



# KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

## Carrying on the Mission of Christ

### What's Happening in this Newsletter...

IW Fish Fry makes  
Headlines

Two Knights  
Become Third  
Degree

Grand Knight  
Report

Knight's Birthdays

A Few More Things

## 2021 Fish Fry Great Success

### Incarinate Word Council 9981 Perseveres with Record-Setting Fish Fry during Pandemic

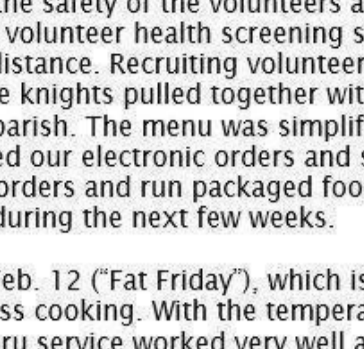
By Jim Ressler, Grand Knight

On March 13, 2020, the Incarnate Word council held its last fish fry of the 2020 Lenten season. The next week, all churches were closed to the public by the Archdiocese of St. Louis, cancelling the fish fry on the remaining 3 Fridays of Lent. With COVID fears and the economic shutdown, council 9981's 2020 Fish Fry revenue was down 65% from the previous year. Our charities, parish and council sources of revenue suffered as we went into lockdown. We stayed together, meeting virtually, and the council dipped into our savings, tightened our belt, and made an appeal in December for council members to contribute extra to the COVID-19 Shutdown Recovery fund. With these measures, the council restored our charitable contributions to 77% of the previous year, and vowed to do whatever we could to resume our successful parish Fish Fry fundraiser in 2021.

Barry and Eric check-in all volunteers for COVID safety



Knights' friend Lois, Kathy and Lisa print and fill the drive through orders taken outside on iPads



Cheerful 8<sup>th</sup> graders ready to run orders to customers waiting in the parking lot

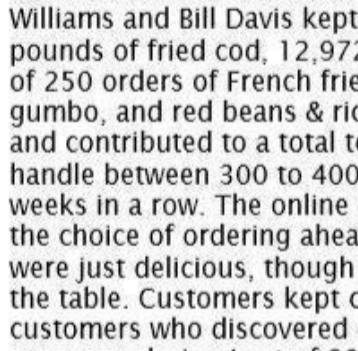


Planning for the fish fry started in December with meetings to face a decision if we could obtain a permit from St. Louis County to operate a restaurant in the pandemic. Chairman Steve Dickhut answered a list of 18 questions from the county public health regulations. Steve successfully obtained a permit by putting in place many restrictions and safety precautions in our operations. The Knights converted the fish fry to a 100% carry-out operation, protecting the safety of the volunteers and customers. We took the measures seriously, instituted a volunteer health screening survey and temperature scan, masked-up and kept our distance. Recruiting volunteers was a big challenge with so many sheltering at home. The knights pulled together with many family members, friends, and students from the parish. The menu was simplified; we added pre-packaged desserts, revamped our electronic orders and [stfishfry.com](http://stfishfry.com) web site. We set up an "assembly line" to fill orders and run packaged food to waiting customers, something we had to fine tune during the next few weeks.

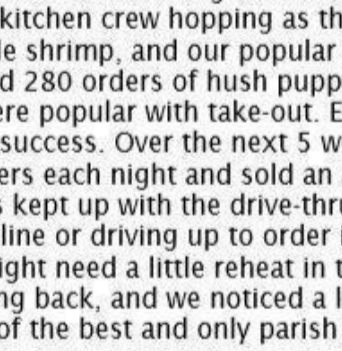
We opened the first fish fry on Feb. 12 ("Fat Friday"), which is a trial run, usually a lighter load of customers and less cooking. With the temperature in single digits on this cold night, our new drive-thru service worked very well and we kept pace with a total of 110 orders and only 45 online orders – a pretty light 3 hours of sales. On Feb. 19 -- the first Friday of Lent -- demand soared with over 120 online orders received

before we opened the doors, and an equally large surge in drive-thru business, and some tech glitches swamped our ordering system and overwhelmed the delivery process. Our customers patiently waited for their food in a jammed parking lot as we sorted through the chaos.

