



The Columbian Gazette

Of Ashburn

VOL. 6 ISSUE 1 - MARCH, 2026

ASHBURN, VA

A Message From Deacon Paul

If you're a fan of baseball, you know that spring training has just begun. For six weeks, the players will work on the fundamentals of the game and improve their skills. The minor leaguers are trying to improve their skills to get to the next level, and the major leaguers are working on honing their skills so that those skills become deeply engrained into their everyday play.

We've begun our Lenten season, and just like the baseball players, we have six weeks to work on improving our faith life. Lent is a time for those of us at the basic and intermediate levels to try to take our faith to the next level, and for those of us who are devout followers of Christ to find new ways to hone our faith so that Christ becomes even more deeply engrained into our everyday lives.

Most of us received our faith when we were children. We learned the basics, and our faith was about obeying the Ten Commandments and the Precepts of the Church. It was about doing all the right things and avoiding all the wrong things. That's okay. That's where we all have to start.

The problem is that many of us don't go any further. We believe in God and try to do the right things and avoid the bad things. It's all about performance. We never move to the next level of having a relationship with God by having a relationship with Jesus. It's hard for us to have a relationship with God, whom we can't see, which is why we focus on having a relationship with Jesus. Jesus shared in our humanity, and that made it possible for us to relate to him because he experienced what we experience.

Deacon Renzette (Continued on page 2)

From our Grand Knight

A Breakout Year of Growth and Impact for Our Council

Brothers, one thing we have done this year compared with past years is to track our volunteer engagement across the various programs within the Knights. Our data confirms what many of us have felt firsthand: our Council's impact at St. Theresa's Catholic Church and across the Ashburn community is accelerating.

Over the past several years, we have seen steady growth in membership, volunteer engagement, and program execution, culminating in a true breakout year in 2025. New member growth reached its highest point, volunteer participation surged, and our flagship programs, including the Food Drive, Pancake Breakfast, and KOVAR, all set new records. Most notably, volunteer impact increased by an extraordinary 150% from 2024 to 2025. That growth was fueled by expanded recruiting, a 77% increase in the number of events offered, 70% more individuals stepping forward to volunteer, and greater engagement per Knight. Simply put: more men are joining, and they are getting involved faster and more often.

This engagement tells a powerful story: not only are more Knights serving, but they are serving more frequently. New leaders have stepped forward, new programs have been added, and we are building centralized data collection and shared program leadership resources for continuity. Thank you to our Program Leaders, our Knight volunteers, and our Brother Knight, Jeff Morris, who have done an incredible job working together to collect and report the volunteer efforts dating back several years through today.

Grand Knight (Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1 Deacon Paul)

So, those of us at the basic level of faith should be focusing our efforts during Lent on creating a relationship with Jesus. We already have the basic skills of belief and performance, so now we should build on that and take it to the next level. That means breaking out of our comfort zone and showing God that our faith is important to us.

So, how do we do that? We start by making ourselves open to the Word of God in Scripture. It requires us to start giving God some control in our lives, which is the beginning of conversion. Every path towards conversion begins with allowing the Word of God to touch our heart and welcome it willingly. There's a relationship between the Word of God, our acceptance of it, and the transformation that it brings about in us. That relationship doesn't work if we're not listening.

That's true of any human relationship. The willingness to listen and try to understand is the first way we demonstrate our desire to enter into a relationship with someone. So, for those of us at the basic level of faith, our focus this Lent should be on creating a relationship with Jesus by actively listening to the Word of God, allowing it to touch our heart, and welcome it willingly.

For those of us at the next level of faith who already have a relationship with Jesus, we need to continue the process of conversion by enhancing our listening skills. We do that by listening to the Word of God, allowing it to touch our heart, and then use forms of prayer like meditation and contemplation to help us surrender total control of our life to God.

For those of us at a more advanced level of faith where God is already the center of our life, we should try to hone our faith skills so that Christ becomes even more deeply engrained into our everyday lives. At this level, we should focus on identifying any weaknesses we might have, and then work on strengthening them. It's a never-ending process of conversion.

Baseball players at all skill levels will be working on improving their game over the coming weeks; and when spring training is over, they'll use those skills to the best of their ability in playing the game every day. Let's follow their example and use the next six weeks of Lent to work on improving our faith skills; and when Lent is over, use those skills to the best of our ability in following Jesus more closely every day.

