

*A Christian Education Series*



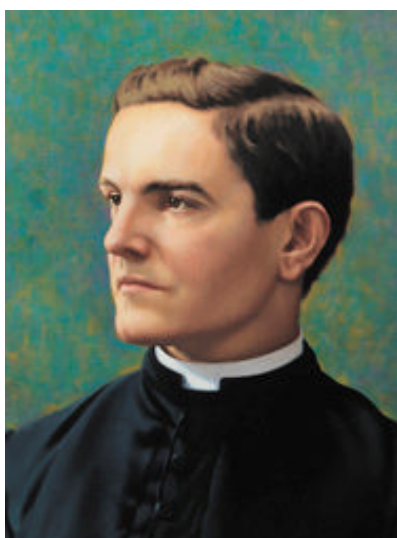
*Twenty Fourth Edition*

Alberta/Northwest Territories State Council  
**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS**

**THE FORMATION  
PROGRAMME**

2009—2010

“MEN OF PEACE AND HOPE”



THE YEAR OF THE PRIEST

## **THE FORMATION PROGRAMME**

### HOW IT WORKS

Our Formation Programme, now in its 24<sup>th</sup> year, is offered to all councils of the Jurisdiction. It is in no way imposed as “official”. Its purpose is to ensure a balance between Knights of Columbus good works and faith, since the former if not nourished by prayerful reflection, can become just another social justice program with little relation to Christ or membership of the people of God.

### CHOOSING THE TOPIC FOR THE YEAR

On April 3, 2009 the Prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy, Claudio Card. Hummes announced that Pope Benedict XVI had declared a Year of the Priest following the year of St. Paul. This year is in memory of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of St. John Mary Vianney, the Curé of Ars, Patron Saint of Parish Priests.

The logo chosen by the Holy father for this year reads: “The faithfulness of Christ, the faithfulness of the priest.” As Knights of Columbus we have always proclaimed solidarity with our priests. Our founder, the venerable Fr. Michael J. McGivney was a parish priest and was pointed out by the pope at his recent visit to the United States of America, as an ideal and example for the American priests.

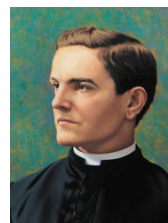
So it seems to me obvious to choose this topic. May it strengthen the bonds of friendship and fraternity between priests and lay people in our Order.

### KEYS TO SUCCESS

First, each Council must take ownership of its own programme.

Second, a few enthusiastic leaders in each Council (not the Grand Knight or Chaplain) should familiarize themselves with the programme and the theme for the discussion the night of the meeting. They can then be responsible for distribution of sufficient copies to members, lead the readings and, when necessary lead or support the sharing and reflection. It may take a little work to get started but the effort is worth it. Many Councils in our Jurisdiction for years have enjoyed this spiritual

component to their busy agenda and welcome the opportunity to learn at each meeting something new about the Catholic Faith. In these days when as *Christi-fideles Laici*, Knights of Columbus often have to stand up and be counted in discussions on controversial issues regarding faith, morals and common decency. The Programme, if followed faithfully, may help in doing so.



### *Prayer of St. Vincent Pallotti's*

Almighty Father, during his life on earth, Christ implored you earnestly for the unity of his followers.

We are to be one, as you, Father, are one with the Son and the Holy Spirit.

We confess that human weakness and guilt have divided the Church.

Give us, your people, the spirit of discernment. Remove misunderstanding and prejudice from among us. Open our hearts to the full truth.

Your people lack the love that would bind them together. Indifference, discord and intolerance drive them apart.

Send your Spirit of Love into the hearts of your Faithful to guide them to work actively for the unity of Christians.

Teach us to work with one mind to fulfill the command that Jesus gave us.

Remove from us all selfishness, formalism and narrow-mindedness. Open our eyes enlighten our minds, inflame our hearts that we may see and accomplish what will be for your greater honor and glory.

Amen

## STUDY-THEME FOR THE YEAR

### *“The Priest Another Christ”*

#### STUDY GUIDE

September	2009	Priestly Vocation.
October	2009	A priest a person of Prayer.
November	2009	A priest a minister of Grace.
December	2009	A priest the interpreter of the Word of God
January	2010	A priest the evangelizer of the un-catechized.
February	2010	A priest the administrator of the parish community..
March	2010	A priest the helper of the poor, and consoler of the sorrowful.
April	2010	A priest the image of the Good Shepherd.
May	2010	The common priesthood of all believers.
June	2010	The Sacred Heart of Jesus and the heart of the Priest.

