



# The Columbian Gazette

## Of Ashburn

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ASHBURN, VA

## A Message From Deacon Renzette

### Sanctifying Summer: Embracing Sacred Hearts Amid Secular Noise

As summer arrives and our family's focus turns toward rest, travel, and time together, the Church places before us three devotions that can transform these months from mere vacation into a Season of Grace.

While the surrounding culture loudly promotes its own observances throughout June and beyond, Catholic tradition has long dedicated June to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, July to His Precious Blood, and August to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. These months invite us to anchor our homes in Christ's love, His redeeming sacrifice, and our Blessed Mother's maternal purity – strengthening our families against secular encroachment.

As Knights and as husbands, fathers, sons, and brothers, we are called to lead our families into these devotions – not as a retreat from the world, but as a bulwark against it.

**June – The Sacred Heart of Jesus.** The devotion in its modern form flows from the visions given to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque between 1673 and 1675 and was warmly commended by Pope Pius XII in his 1956 encyclical on devotion to the Sacred Heart. Practical steps for the family: enthrone an image of the Sacred Heart in your home; pray the Litany of the Sacred Heart together one evening a week; and attend Mass together on June's First Friday, June 5.

**July – The Most Precious Blood of Jesus.** Pope Pius IX instituted the universal feast in 1849 and Pope Pius X fixed July 1 as its date. While the specific

*Deacon Renzette (Continued on page 2)*

## From our Grand Knight

### A Year of Faith, Service, and Brotherhood

As we close out another fraternal year, we give thanks to God for the extraordinary generosity, dedication, and brotherhood demonstrated by the men in our St. Louis Martin Council. Together, we experienced one of the most impactful years in our Council's history – a year defined by charity, faith, unity, and fraternity.

This year, our Council achieved 113% of our membership goal while continuing to grow both in numbers and in engagement. Through countless volunteer hours and sacrificial giving, our Brothers helped raise, sort, and deliver over 60,000 pounds of food for local food pantry efforts, providing an estimated 50,000 meals to families and individuals in need.

We also set a new Council record for KOVAR contributions, raising more than \$15,000 in support of Virginians with intellectual disabilities. Our monthly Pancake Breakfast program achieved new heights of revenue, generating nearly \$12,000 for charitable causes across our parish and local community, an increase of 155% over last year's levels. These efforts were powered by an incredible culture of volunteerism that saw over a hundred Brothers step forward in service throughout the year. Volunteer participation reached historic levels, with more than 1,500 volunteer hours logged across multiple events and programs.

Beyond our charitable works, our Council deepened its spiritual mission. More brothers became actively engaged in *That Man Is You* faith formation efforts, strengthening both their personal faith and fraternity with one another. We hosted an Advent Retreat once

*Grand Knight (Continued on page 2)*

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feast day was removed from the universal calendar of the Roman Rite, the Church continues to honor the Precious Blood with a votive Mass, and the entire month of July is traditionally dedicated to this devotion

Lead your family in the Litany of the Precious Blood, pray the Chaplet of the Precious Blood on a road trip, and reflect together after Sunday Mass on the words of consecration – the same Precious Blood poured out on Calvary is offered on our altar at every Mass.

**August – The Immaculate Heart of Mary.** Rooted in the apparitions of Our Lady of Fátima in 1917 and the consecration by Pope Pius XII of the Church and the entire human race to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in 1942, this devotion calls us to entrust our families to the prayers and protection of our Blessed Mother. Pray a daily family Rosary – summer vacation car rides are a wonderful occasion to exercise this devotion – observe the Five First Saturdays, and consecrate your household to her Immaculate Heart before the school year begins.

On June 13, 1917, Our Lady spoke words to the young Lucia that every Catholic father should hear as spoken directly to him: *"Don't lose heart. I will never forsake you. My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God."* In a culture that prides itself on substituting its own refuges for hers, let us lead our families this summer to the only Hearts – Sacred and Immaculate – that can truly shelter them.

By leading in these devotions, we protect the purity of our families and witness Christ's kingship. As Jesus promised St. Margaret Mary, He will bless homes that honor His Heart. Let this summer bear lasting fruit. *Vivat Jesus!*

- Deacon Anthony Renzette

*(Continued from page 1 GK)*

again, providing an opportunity for reflection, prayer, and spiritual renewal during the holy season of preparation for Christmas. In addition, Brothers and families gathered monthly to honor our Blessed Mother through Virtual Rosary devotions on Marian Feast Days, uniting our Council in prayer and entrusting our parish, families, and community to Mary's loving intercession.