- Deacon Paul Konold

(Continued from page 1 GK)

While 2026 represents only a partial-year snapshot, early indicators suggest we are positioned for another strong year. The numbers are compelling, but behind every data point is a family fed, a veteran supported, a charity empowered, and a parish strengthened. Together, we are not just growing, we are multiplying our impact for the good of our Church and our community – and that's exactly what we as Catholic men are being called to do. Vivat Jesus!

- Eric Ciliberti, Grand Knight

Culture of Complaint

Today, a veteran of 30 years in the Navy visited the USO lounge at Dulles Airport during my shift. An agreeable fellow who engaged in a lively and informative chat made a very interesting observation. When comparing the cultures of other countries where he served, he said that Americans have turned into a “culture of complaint”. He noted that we have become so used to having everything we need almost exactly when we want it. We now take for granted so many things: instant communications, next day delivery, heating and cooling when we want it, roads that go just about everywhere, food of every variety year-round, and “26 types of toilet paper at Walmart”. When something causes a delay and we don’t get what we want when we want it, we complain. Some complaints are justified. Many times ... make that most of the time ... it’s just us expecting too much. And why? We’ve become spoiled and most people don’t recognize it.

As my teammate and I continued to chat with this gentleman, the kernel of this article started to form. Questions arose. As a Knight, was I part of this “culture of complaint”? It’s almost human nature to complain when we encounter some sort of obstacle in our path. But what do we do with the obstacle? Do we find ourselves complaining? It’s very easy to do, especially if there is an audience to hear it.

When we fall into that trap, perhaps it’s best to take a step back ... pause ... and think before uttering that complaint. Ask yourselves a couple questions? Was it really so vitally important that I need to complain about it? Just a minor inconvenience or a major issue? Are there extenuating circumstances causing the problem? Were you clear in stating what you wanted? There are a myriad of questions to ask yourself before complaining. And as you ponder those questions, you might find that being patient and understanding can make you feel much better about the situation.

If another person is involved, being understanding and calm might also make that person more willing to assist you in getting to a solution. Each and every day, being a Knight demands a lot from us to live out the values professed by our founder, Father McGivney.

We need to try our best to do that for our own well-being, for our families, and for those around us.

- Doug Smith

KOVAR Update



Our recent KOVAR collection after all Sunday Masses on January 17 and 18 raised \$5,150, making it our largest single-weekend KOVAR collection ever. Many brother Knights, along with their families and friends, volunteered to wear KOVAR vests and distribute tootsie rolls at all Church exits. Watch for an email in early spring to sign up for our next collection in mid to late April. Please consider helping with this cause—it only takes a few minutes after Mass. Your support makes a difference, and KOVAR is grateful. Over the past 10 years, our council has contributed about \$92,000 to KOVAR, which provides grants and home loans to individuals with intellectual disabilities.

For more information on KOVAR, click on the following link for an introductory video:

<https://kovarva.org>



Book Review:

Revelations of Divine Love by Julian of Norwich

By ROBERT N. BORGHESE

Julian of Norwich (c. 1342-1416) is recognized as the first woman to write a book in English whose work has survived, giving her a unique place in history.

Julian of Norwich's actual birth name is unknown. She is called "Julian" because her anchorite cell was attached to the Church of St. Julian in Norwich, England. It was common practice for an anchoress (religious recluse) to take their name from their patron saint or church before entering their "tomb" (cell), usually after a Mass for the Dead as they became "dead unto the world and alive unto God."

In "Revelations of Divine Love," Mother Julian gives an account of sixteen "showings" (or visions). She received the "showings" on May 8, 1373, during an illness and spent the next 20 years pondering them to understand their full meaning. Her writing is insightful and rich in theological meaning.

The Catholic Church holds Julian of Norwich in high esteem as a significant mystic even though she is not canonized. She is quoted in paragraph 313 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church in relation to understanding faith and suffering. Popes Benedict XVI and Francis commented on her mystical theology and focus on merciful love.

Mother Julian shocked some people during her life (and now) with her statement "As God is our Father, so truly is God our Mother," a theological concept with scriptural support describing God's nurturing, tender, creative, and sustaining love. God's attributes are a mystery beyond our full understanding, nor do we have language to adequately describe them. The prophet Isaiah describes God as a woman in labor (42:14) and as a mother who nurses and comforts her child (66:10-13). Jesus quoted in Matthew 23:37: "Jerusalem,

Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing."

After her long contemplation, Mother Julian felt assured that despite suffering and sin in the world, God's ultimate purpose is good and loving.