---

#### **THE FORMATION PROGRAMME**

The Knights of Columbus Formation Programme is designed to help us strike a practical balance between faith and good works in our service-oriented projects. These latter, unless continuously nourished by prayer and reflection, can and sometimes do, degenerate into mere humanitarian service divorced from God or any spiritual motivation.

#### **PRACTICAL DIRECTIONS FOR THE PROGRAMME**

- The program is printed on Quarto sized sheets so that individual pages or the whole program can be easily photocopied for members. It also can be found on the Website.
- All present should have copies of the text for the night's Formation Session.
- The Program leader should be appointed at the beginning of the Council Meeting not at the beginning of the Formation Session. Not to be prepared, is to be prepared to fail.
- The Formation Session should be given a regular time-slot in the Council Meeting's agenda.
- The Session should be neither skimmed nor unduly prolonged.
- A 10-minute time-slot maybe sufficient.
- All should join the Opening and Closing Prayers.
- The Period for Silent Reflection should be no more than one minute. The Sharing of Reflections by Council members should keep to the topic of the evening.
- The Session might end with the Chaplain's remarks before the Program's Closing Prayer.

## Message from the State Deputy



Brother Knights:

I am pleased that, once again this year, the Formation Programme has been made available to the Knights of Saskatchewan. This program, prepared by the Alberta State Council, is now in its twenty-fourth year. On behalf of the Saskatchewan Knights of Columbus, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to Neil Gannon, State Deputy for Alberta, and Father Henry

Rosenbaum, SAC, State Chaplain, for preparing this excellent document and for sharing it with us.

This year's theme is "The Year for Priests". The Formation Programme gives us the opportunity to reflect on how we can support our priests. I encourage you to integrate this program into your council meetings. The readings and reflections are an excellent opportunity for us to practice and enrich our faith.

I wish you all the best as you continue your journey of faith and service during this Columbian Year.

VIVAT JESUS!

Arden Andreas

Saskatchewan Knights of Columbus

State Deputy

---

## The Priest



For many people, even Catholics, the priest may be an enigma, or he may be a dinosaur from millennia past. This year's programme should draw priests and lay people closer together, because only in Unity will we achieve God's purpose in our lives. "Verba docent, exempla trahunt." (Words teach, examples draw).

So I have added to each month the example of a Priest Saint. Although we have not enough space to add a short hagiography but I challenge you to look it up yourself. There are lots of sources, even "Google".

May this programme help you to discover your priestly traits and pursue them faithfully.

Vivat Jesus!

**Henry H. Rosenbaum, SAC, State Chaplain**

## September 2009 Meeting Priestly Vocation

*Priest Saint of the Month: St. Jean de Brébeuf  
and the Canadian Martyrs (Sept 26)*

### **Opening Prayer**

**In the name of the Father and of the Son and  
of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

---

### **The Reading**

*(to be read by the Leader)*

The next day John was there again with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he said, "Behold, the Lamb of God." The two disciples heard what he said and followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following him and said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?" He said to them, "Come, and you will see." So they went and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day. It was about four in the afternoon. Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who heard John and followed Jesus. He first found his own brother Simon and told him, "We have found the Messiah" (Which is translated Anointed). Then he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John; you will be called Kephas" (which is translated Peter).

(John 1, 35-42)

---

### **The Reflection**

*(to be read by the leader)*

Everybody has a vocation in life to his occupation, to his social standing, to his community, so why are we particularly concerned about vocations to the priesthood and religious life? All callings comes from God but some people are called to follow Christ in a very special way. That was shown in the reading; Christ invites some people into a special following: "Come and See." This passage has become a special invitation to all men who want to become priests. Some priests, like John, remember even the time when Christ called them, when this recognition broke open in their hearts: I think Christ called me to be a priest. Christ has to become, for them, a great value in their hearts. John the Baptist points out "There is the Lamb of God." A priestly vocation needs someone to guide him, quite often

another priest. But since priests do not grow on trees, but are part of an ordinary family, they can find their guidance and growth in their family already. The acceptance and support which a family can give is invaluable for the future priests. In John's story the first disciples immediately invite others and share the Christ they have found, so the vocation of one priest is always an invitation to somebody else to consider their vocation. The last and final decision of a priestly vocation is done by the bishop, or religious superior, to accept that person for ordination and they all have their criteria to apply, but what is really needed is an insight into the spiritual life of that person. The story of St. John Maria Vianney illustrates this well. It was used by Bishop F. B. Henry at the last ordination. St. John was not a very gifted student; he did not make all his exams. But when the Vicar General asked the professor, "but is he a **good** man?" He answered, "There is no question, he is the best." "Then ordain him." Said the Vicar General and this decision gave John Maria the opportunity to become a stellar priest of whom an atheist who came from Paris and did not believe all this talk about John Maria said, "I have seen the face of God in him."