Kitchen crew with cod - Dave, Dave, and Erv



Jeff and Chris ready to serve hungry customers



Ed and Steve serve up Lisa's special Gumbo



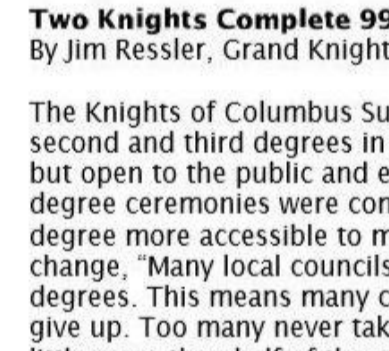
After this near disaster, we had to make drastic improvements to continue the fish fries, so we worked together to find a way manage the demand for orders, recruit more volunteers, prepare earlier on Friday, and improve the delivery process to the customers. Grand Knight Jim Ressler and Recorder Kevin Stanley fine-tuned the electronic ordering system and trained a dedicated team to quickly process orders, fill each order, and deliver them to the customers waiting in their car. Ned Harris and Mike DiScala worked the lines to keep the food moving efficiently to the customers. Chris Williams and Bill Davis kept the kitchen crew hopping as they cooked an amazing 2750 pounds of fried cod, 12,972 little shrimp, and our popular sides with a weekly average of 250 orders of French fries and 280 orders of hush puppies. Even our Cajun specials gumbo, and red beans & rice were popular with take-out. Every volunteer pitched in and contributed to a total team success. Over the next 5 weeks we rebounded to handle between 300 to 400 orders each night and sold an average of \$10,000 for 3 weeks in a row. The online sales kept up with the drive-thru sales as customers liked the choice of ordering ahead online or driving up to order in person. The fish and sides were just delicious, though it might need a little reheat in the microwave before it's on the table. Customers kept coming back, and we noticed a larger number of first-time customers who discovered one of the best and only parish fish fries of St. Louis that was open during Lent of 2021.

The volunteers really came through -- we had an average of 76 volunteers working each night and an estimated 1600 total volunteer hours for the season. We were especially thankful for the Incarnate Word and PSR 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and high school volunteers who did the carrying and running food orders from the parish hall to the customers waiting in their cars. The end results from the fish fry was astounding: a new record of \$56,185 in revenue and a new record of \$26,832 in net income that exceeded our

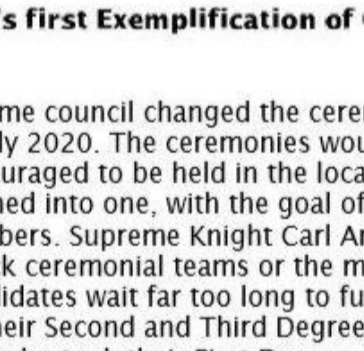
previous best in 2019, realized by lower expenses in 2021. The end result means we will share \$21,465 (80%) to bless over 30 charities and the Incarnate Word parish.

Best of all, we came back from the pandemic! Thanks to God and common sense, there were ZERO COVID infections among the volunteers. As a resilient KofC council and parish put our faith into action, we found the hope and perseverance to turn around a bleak 2020 into a blessing for everyone in 2021.

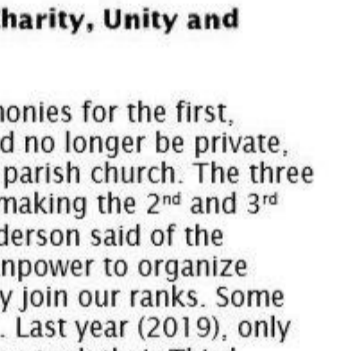
Karen, Beth, and Jim handle the computers to keep up with influx of online orders



A happy team keeps the sides coming -- Dan, Chris, Don, Bill, Rob, David, Dan, and Bill



Youthful serving line packs delicious food for our customers in our church hall



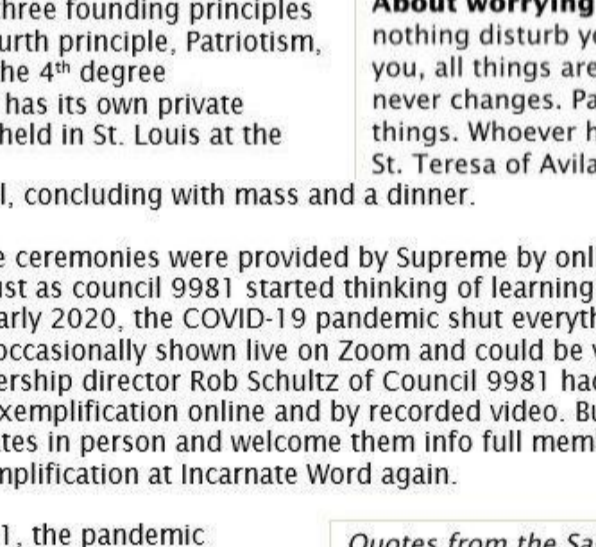
## New Second and Third Degree Ceremony Held in Church

### Two Knights Complete 9981's first Exemplification of Charity, Unity and

By Jim Ressler, Grand Knight

The Knights of Columbus Supreme council changed the ceremonies for the first, second and third degrees in early 2020. The ceremonies would no longer be private, but open to the public and encouraged to be held in the local parish church. The three degree ceremonies were combined into one, with the goal of making the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> degree more accessible to members. Supreme Knight Carl Anderson said of the change, "Many local councils lack ceremonial teams or the manpower to organize degrees. This means many candidates wait far too long to fully join our ranks. Some give up. Too many never take their Second and Third Degrees. Last year (2019), only little more than half of the men who took their First Degree also took their Third Degree." It was time for a change and we had to re-learn the degree ceremony.