Thus, I will end with Julian of Norwich's most famous quote: "**All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.**"

Pancake Breakfast on 2/15 Benefitted Diocesan WorkCamp

Our pancake breakfast held on February 15 was another great success. We were able to raise and donate \$1200 to Diocesan WorkCamp, which this year is slated to help families in need in the Shenandoah County area, and is scheduled for June. The proceeds help offset expenses for adult volunteer leaders that provide support and guidance to the students.

A group of ten high school students from the Parish that are WorkCamp participants, came to help serve breakfast to our parishioners. A huge thank you to them and all our brother volunteers that made this breakfast a success! A special thank you goes to Michael Dunne, who is the stakeholder for the St. Theresa Parish WorkCamp program.

If you have any questions about WorkCamp, would like to volunteer or donate, please reach out to Michael at: workcamp@sainttheresaparish.com.



The Passion of Our Lord

In the Garden of Gethsemane, with drops of blood He wept,
He bowed beneath a burden far too heavy to be kept.
The cup of human sorrow pressed like fire on His breath,
And still He chose obedience on the road that led to death.

The lash of scourging made stripes across His skin,
A brutal proof of cruelty that mocked the love within.
Yet every wound He suffered held a mercy still untold.
He is the Suffering Servant as Isaiah had foretold.

They wove a crown of mockery and pressed it on His head,
Yet from those wounds sprang royalty that earthly power would dread.
For every thorn that pierced Him spoke a truth no hate could hide:
The King of all creation chose to suffer at our side.

The cross lay heavy on His shoulders, and yet He gave no plea,
As heaven watched in silence at what our cruelty could be.
His knees gave way beneath the load, yet still He rose again,
Compelling Simon of Cyrene to help, picked from unwilling men.

At the cross of Calvary, His final breath grew thin,
Love stretched across the timber, wide enough to hold all sin.
For when He cried, "Forgive them," as the sky grew dark above,
He sealed His sacred suffering with the victory of love.

Why did You bear the lashes, why the thorns, the cross, the grave?
What drew You into suffering for the souls You longed to save?

At last, I understood why Jesus suffered so.
It was for love of us that His sacred blood did flow.

Poem by Robert N. Borghese 2026. All rights reserved.

Knight and Family of the Month - January 2026



Knight of the Month for January 2026: Luke Bedrosian is our Knight of the Month! Luke has been involved in our food drives, pancake breakfasts, and is the Council's new Respect Life program lead leading our first ever Knights' Bingo Night in February. Congrats, Luke!



Family of the Month for January 2026: Don Smaltz and his family led the KOVAR collections for our Council in January raising over \$5000. Not only did he lead it, he was at every Mass ensuring a strong Knights' presence. He & his son Matthew led the charge in collections. Congrats, Smaltz Family!

Knight and Family of the Month - December 2025



Knight of the Month for December 2025: Cooper Hodges. Cooper led the coordination of our Sweats for Vets program for our Council and the Parish, delivering dozens of sweats to vets in need. He also led a team into Arlington National Cemetery for Wreaths Across America and continues to develop our Council newsletter. Congrats, Cooper!



Family of the Month for December 2025: The Hayes Family. Jack led a successful Advent Retreat attended by 80+ Parish members, and continues to lead our That Man Is You (TMIY) program. He and his wife Sharon are leading the bi-monthly Council dinners to strengthen the bonds of our Council outside of our regular meetings. Congrats, Hayes family!

Film: A Great Day

Young people in our Church inspire me.

Joshua Mauro (17) and Luke Mauro (19) of St. Augustine, Florida co-wrote and co-directed *A Great Day*, which won Best Student Short Film at the Indie New York Film Festival in 2025.

Based on a true story, a struggling priest must hear the confession of the man responsible for the death of his family.

Select Endorsements:

“I am very happy to recommend the film, *A Great Day*.”
Most Rev. Erik Pohlmeier, Bishop of St. Augustine.

“I’m most excited by the fact that a group of young film makers local to our community were able to produce such a high-quality short film. It bodes well for the future of Catholic film making that they had the determination and talent to make it happen.” Fr. David Ruchinski, Pastor of St. Joseph Catholic Church.

“What I appreciate about *A Great Day* is that it leaves you pondering about the power of God’s forgiveness and the beauty of the Sacraments of the Catholic Church.” Fr. Clay Ludwig, Vocations Director, Diocese of St. Augustine.

You will be inspired too. The 30-minute film is located for free on YouTube.