Let us all think of our own vocation and pray that we are able to fulfill it.

---

### **Meditation Period**

*(The leader now invites the members to spend a few moments in silent reflection, as the above text is not meant to be a ready-made answer but a starter for personal reflection on the theme)*

---

### **Fraternal Sharing**

*(The leader now invites the members to share with their Brother Knights any relevant thoughts that came to them during the meditation period.)*

---

### **Closing Prayer**

*(Recited by all)*

Father, you consecrated the first beginnings of the faith in North America by the preaching and martyrdom of St. John Brebeuf and his companions. By the help of their prayers may the Christian Faith continue to grow throughout the world. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## **October 2009 Meeting**

### **A Priest a Person of Prayer**

***Priest of the Month: St. John Leonardi (Oct 9)***  
***Co-Founder of the Propaganda College in Rome***

#### ***Opening Prayer***

**In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

---

#### **The Reading**

*(to be read by the Leader)*

Every high priest is taken from among men and made their representative before God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal patiently with the ignorant and erring, for he himself is beset by weakness and so, for this reason, must make sin offerings for himself as well as for the people. No one takes this honor upon himself but only when called by God, just as Aaron was. In the same way, it was not Christ who glorified himself in becoming high priest, but rather the one who said to him: "You are my Son; this day I have begotten you", just as he says in another place: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." In the days when he was in the flesh, he offered prayer and supplications with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, declared by God high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

(Hebrews 5, 1-10)

---

#### **The Reflection**

*(to be read by the leader)*

Although the priest is a normal human being, he is separated from the people for a special purpose; like Moses who was standing before his people to pray to God for them; like Jesus, the high priest, praying for the salvation of God's people. So the priest is separated to be a kind of mediator, like Christ, the only mediator. To bring "the thing pertaining to the people before God" he is this middle man reaching out to God on behalf of his people.

If people are coming to ask the priest to pray for them especially when they are sick, when they come to have a mass said for their intention, when they ask for a priest's blessing, all are expressions that he may intercede for them before God. The priest has to be a man of prayer, every priest is asked to say the "Office" on behalf of his people. He is to pray in meditation everyday. He is to do some spiritual reading and, as anyone of you, to pray the rosary everyday. Those are only the official prayers. A good priest will also learn how to pray with people, with families and organizations. He is often considered the official prayer person. But there is more in the prayer life of the priest. Meditation should lead him to contemplating the deep opening of oneself to God. In God he can, like Christ, take all the troubles in the world in his prayerful "supplication."

Although the priest is called to pray, he should invite other people to pray with him. We have prayer groups, we have communal rosary, we have common lectio divina (reading scripture meditatively) and any kind of common prayer makes the world a better place. Ask yourself how you pray alone, with your family, with your church community, at home or in public. Maybe one of your lecture nights should be on prayer, we need reminders.

---

#### **Meditation Period**

*(The leader now invites the members to spend a few moments in silent reflection, as the above text is not meant to be a ready-made answer but a starter for personal reflection on the theme)*

---

#### **Fraternal Sharing**

*(The leader now invites the members to share with their Brother Knights any relevant thoughts that came to them during the meditation period.)*

---

#### **Closing Prayer**

*(Recited by all)*

Father, giver of all good things, you proclaimed the good news to countless people through the ministry of St. John Leonardi. By the help of his prayers may the true faith continue to grow. Grant this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## November 2009 Meeting A Priest a Minister of Grace

*Priest of the Month: St. Andrew Dung-Lac  
(Nov 24) Vietnamese Martyrs*

### *Opening Prayer*

**In the name of the Father and of the Son and  
of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

---

### **The Reading**

*(to be read by the Leader)*

Philip said to him, "Master, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you for so long a time and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The father who dwells in me is doing his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe because of the works themselves. Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father. And whatever you ask in my name, I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything of me in my name, I will do it.

(John 14, 8-14)

---

### **The Reflection**

*(to be read by the leader)*

The scripture reading tries to make the Apostle Philip see that the Father and Christ are one. Through this oneness of father and son, Christ works and his actions bring the grace of God to the people who are the recipients of his actions. Then he tells the apostles that all who believe in him, who are connected with him, will do the same works.

A priest ordained to the ministerial priesthood is so united in Christ that when he distributes the sacraments he acts in persona Christi (in the person of Christ).