The fruits of these efforts were recognized from the Virginia Knights of Columbus and Supreme. This fraternal year, our Council was recognized with the Virginia Knights of Columbus State Deputy's Award, the prestigious Star Council Award from Supreme, and the [Virginia Knights of Columbus State Program of the Year Award](#) for our Food Drive efforts. These recognitions reflect not just successful programs, but the spirit of servant leadership and Christian charity alive within our Council.

Finally, as we celebrate this remarkable year, we also pause to remember our departed Brother Knights who passed into Eternal Glory: Ralph Young, Lem Kamanya, Ted Spara, and Greg DiMuzio. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

As we turn the page on this impactful year, I urge you all to continue praying the Rosary and ask for Our Blessed Mother's intercession in your daily lives. Our Council is ready to go to another level under the leadership of incoming Grand Knight, Steve Shields. *Vivat Jesus!*

- Eric Ciliberti, Grand Knight

# From the Desk of Bill Lehner

## Dynamite

Dynamite illustrates how technology itself is neither inherently good nor evil; rather, its impact depends on how people choose to use it. Invented by Alfred Nobel in 1867, dynamite transformed mining, construction, and infrastructure development by making it possible to build tunnels, roads, railways, and canals more efficiently and safely than before. At the same time, the same technology could be used for warfare and destruction. This dual nature of dynamite reminds us that technological innovations can both improve society and cause harm.

Throughout history, great evangelists have used the technology of their age to spread the Gospel. St. Paul traveled the Roman roads to carry Christianity across the Mediterranean world. St. Francis Xavier sailed on Portuguese ships to bring the faith to Asia. St. John Paul II harnessed radio, television, and air travel to reach millions around the globe.

Today, the internet allows evangelization to travel through cyberspace. Emails, websites, podcasts, video-sharing platforms, webinars, and social media provide unprecedented opportunities to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Cyberspace allows each of us to assist in this mission. By sharing inspiring messages, articles, videos, and testimonies with family, friends, and colleagues through likes, connections, and reposts, we can witness to Christ and help sow the seeds of faith.

Digital resources also help us grow in our own faith. Catholic websites, apps, podcasts, and online communities make it easier than ever to

learn about Scripture, theology, prayer, and the teachings of the Church. As we deepen our understanding of the faith, we become better equipped to share it with others.

Popular resources include Bishop Barron's Word on Fire, Catholic Answers, EWTN, and the Hallow app. These platforms provide valuable content for both learning and evangelization. Our pastor has a great podcast and website too! Let us use cyberspace to grow in faith and help spread the Good News to others. Do not be afraid to like, repost, comment, or even share your own witness online. As Jesus said, "And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God" (Luke 12:8).

Cyberspace offers a convenient and powerful public platform – much like the Roman Forum in St. Paul's day – to testify to our faith and share the hope of Christ with the world.

*Bill Lehner, Lecturer*

## Book Review: “The Scope and Nature of University Education”

by John Henry Cardinal Newman

By ROBERT N. BORGHESE

John Henry Cardinal Newman is a saint. Canonized by Pope Francis in 2019, St. John Henry Newman (1801–1890) was a renowned 19th-century theologian, Anglican convert, and cardinal. In 2025, he was further recognized as a “Doctor of the Church” for his significant contributions to theology by Pope Leo XIV. John Henry Newman became a cardinal without first becoming a bishop, a rare honor that allowed him to continue his scholarly work, rather than serving in the Roman Curia or as a diocesan bishop.

In *The Scope and Nature of a University* (1852), John Henry Newman defines a university as a place of universal learning, focusing on liberal education over professional training. According to Cardinal Newman, the university’s primary purpose is to cultivate the intellect, rather than just acquiring knowledge. Cardinal Newman argues that a university must embrace all branches of knowledge, emphasizing that theology must be included in a liberal education. Excluding theology, or any other branch of knowledge, damages the integrity of the whole system. He said a university is for teaching, not merely a hub of research. The goal is to produce individuals with critical thinking skills and Catholic in religious belief, well-rounded individuals rather than mere specialists.

This book is a series of lectures originally delivered at the Irish Catholic University in Dublin in 1852. Cardinal Newman lays the foundation for

what he later expanded into “The Idea of a University.”

