. Let us choose wisely.

Vivat Jesus!

Rainier J. Reyes  
Grand Knight