At baptism: "I baptise you", at the Eucharist: "This is **my** body, this is **my** blood", at Reconciliation: "I absolve you". We see that even in the language of the sacraments the person of Christ and the person of the priest are one. So the priest distributes the grace

of God, not in his power or name, but as Christ, in his person, in his name. We are a sacramental church and that means that we receive the ordinary graces of God through the sacraments. Therefore, the priest is necessary in our church; without priests, no sacraments. There are two sacraments which the laity can dispense: that is baptism in emergency situations and certainly the sacrament of matrimony which the partners, man and woman, administer to each other.

There are two sacraments which are reserved for the bishop: confirmation and holy orders. Confirmation may also be administered by priests if the bishop asked the priest to do so and in the case of catechumens or those who are baptized and join the Catholic Church.

Some people have thought that the sacramental ministry makes the priest very powerful, but it is called **ministry**, service to the community of Christ. As Christ called himself a servant, so is the priest.

For all believers, it is important to stay with Christ and to serve with Christ as sisters and brothers.

---

### **Meditation Period**

*(The leader now invites the members to spend a few moments in silent reflection, as the above text is not meant to be a ready-made answer but a starter for personal reflection on the theme)*

---

### **Fraternal Sharing**

*(The leader now invites the members to share with their Brother Knights any relevant thoughts that came to them during the meditation period.)*

---

### **Closing Prayer**

*(Recited by all)*

Let us pray: O God, the source and origin of all fatherhood, you kept the holy martyrs, Andrew and his companions, faithful to the cross of your Son even to the shedding of their blood. Through their intercession enable us to spread your love among our sisters and brothers, that we may be called and may truly be your children. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## December 2009 Meeting A Priest the Interpreter of the Word of God

*Priest of the Month: St. Francis Xavier (Dec. 3)  
Missionary to East Asia*

### *Opening Prayer*

**In the name of the Father and of the Son and  
of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

---

### **The Reading**

*(to be read by the Leader)*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not over come it.

Ant the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

(John 1, 1-5, 14)

---

### **The Reflection**

*(to be read by the leader)*

The words of this reading are used at the last mass on Christmas day. The word spoken by the Father becomes a human being: "and the word was made flesh full of grace and truth". The word which God spoke becomes tangible and audible to humanity.

To bring the word of God into a human context we have the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, but their words are often not understandable in today's context. The biblical scholars unearth lots of data to understand the text better in its historical setting.

The priest in his homily of any sacramental setting has a different task. What does scripture mean to us in our everyday life? "The priests are to preach the Gospel and explain the Christian message" says Vatican II. Sometimes we criticize priests because we feel they are poor preachers and we forget that **God** wanted o give us a message, even if it came in a

tainted and torn envelope. When a priest speaks in a liturgical setting, he speaks with the authority of his ministry. God puts his gold quite often in "vessels of clay". Too bad if we see only the clay and not the gold inside. "Full of grace and truth", that is the word we should accept, God's grace is in his word as well as in his sacraments. That's why Thomas a Kempis says in his *Imitation of Christ*: "we have two tables at the Eucharist; that table of the word and the table of the bread and wine" or our missal refers to it as the liturgy of the word and the liturgy of the Eucharist.

During this Advent, let us listen to the word of God and when we find something which speaks particularly to us, let us meditate on it and practice it in our daily lives because that is the way in which we give flesh to abstract ideas and make the Word become Flesh again.

May you and your families have a blessed Christmas.

---

### **Meditation Period**

*(The leader now invites the members to spend a few moments in silent reflection, as the above text is not meant to be a ready-made answer but a starter for personal reflection on the theme)*

---

### **Fraternal Sharing**

*(The leader now invites the members to share with their Brother Knights any relevant thoughts that came to them during the meditation period.)*

---

### **Closing Prayer**

*(Recited by all)*

Let us pray: God our Father, by the preaching of Francis Xavier you brought many nations to yourself. Give his zeal for the faith to all who believe in you, that your Church may rejoice in continued growth throughout the world. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

## **January 2010 Meeting** **A Priest the Evangelizer of the Un-catechized**

***Priest of the Month: St. Vincent Pallotti**  
**(Jan. 22) Founder of the Union of Catholic**  
**Apostolate, Patron Saint of Missionary Priests***

### **Opening Prayer**

**In the name of the Father and of the Son and of  
the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

---

### **The Reading**

*(to be read by the Leader)*

Yet we do speak a wisdom to those who are mature, but not a wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age who are passing away. Rather, we speak God's wisdom, mysterious, hidden, which God predetermined before the ages for our glory, and which none of the rulers of this age knew for, if they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written: "What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and what has not entered the human heart, what God has prepared for those who love him," this God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit scrutinizes everything, even the depths of God. Among human beings, who knows what pertains to a person except the spirit of the person that is within? Similarly, no one knows what pertains to God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the things freely given us by God.