Following the Great Famine of Ireland (1845-1852), the percentage of people going to university was extremely low, well below 1%, almost exclusively restricted to the wealthy. Wanting to expand educational opportunities, Cardinal Newman introduced the first evening lectures for students who were employed during the day.

Taking the advice of Cardinal Newman to continue our education, especially in theology, we should take advantage of the Catholic Education for Adults Programs here at St Theresa’s Parish.

I’ll end with my favorite quote of Cardinal Newman from the book: “Error may flourish for a time, but truth will prevail in the end. The only effect of error ultimately is to promote truth.”

- *Robert Borghese*

## Poem:

### Peter Is Everyman



Peter stepped out of the boat onto the sea, water churning beneath him, causing fear. Then the wind rose, louder than he could trust, and the moment he took his eyes off Jesus he slipped—the way many of us slip when fear suddenly remembers our name.

Peter wanted a Messiah who brought victory, a Messiah untouched by suffering, a salvation story without the pain. Pride made him bold enough to argue with God, and his devotion made him think he was helping. Then came the words that cut through illusion when Jesus said “Get behind Me, Satan” — a reminder that even the devoted can lose their way.

After Jesus was arrested and taken away, the disciples fled while Peter remained watching. Later, in the chill of a courtyard lit by a fire that warmed no one, he folded under the weight of simple questions. Three denials fell from his mouth before he even knew they were his, and the rooster’s cry split the night open like a truth he could no longer outrun.

Peter was no marble saint carved smooth by perfection.

He stumbled and fell like everyman, tripping over fear, over pride, over his own denials. Yet the calling still came, quiet and insistent, naming him rock even when he felt like sand.

The keys to the kingdom were placed in his hands—not because he was steady, but because he knew what it felt like to fall through his own mistakes. A fisherman with calloused palms suddenly carrying the weight of heaven, God entrusted a flawed man instead of one perfect.

And so, the first shepherd of Rome was a man who knew the taste of regret, who was sinful before he was blessed.

Maybe that’s why the keys fit him—because everyman needs a gatekeeper who understands what it is to be lost, and still be chosen.

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

## KOVAR Collection Update



Our recent KOVAR collection after all Sunday Masses on April 11 and 12 raised over \$5,106, making this another successful KOVAR collection. Many brother Knights, along with their families and friends, volunteered to wear KOVAR vests and distribute Tootsie Rolls after all Masses. Your support makes a difference, and KOVAR is grateful. Over the past 10 years, our council has contributed about \$95,000 to KOVAR. KOVAR provides grants and home loans to tax-exempt organizations that provide service to Virginians with intellectual disabilities (ID). These organizations provide support and services such as job and life skills training, employment, education, housing, athletics, and transportation to our friends with ID. Photos below:



## Knight and Family of the Month - January 2026



Above: Jeff Morris, Family of the Month for March and Steve Kasban, Knight of the Month for March.

Jeff has played a critical role in leading our Data Analytic efforts for the Council. You'll see Jeff & Family volunteering at Food Drives, collecting for KOVAR, and they led the pizza tables at our first ever Bingo Night. Congrats, Morris Family!

Steve serves as an Usher at weekend Masses for the Parish. He participated in our Lenten Soup Supper as both a cook and a server serving our Parishioners on our final soup supper of the Lenten Season. Congrats, Steve!



Above: Knight of the month (April), Tim Mason. Tim served as an usher at weekend Masses for the Parish. He helped support the St. Theresa Catholic School 5K run and helped us collect for KOVAR last month as well. Congratulations Tim!



Left: Don Smaltz, Family of the Month for April. Do took the lead yet again raising money for KOVAR in April. He and his son Mathew led the way in collecting over \$5000 for KOVAR this month - and this was his last month in the KOVAR support role after 10 years of service (raising close to \$100k for KOVAR during this time). Congratulations, Smaltz Family! Also, Don Smaltz & Family were not only our Council's recognized Family of the Month for April 2026, but were also recognized by Supreme as Family of the Month for the whole state of Virginia!!).

# Food Drive: Food for Families

Our council has led monthly food drives for the Sterling Food Pantry of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington since March of 2018. In 2025, 62,332 pounds of food were collected, the largest amount to date.

It is amazing to see the number of blue bags dropped off in the Narthex and side entrances by our generous parishioners despite sharply rising food prices.

