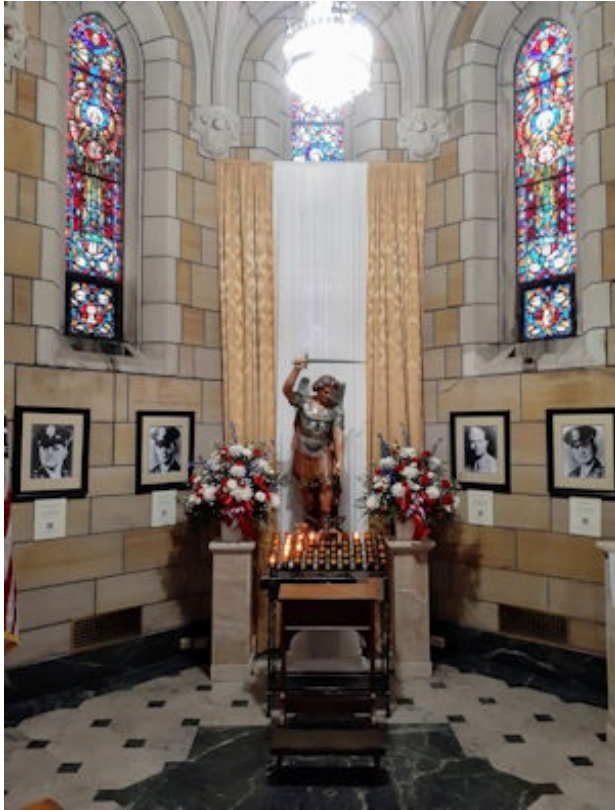


The Meadowlands Patriot

Msgr. Peter B. O'Connor Assembly #1543,
First New Jersey District

Issue #262 February 2026
Knights of Columbus

Remembering the 4 Chaplains



Sanctuary of the Four Chaplains

Faithful Navigator's Message!

Worthy Sir Knights,

Father John J Washington, after the events of Pearl harbor, received his appointment as chaplain for to the US Army. He boarded the USAT Dorchester at Boston Harbor in January 1943.

On February 3rd, U-223, a German submarine found the Dorchester at sea and launched a fan of three torpedoes and the Dorchester quickly sank into the Atlantic! Father Washington and the other 3 chaplains have up their life jackets without hesitation. These men remained behind praying for the safety of all the men. Here at Saint Stephen's, we remember the tremendous bravery that Father Washington and the other chaplains demonstrated at our annual Father Washington Mass. We honor these men with the help of our Knights of Columbus, scouts, the adult choir, relatives of the chaplains and the faithful community.

Vivat Jesus!
SK Joseph DeMasi,
Faithful Navigator
Monsignor Peter B. O'Connor
Assembly #1543
North Arlington NJ 07031
201-527-8913

Our Website:
www.kc4d1543.org

Supreme Master's Message

I recently gave a speech about the Liberty Bell where I discussed how most people look at the gap in the bell and assume that what they are seeing is the infamous crack. Instead, they are actually looking at the 1846 fix used to correct a hairline fracture that is barely visible to the human eye.



By expanding the crack down the bell and then reinforcing the gap with steel bolts, metal workers hoped to halt the fracture from spreading further down the bell, and this fix worked. Well, sort of.

As hoped, the crack did not spread further down the bell. Instead, upon ringing the bell, the crack simply decided to spread in the opposite direction to such a point that all hopes of further repair were finally abandoned, creating the irony that the very symbol of American liberty is a broken bell that can no longer be rung as intended.

As goes the bell, so often goes life itself.

In our personal lives, we often view problems just like we view the Liberty Bell. In doing so, we run the risk of simply passing judgment on broken-ness without understanding. The far greater challenge is for us to get up close to the problem to look for the less apparent hairline fractures, seeking to understand what happened, how it happened, and what can be done about it.

This truth is often reflected in how we approach problems in our parishes, councils, assemblies, and even society itself.

As we begin this new year, let's commit ourselves as Sir Knights to look beyond the obvious and in doing so, set aside our biases that make it so easy to pass judgment without understanding. Like the Liberty Bell, we are all, one way or another, broken, and yet God still has a purpose for us, especially as Sir Knights where, as the visible arm of the Order, He needs us to be symbols of strength, hope, compassion, and courage to this broken world.

Long has the Liberty Bell been broken and silent, and yet, like its very inscription, it continues to "proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." (Leviticus 25:10)

Let us endeavor to do the same as Catholics, patriots, and Sir Knights.

Vivat Jesus!

Michael McCusker
Supreme Master

DATES TO REMEMBER

Membership Meeting
Thursday, Feb. 12th at 8 pm
at Queen of Peace KofC Hall
194 River Rd, North Arlington

March Membership Meeting
Thursday, Mar. 12th at 8 pm
at Queen of Peace KofC Hall
194 River Rd, North Arlington

The Content of our Characters



On August 28, 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his momentous speech challenging America to become a nation where men are judged not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character. As Catholic men, as Knights of Columbus, this call should resonate deeply within our hearts.

When Blessed Michael McGivney founded our great Order, one of his noble motivations was the sanctification of its members: encouraging men to live fully the call of the Gospel. That mission remains just as vital today.

As members of the Fourth Degree, we possess a unique visibility within the Order. We are often the most recognizable representatives of the Knights of Columbus, and through us, many outside the Order form their judgment of who we are. Blessed McGivney deliberately chose the title “Knights” to recall the men of great character in the Middle Ages who defended and upheld Christendom.

We think of figures such as Blessed Karl of Austria, St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Martin of Tours, St. Ferdinand, and St. Louis IX of France—men whose greatness was evident even in their own time because of the strength of their character and faith. Our task today is to emulate them and to become men of great character in our own age.

One powerful way we can inspire our brother Knights is by sharing the successes of our Assemblies and Districts. Perhaps your Assembly has implemented a program or carried out an activity that could inspire others to make a meaningful difference in their own communities. I encourage you to share these stories and help inspire Knights everywhere by submitting them to The Catholic Patriot.

By God’s grace, may the content of our own character increasingly reflect His Son, and may we spread the Gospel more fully in our world today. Vivat Jesus!

Sterling C. Roatch
Director of Fourth Degree
Communications

Lyndhurst Council

Mary Immaculate - Secaucus



Annual Free Throw Contest held at Sacred Heart Parish

New members, Degree Team and Officers are joined by Fr Francis for the CUF Degree.



Lyndhurst Knights were on hand to help Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish with their fund raiser.

SK Jim Condino, the Grand Knight, gives the last drop!