(1 Corinthians 2, 6-12)

---

### **The Reflection**

*(to be read by the leader)*

People who have been baptised and raised in the Catholic faith often forget what they have learned and therefore the priest has to bring the teachings of the church to new life by means of expounding the traditions of the church to the forgetful or to the neophytes (newly baptised).

The importance of catechesis in our fraternity is underlined by the catechesis of Bishop Lori in the Columbian Magazine. Certainly, we also have Lay catechists who should be well trained in the method

and context of catechetics, but the priest has the final responsibilities for his catechists. We can also try to inform ourselves by catechisms which are recommended and authorised wither by the Pope or the local bishop or bishops conferences. The "Compendium of the catechism of the Catholic Church of 2006" is an excellent tool because it uses the old practice of question and answer. But the most important thing is the wisdom which we receive from the catechism for practicing our faith. St. Paul refers to the Holy Spirit as the source of this wisdom. So the spirit has to inspire the priest as catechist. The catechesis of the priest will be only spirit filled when he practices what he preaches. Paul thinks that this wisdom should not be seen as philosophy, but as a mystery revealed by God in Christ by the power of the spirit. The spirit will lead us to this wisdom in prayer and contemplation. The word of St. Dominic should be addressed to all catechists, "contemplata aliis tradere" (to give to others what you have contemplated in prayer, ie. infused by the spirit).

May the New Year be blessed and spirit filled for you, your families, your councils and assemblies and all your activities as Knights.

---

### **Meditation Period**

*(The leader now invites the members to spend a few moments in silent reflection, as the above text is not meant to be a ready-made answer but a starter for personal reflection on the theme)*

---

### **Fraternal Sharing**

*(The leader now invites the members to share with their Brother Knights any relevant thoughts that came to them during the meditation period.)*

---

### **Closing Prayer**

*(Recited by all)*

Let us pray: O God, in your Church you chose St. Vincent Pallotti, your priest, to defend the faith and re-kindle love. Grant that, by following his example, we may be witnesses in affection and action to the splendour of faith and the fellowship of love. Through Christ, your son, our Lord. Amen.

**February 2010 Meeting**  
**A Priest the Administrator of the Parish Community**

***Priest of the Month: St. Valentine (Feb. 14)***  
***Priest and Martyr***

***Opening Prayer***

**In the name of the Father and of the Son and  
of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

---

**The Reading**

*(to be read by the Leader)*

And he gave some as apostles, others as prophets, others as evangelists, others as pastors and teachers, to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the extent of the full stature of Christ, so that we may no longer be infants, tossed by waves and swept along by every wind of teaching arising from human trickery, from their cunning in the interests of deceitful scheming. Rather, living the truth in love, we should grow in every way into him who is the head Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, with the proper functioning of each part, brings about the body's growth and builds itself up in love.

(Ephesians 4, 11-16)

---

**The Reflection**

*(to be read by the leader)*

All gifts and ministries are given by the Holy Spirit for the building up of the mystical body which is the church. "The body of Christ come to full maturity". Certainly, many administrative duties of the priest are handled by lay people, not only to give the priest time for himself, but give him more time for more important things, like prayer and the sacraments. In the Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests (Presbyterorum Ordinis) of Vatican II, it is stated: "In the world of today, with so many duties which people must undertake and the great variety of problems vexing them and, very often demanding a speedy solution, there is often danger for those whose energies are divided by different activities. Priests who are perplexed and distracted by the very many obligations of their position maybe anxiously

enquiring how they can reduce to unity their interior life and their program of external activity. This unity of life cannot be brought about merely by an outward arrangement of the works of the ministry, nor by the practice of spiritual exercises alone. Priests can achieve it by following the example of Christ, "whose food it was to do the will of the Father" that he might perfect his work". (14)

The last part of our reading speaks about the necessity of love which keeps the mystical body growing. Administration in the church is not just a matter of laws, financial know-how, or keeping the plant working properly. It is a matter of love; a love for the church, a love for the parishioners who profit from it, a love which should be behind every action of the Knights which we call church activities. When was the last time that your council got a prize in church activities? You might have done it, but you did not send it in. Start doing it. Next month is judging time.