Link: <https://youtu.be/Hs980DuOBNU?si=0jKfE2ivF5B2u8g5>

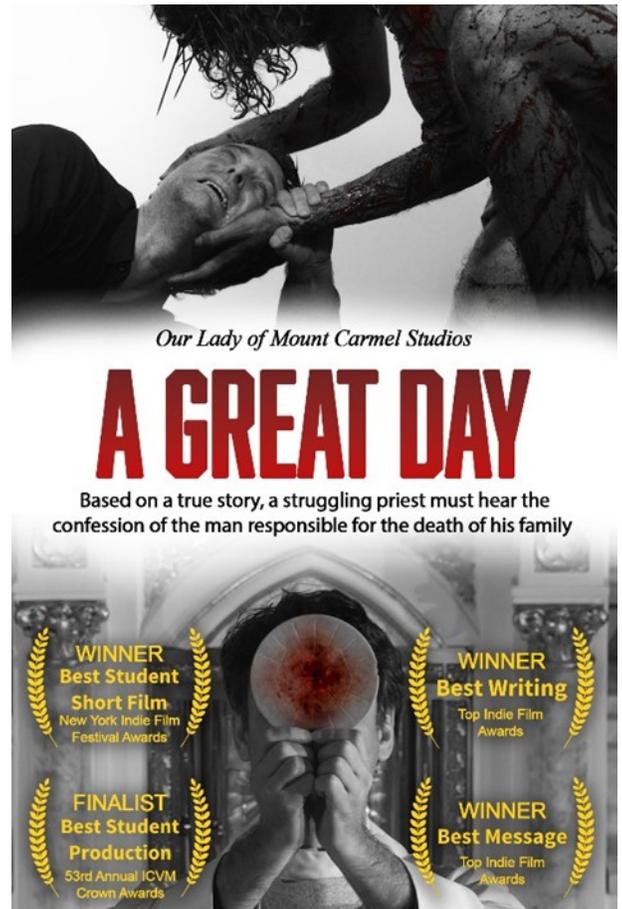
- Bill Lehner, Lecturer

Council and District Free-Throw Events this past Quarter

Our annual Council and District Basketball Free Throw competitions were held on January 19 and February 16, respectively. A total of approximately 20 kids, ages 8 to 14 participated in each event. Both were hosted by our council.

Several of our council members, led by brother James McQuarrie JR, helped with registration, organization, competition, and scoring.

Congrats to the winners and a thank you to all the volunteers!



Brother Jim McQuarrie has taken the reins from brother Adam Yozwiak for the coordination of future Free Throws. Thanks to Adam for his efforts and a warm welcome to Jim!

Knight and Family of the Month - February 2026



CURRENT COUNCIL OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS (2025 -2026)



Knight of the Month for February: Jim McQuarrie
"JimE-Mac" has taken the lead in leading two (2) Basketball Free Throw competitions in as many months – both here at St Theresa and also for District 18. Both have been huge hits and benefitted our Parish and District. Congrats, JimE Mac!

Family of the Month for February: The Boyles

Mike led another highly successful Father-Daughter Dance raising \$5,000.00 for Divine Mercy Outreach. He and his daughters are always helping out at Food Drives and supporting the Knights' missions as a family. Congrats, Boyle Family!



Chaplain
Associate Chaplain
District Deputy
Grand Knight
Deputy Grand Knight
Chancellor
Financial Secretary
Warden
Recorder
Treasurer
Advocate
Trustees

Primary Alt. State Del.
Secondary Alt. State Del.
Programs Director
Lecturer
Inside Guard
Outside Guard
Faith Director
Vocations Chairman
Community Director
Life Director
Communications

Family Director
Membership Director
Recruitment Committee
Retention Chairman
Construction Team Lead
Pancake Breakfast

KOVAR Team Lead
Fraternal Benefits Field Agent
Technology Team
Parish Picnic

Father Hudgins
Father John
Jay Hallam
Eric Ciliberti
Stephen Shields
Dan Brendes
Jim Bonfils
Todd Kane
Miguel Sian
Mike Lang
Miguel Rodriguez
1 Yr. Mike Boyle
2 Yr. John Hegarty
3 Yr. Rob McNamee
Miguel Rodriguez
William Lehner
Mike Boyle
Bill Lehner
Todd Kane
Vince Tranchitella
Jack Hayes
Vince Tranchitella
Stephen McLaughlin
Vacant
Rudy Flores
Dave Schreder
Robert Borghese
Cooper Hodges
Torsten Koehler
Dan Brendes
Jack Hayes
Jack Hayes
Dale Stucke
Jim Mosesso
Mike Zavala
Donald J. Smaltz
Bill Lupinacci
Anthony Gizzi
William Lehner