But we do more than collecting and delivering food donations. We partner with the Food Pantry and St. Theresa Youth Ministry to tailor requested food & toiletry categories to the pantry's needs, and sort the donations by category and expiration date. Under Paul Dwyer's great leadership, we have many teens helping, and their keen eyes help a great deal finding the expiration dates on the food items. We also have parishioners and family members of our Knights jump in to be the Helping Hands of Christ which gets the work done so much faster. This way, pantry volunteers & staff only need to move delivered donations to the appropriate shelves in the pantry, saving them about 2 weeks worth of work.

Every month, except for December, we receive 400 blue shopping bags provided by the food pantry, along with a list of needed toiletries, food items, and priority items. Fliers are generated with a donation list, instructions for cash donations, and branding for Knights of Columbus

and the Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington's St. Lucy Project. We prepare the bags for the next donation by attaching the flyers to the bags and organize them into bins.

The following weekend, we stage the bins at church entrances, redistribute bags as needed, and clean up after the final Mass. A week later, parishioners drop off their bags and Knights along with other volunteers carry the bags from church entrances to St. Louis Martin room and sort the donations as previously described. On Tuesday following the collection, donations are then taken to the Food Pantry, and council members help pantry volunteers weigh donations and stock the shelves.

Each month, the Sterling Food Pantry distributes 33,000 pounds of food, providing 1,000 people with a week's amount of food. Over the last two years, our council delivered about 4,800 pounds of food each month, over 14% of the pantry's donations.

If you are looking for an opportunity for yourself and your family to help, look out for our monthly emails to sign up. We always welcome another pair of helping hands.

God bless you,

- *Torsten Koehler*



# Pancake Breakfast Update

Our 15 March Pancake Breakfast benefited the St. Theresa School Thunder Appeal. We donated \$1200 from the profits of the breakfast. Our efforts helped by providing funds to support student programs that enrich each student’s spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical development.

Our 17 May Pancake Breakfast supported Foster Care Support in Loudoun County, specifically The Next Step Initiative—an UpsideDown Moments program dedicated to helping foster children who are aging out of the foster care system. We were able to donate \$ 1,000 to UpsideDown Moments for this program.

Thank you to everyone who supported our Pancake Breakfasts throughout this fraternal year. Your generosity, hard work, and unwavering spirit are the reason these breakfasts continue to bring our parish together and make a real difference to our charities! We are deeply grateful for all you’ve given, and we look forward to sharing fellowship and service with you again in the coming fraternal year. We will see you in September!

*- Jim Mosesso and Mike Zavala*



## CURRENT COUNCIL OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS (2025 -2026)

- |                                |                    |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Chaplain                       | Father Hudgins     |
| Associate Chaplain             | Father John        |
| District Deputy                | Jay Hallam         |
| Grand Knight                   | Eric Ciliberti     |
| Deputy Grand Knight            | Stephen Shields    |
| Chancellor                     | Dan Brendes        |
| Financial Secretary            | Jim Bonfils        |
| Warden                         | Todd Kane          |
| Recorder                       | Miguel Sian        |
| Treasurer                      | Mike Lang          |
| Advocate                       | Miguel Rodriguez   |
| Trustees                       | 1 Yr. Mike Boyle   |
|                                | 2 Yr. John Hegarty |
|                                | 3 Yr. Rob McNamee  |
| Primary Alt. State Del.        | Miguel Rodriguez   |
| Secondary Alt. State Del.      | William Lehner     |
| Programs Director              | Mike Boyle         |
| Lecturer                       | Bill Lehner        |
| Inside Guard                   | Todd Kane          |
| Outside Guard                  | Vince Tranchitella |
| Faith Director                 | Jack Hayes         |
| Vocations Chairman             | Vince Tranchitella |
| Community Director             | Stephen McLaughlin |
| Life Director                  | Vacant             |
| Communications                 | Rudy Flores        |
|                                | Dave Schreder      |
|                                | Robert Borghese    |
|                                | Cooper Hodges      |
|                                | Torsten Koehler    |
| Family Director                | Dan Brendes        |
| Membership Director            | Jack Hayes         |
| Recruitment Committee          | Jack Hayes         |
| Retention Chairman             | Dale Stucke        |
| Construction Team Lead         | Jim Mosesso        |
| Pancake Breakfast              | Mike Zavala        |
|                                | Donald J. Smaltz   |
| KOVAR Team Lead                | Bill Lupinacci     |
| Fraternal Benefits Field Agent | Anthony Gizzi      |
| Technology Team                | William Lehner     |
| Parish Picnic                  |                    |



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