May the blessing of St. Valentine be upon your families and may you renew your love to each other.

---

**Meditation Period**

*(The leader now invites the members to spend a few moments in silent reflection, as the above text is not meant to be a ready-made answer but a starter for personal reflection on the theme)*

---

**Fraternal Sharing**

*(The leader now invites the members to share with their Brother Knights any relevant thoughts that came to them during the meditation period.)*

---

**Closing Prayer**

*(Recited by all)*

Let us pray: God of power and mercy, through your help St. Valentine has overcome the tortures of his passion. Help us, who commemorate his triumph, to remain victorious over the wiles of our enemies. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## **March 2010 Meeting**

### **A Priest the Helper of the Poor, and Consoler of the Sorrowful**

*Saint of the Month: The venerable Fr. Michael J. McGivney (March 29 Founders Day) Founder of the Knights of Columbus*

#### **Opening Prayer**

**In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

---

#### **The Reading**

*(to be read by the Leader)*

He came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.” Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them, “Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing.”

(Luke 4, 16-21)

---

#### **The Reflection**

*(to be read by the leader)*

The reading from Isaiah which Christ uses to open up his ministry in Galilee, describes the activities of the Messiah: good news to the poor, release to captives, opening the eyes of the blind, freedom for the oppressed (slaves) and announcing a Jubilee. This statement of Isaiah is often the ideal for a young priest to follow; it was also printed on my holy pictures commemorating my ordination.

Are these lofty words still working?

Vatican II states again: “Although priests owe service to everybody, the poor and the weaker ones have been committed to their care in a special way. It is with these that the Lord himself associated”. (6) But there are not only the marginalised of society, there are also the poor and downtrodden spiritually. We are all sinners and as such the priest has to be there to give us Christ’s forgiveness and the acceptance into the church community again in the sacrament of

reconciliation, making peace with our sisters and brothers.

In our prayer for the canonization of Father McGivney we call him: “protector of the poor and defender of the widow and orphan”. Our charity without helping the poor is lifeless.

The consoling of those who weep is certainly a part of the priest life. If we visit the sick or bury the dead, one part of it is consolation. As Knights, we too have many ways in which we minister to those in sorrow. What comes to your mind when the question is raised for the “Good of the Order”?

We are in the time of Lent, let us double our efforts of the charity towards the poor and needy and let us treat every sorrowful person as we would our sorrowful mother under the cross of Christ.

---

#### **Meditation Period**

*(The leader now invites the members to spend a few moments in silent reflection, as the above text is not meant to be a ready-made answer but a starter for personal reflection on the theme)*

---

#### **Fraternal Sharing**

*(The leader now invites the members to share with their Brother Knights any relevant thoughts that came to them during the meditation period.)*

---

#### **Closing Prayer**

*(Recited by all)*

Let us pray. God, our Father, protector of the poor and defender of the widow and orphan, you called your priest, Father Michael J. McGivney, to be an apostle of Christian family life and to lead the young to the generous service of their neighbour. Through the example of his life and virtue, may we follow your Son, Jesus Christ, more closely, fulfilling his commandment of charity and building up his Body, which is the Church. Let the inspiration of your servant prompt us to greater confidence in your love so that we may continue his work of caring for the needy and the outcast. We humbly ask that you glorify your servant Father Michael J. McGivney on earth according to the design of your holy will. Through his intercession, grant the favour I now present *(here make your request)*. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## April 2010 Meeting A Priest the Image of the Good Shepherd

*Priest of the Month: St. Peter Chanel (Apr. 28)  
Patron of the South Seas*

### *Opening Prayer*

**In the name of the Father and of the Son and  
of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

---

### **The Reading**

*(to be read by the Leader)*

I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. A hired man, who is not a shepherd and whose sheep are not his own, sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf catches and scatters them. This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd.

(John 10, 11-16)

---

### **The Reflection**

*(to be read by the leader)*

Easter time, Christ our Paschal lamb, had been sacrificed and we have been made free. The fourth Easter Sunday has been traditionally the "Good Shepherd" Sunday. We all will have our traditional collection for the education and upkeep of priests. But that is only an external expression of what the Good Shepherd is all about. The first pictures of Christ were found in the catacombs, the picture of the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd has continued to be the ideal of bishops and priests. What points does Christ make in the reading: Laying down our life, knowing his own and being recognized, image of God the father. Sheep of different origin (Jesus and Gentiles). One flock, one shepherd. As priests we have to ask ourselves: Are we ready to defend our flock up to the ultimate sacrifice. The book of Martyrs (martyrology) is full of priests and martyrs.