New 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree Knights Rick Vogel and Nick Overmann (front right) and District 54 Deputy Bill Davis



Exemplification Team: Don Mueller, Jim Ressler, Jason Thurmon, Rev. Godwin Oluigbami, Joe Hodes (left to right, back to front),

The combined ceremony is called the *Exemplification of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity* after the three founding principles of our order. The fourth principle, Patriotism, is still reserved for the 4<sup>th</sup> degree exemplification and has its own private ceremony, typically held in St. Louis at the Marriot Airport hotel, concluding with mass and a dinner.

#### Quotes from the Saints

**About worrying and anxiety...** "Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you, all things are passing away, God never changes. Patience obtains all things. Whoever has God lacks nothing." St. Teresa of Avila

The first new degree ceremonies were provided by Supreme by online video for the councils to learn. Just as council 9981 started thinking of learning the new Exemplification in early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic shut everything down. Still, the new ceremony was occasionally shown live on Zoom and could be viewed DVD or online video. Membership director Rob Schultz of Council 9981 had a few new members take the Exemplification online and by recorded video. But our council strived to meet our candidates in person and welcome them into full membership by conducting the Exemplification at Incarnate Word again.

In the spring of 2021, the pandemic subsided and vaccination became prevalent, our churches and gatherings re-opened to larger groups, and the officers agreed it was time for our council to host the Exemplification. After making a recruiting drive in early May, our first Exemplification degree team learned how to conduct the ceremony and prepared the materials.

#### Quotes from the Saints

**About life in Heaven...** "Considering that when the saints lived in this world they were at liberty to roam the earth, do you really think that in Heaven God would have them tied to a post?" St. Thomas More

Although our recruiting efforts turned out bone-dry, we were ready to conduct the Exemplification with two 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> degree candidates.

On May 22, 2021, after the 5 PM vigil mass, council 9981 conducted the first Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity at Incarnate Word church. The team from 9981 consisted of Chaplain Fr. Godwin Oluigbami, Presiding Officer Jim Ressler, Presenter on Charity Jeff Grotegeers, Presenter on Unity Don Mueller, Presenter on Fraternity Jason Thurmon, and Warden Joe Hodes. The team kept their presentations sincere and spot-on and conducted the Exemplification with honor. We are thankful to have initiated two of our first degree members into the full knighthood:

- Richard (Rick) Vogel of Creve Coeur, who joined the 1<sup>st</sup> degree in 1989 and transferred into council 9981 in December 2020.
- Nicholas (Nick) Overmann of Chesterfield, a first degree member of our council since 2016.

Congratulations and God's blessing to Rick and Nick, our newest full knights. Let's be thankful to God for having an Exemplification team from council 9981. Let us pray we can repeat this Exemplification with many new members in the 2021-22 fraternal year.

#### Quotes from the Saints

**About Imperfection...** Who is free from defects? He lacks everything who thinks he lacks nothing. St. Bernard of Clairvaux



## Grand Knight Report

Council 9981 report and council meeting Thursday June 10 @ 7 PM

Jim Ressler, Grand Knight

GK report June 2021

Faithful Knights of Columbus,

I write this report with an anxious heart. While I have been very blessed to serve as Grand Knight for two years, my time has come to an end and I wonder where God will lead me next. We have been through times these past two years that I will remember for the rest of my life. Through it all, God was there for us! After the desperate loneliness and uncertainty of the pandemic and ensuing shut down, we can literally breathe freely again without a mask and be together again! Thinking back to 2019, I had many ideas of gathering and working together on new endeavors for our council -- stronger and new prayer devotions, renewing into the Breach through a video series, bringing our charitable activities to new levels of giving and sharing.

Instead, we were thrust into a pandemic 9 months into the fraternal year in the middle of Lent, set our plans aside and figured out how to regroup and recover. As our recent successes in rejoining parish life such as the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday, blood drive and making over \$11,000 of charitable contributions for the fraternal year 2020-21, I can boldly say WE HAVE MADE IT and begun to RECOVER from the pandemic. We did well during the past year to stay together and find ways to serve. Whether it was the golf tournament, the DD Drive, or the recent Fish Fry, we outperformed our expectations in large part because we had no choice but to work together and reach out for help to survive. That is a lesson we should continue to follow.

I ask you to support our new Grand Knight, officers, and directors in continuing to serve our church and community in our faithful activities while taking the opportunity to do more with our knights within our parish. Here are some critical goals I leave for the next Grand Knight and leaders of our programs to consider.