Do priests know their flock? Do we share their lives, their anxieties, their joys and sorrows? Do parishioners know their priests? A member of a parish council in the USA wanted to know exactly what his parish priest was doing all day. So he asked the priest if he could move into the rectory for 24 hours. The priest agreed and the parishioner moved in. He accompanied the priest in all his prayers, Eucharist and every activity and meeting this day. After 24 hours, the parishioner was completely exhausted and he had only seen a glimpse of his pastor's work. When asked "what shall we do?" he said: "We don't pay him enough". Know you pastor. The other sheep bring us to the point that the Good Shepherd has to relate also to Christians of other denominations; to Jews, to Moslems and to believers of various kinds. They all might show up in the community where he shepherds. Let us all support our shepherds to ease their burden because many of the sheep we have to carry on our shoulders are quite heavy.

---

### **Meditation Period**

*(The leader now invites the members to spend a few moments in silent reflection, as the above text is not meant to be a ready-made answer but a starter for personal reflection on the theme)*

---

### **Fraternal Sharing**

*(The leader now invites the members to share with their Brother Knights any relevant thoughts that came to them during the meditation period.)*

---

### **Closing Prayer**

*(Recited by all)*

Let us pray. Father, you called St. Peter Chanel to work for your Church and gave him the crown of martyrdom. May our celebration of Christ's death and resurrection make us faithful witnesses to the new life he brings, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

## May 2010 Meeting The Common Priesthood of all Believers

**Saint of the Month: St. Philip Neri (May 26) Patron  
of Rome**

### **Opening Prayer**

**In the name of the Father and of the Son and of  
the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

---

### **The Reading**

*(to be read by the Leader)*

Come to him, a living stone, rejected by human beings but chosen and precious in the sight of God, and, like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

But you are “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own, so that you may announce the praises” of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were “no people” but now you are God’s people; you “had not received mercy” but now you have received mercy.

(1 Peter 2, 4-5, 9-10)

---

### **The Reflection**

*(to be read by the leader)*

Peter is using the words which are repeated at every baptism: you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people. The anointing with chrism after baptism shows the 3 times in scripture when one person was anointed: king, prophet and priest. From these words we derive the concept of the common priesthood of all believers. We are a priestly people. Similar to the ministerial priesthood we are set apart. Guided by the Spirit, we all may be able to prophesy, proclaimers of the Good News and we should become shepherd-kings, leading the sheep to the shepherd. Vatican II again describes the common priesthood (2): “The Lord Jesus, whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world” (John 10, 36), makes his whole mystical body share in the anointing of the Spirit with whom he has been anointed: “For in that body all the faithful are made a holy and royal priesthood, they offer spiritual sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ. Therefore, there is no such thing as a member that has not a

share in the mission of the whole body.” The next paragraph leads into the ministerial priesthood.

As an example of the difference between the common and ministerial priesthood, let us take the Eucharist. In the Compendium of the Catechism no. 235 asks: How does the church on earth celebrate the Liturgy?

The church on earth celebrates the Liturgy as a priestly people in which each one acts according to his or her proper function in the unity of the Holy Spirit. The baptised offer themselves in a spiritual sacrifice; the ordained minister celebrate according to the Order they received for the service of all members of the church; the bishops and priests act in the Person of Christ, the head. We see that all are a part of the Eucharist but in different ways and functions.

If you listen carefully to the Eucharistic Prayer you will find that not only the church here on earth is participating, but also all Angels and Saints in heaven and those who have past away in Christ.

In May let us celebrate Mary, the Queen of Apostles, although she was not ordained, was the greatest sign of a priestly life in Christ.

---

### **Meditation Period**

*(The leader now invites the members to spend a few moments in silent reflection, as the above text is not meant to be a ready-made answer but a starter for personal reflection on the theme)*

---

### **Fraternal Sharing**

*(The leader now invites the members to share with their Brother Knights any relevant thoughts that came to them during the meditation period.)*

---

### **Closing Prayer**

*(Recited by all)*

Let us pray. Father, you continually raise up your faithful to the glory of holiness. In your love kindle in us the fire of the Holy Spirit who so filled the heart of Philip Neri. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## June 2010 Meeting The Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Heart of the Priest