- Teaching men how to praying in a relationship with Christ.
- Serving our community, parish and country with honor and respect for each other.
- Finding strong Catholic men who will step up and lead us in what we do well and can do better.
- Encouraging **all members** who are in KofC council 9981 to be a Catholic man who gives of himself to make a difference by his Faith in Action.

Because I think it is vital to our council's survival, I say this again from my report in May: There are many members who have been carrying the load for this council for years. We would all benefit from having a partner or someone to mentor in a long-held current position. Getting more knights leading and serving brings energy and new ideas and life to our council and parish.

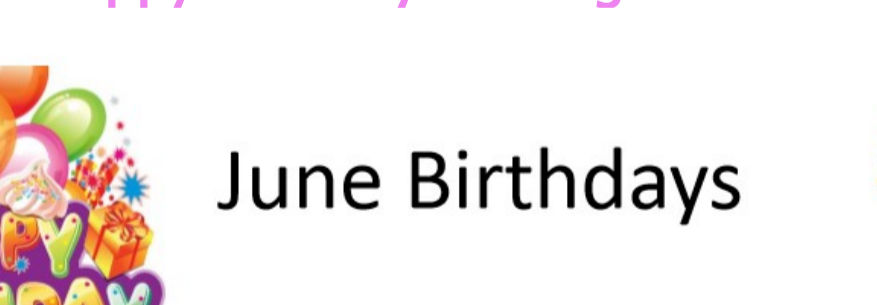
To bookend my term, I recall we had the last private Admissions 1<sup>st</sup> degree ceremony in our council in August 2019 and we just held our first using the new Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity on

May 22, 2021. Having held this Exemplification, let us remember to use this beautiful, public ceremony in our future path to recruiting and advancing new members in our council.

I leave you with a verse that is dear to my heart that I shared in my first GK report in 2019:

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight." Prov 3:5-6

As for what's next, I hope to be spending much more time with my wife Julie going to places like this:



1. Vivat Jesus! El Cristo Rey!

Jim Ressler

Grand Knight

## Happy Birthday IW Knights!!



- Chris Williams
- Timothy Ney
- Bill Sippos
- Michael Hritz
- Richard Miskell
- Bill Lodderhose
- Richard Skates
- Thomas Zak
- Steve Lohe
- Keith Bollinger
- Buz Peek
- Bryan Hewing
- Jeff L West

## A Few More Things

**Got a little extra time?** Try taking an hour in adoration with the Lord. If you have never spent some quiet time alone with Jesus, it is a very worthwhile endeavor. If you approach him with an open heart and attentive mind you will encounter a wonderful and unique experience you will not find anywhere else.

## More Quotes from the Saints

**About our cause...** You can win more converts with a spoonful of honey than with a barrelful of vinegar. *St. Francis De Sales*

**About Heaven...** How can you admire the heavens, my son, when you see that you are more permanent than they? For the heavens pass away, but you will abide for all eternity with him who is forever. *St. Gregory of Nyssa*

**About repentance...** "Have you sinned? Go into Church and wipe out your sin. As often as you might fall down in the marketplace you pick yourself up again. So too, as often as you sin, repent your sin. Do not despair. *St John Chrysostom*

## Some Good Reads

**The Navarre Bible** This is my favorite version of the Catholic Bible. In addition to holding all of the sacred texts, it contains a detailed and easy to understand explanation of scripture right there for you. It covers the entire New Testament in separate volumes.

**The Diary of St. Faustina** You've probably already heard of this one. A very comforting read. And although it's a little lengthy, it's very easy to skip around and read at leisure. This book is the story of the origin of the Divine Mercy Image and Divine Mercy Sunday.

## Some Humor

It was so cold in DC today... that I saw a politician with his hands in his own pockets

My wife has a strange way of beginning conversations... she says "are you even listening?"

## One Final note...

If you are looking for Catholic books, decorations, or other gifts there is a great Catholic store right across the street from Incarnate World Parish. In this age when more and more things are being bought online, it's a good idea to support the business.

## A Message From the Editor in Chief

I am very excited to be the new editor of this newsletter. In addition to providing the necessary information you have come to rely on, I have plans to put my own spin on things. With each issue, I'll try to bring you a mix of fun and informative content. Including some wisdom from the saints and leaders of the Catholic Church, good Catholic book recommendations, and anything else I think you might find entertaining or enriching to your holy faith. If some of you don't know me, my name is Nicholas Overmann. But you can just call me Nick. I was born and raised Catholic in Jefferson City, MO. I was confirmed in 1997 at the age of 17. I moved to Chesterfield and became a member of Incarnate Word in 2013. I became a knight here in 2016. In my free time I enjoy painting landscapes, reading, movies, and video games. If you have any questions or would like to submit something for future newsletters, you can contact the Grand Knight or email me at [nickover14@gmail.com](mailto:nickover14@gmail.com)