*Saint of the Month: St. Anthony of Padua,  
Patron of the Poor*

### *Opening Prayer*

**In the name of the Father and of the Son and of  
the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

---

### **The Reading**

*(to be read by the Leader)*

I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for the ones you have given me, because they are yours, and everything of mine is yours and everything of yours is mine, and I have been glorified in them. And now I will no longer be in the world, but they are in the world, while I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are. When I was with them I protected them in your name that gave me, and I guarded them, and none of them was lost except the son of destruction, in order that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you. I speak this in the world so that they may share my joy completely. I gave them your word, and the world hated them, because they do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world but that you keep them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. Consecrate them in the truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world. And I consecrate myself for them, so that they also may be consecrated in truth. (John 17, 9-19)

---

### **The Reflection**

*(to be read by the leader)*

This reading from the Farewell Speeches of Jesus is commonly called the High-Priestly Prayer of Christ. What does Christ want for his priests? He intercedes on their behalf, they are his family, asks for protection, for unity, for joy in Christ. Sanctification in the truth, mission to the world. I sanctify myself that they may be sanctified. It would not necessarily be what we would pray for but who wants to argue with Christ. Protection from the “world” (John’s expression of evil). Unity, joy and sanctification and the ability to be missionaries. Those are the spiritual things with which Christ wants to endow his priests. The letter to call this year of the priest, calls it “The Faithfulness of Christ – the faithfulness of the priest”. What Archbishop Mauro Piacenza wrote to the priest is very important. First we are called to conversion: to be ever more authentically what we already are,

conversion to our ecclesiastical identity of which our ministry is a necessary consequence. Our spirituality must be nothing else but the spirituality of Christ.

We must exist for others, the people of God, in solidarity with those who suffer and are living in all kinds of poverty. We must be laborers for building up the church. We must be holy priests. This is a shortened version of everything that we have meditated on during this year. From the Original Letter of the Archbishop again: “remembering that the name of love within time is faithfulness!”

Let me close with a kind of nostalgic moment in a free translation of a hymn which was sung at my ordination, 48 years ago.

*A heart of a priest is the heart of Jesus,  
The sacrificial lamb for our sins.  
Seeking all over in pain and anxiety  
To find the straying sheep.*

*A heart of a priest is the heart of Jesus  
Which feels only other peoples sorrow.  
Takes for itself only the others pain  
And gives them the joys of heaven.*

*A heart of a priest is the heart of Jesus  
To save those souls is its desire  
For souls it suffered death and pain  
For souls its love consumes it.*

*O Sacred Heart forever more  
Make our hearts your altar now  
And let us all pure as you are  
Be holy priests for evermore.*

Have a great summer.

---

### **Meditation Period**

*(The leader now invites the members to spend a few moments in silent reflection, as the above text is not meant to be a ready-made answer but a starter for personal reflection on the theme)*

---

### **Fraternal Sharing**

*(The leader now invites the members to share with their Brother Knights any relevant thoughts that came to them during the meditation period.)*

---

### **Closing Prayer**

*(Recited by all)*

Almighty God, you have given St. Anthony to your people as an outstanding preacher and a ready helper in time of need. With his assistance may we follow the Gospel of Christ and know the help of your grace in every difficulty. Grant this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## Prayer for the Canonization of Father Michael J. McGivney

**G**od, our Father, protector of the poor and defender of the widow and orphan, you called your priest, Father Michael J. McGivney, to be an apostle of Christian family life and to lead the young to the generous service of their neighbor. Through the example of his life and virtue may we follow your Son, Jesus Christ, more closely, fulfilling his commandment of charity and building up his Body, which is the Church. Let the inspiration of your servant prompt us to greater confidence in your love so that we may continue his work of caring for the needy and the outcast. We humbly ask that you glorify your servant Father Michael J. McGivney on earth according to the design of your holy will. Through his intercession, grant the favor I now present (*here make your request*). Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Our Father      Hail Mary      Glory be to the Father*



---

Please Report All Favors Received:  
The Father McGivney Guild  
One Columbus Plaza  
New Haven, CT 06510-3326 U.S.A.

## Vocation Prayer

**L**oving God, source of life and goodness, we rejoice in the gift of your Son, who dwells constantly in our midst, revealing to us the splendor of your love. We pray that you will call to your service faithful followers of Jesus, who will offer themselves to the ordained ministry and consecrated life. Imbued with your love and mercy, may they offer their lives generously to the Church a living witness of your love for all people.

Lord Jesus Christ, Master of the Harvest, the true light come to the world, grant an increase of workers for your harvest. We ask for grace to preach the Gospel that brings hope of eternal life to every human being.

Holy Spirit, you open the heart and mind to the divine call, you make effective every impetus toward good, toward truth, toward charity. Bless and inspire the faithful of North America with zeal and generosity to encourage and support those you call to the ordained ministry and consecrated life especially those who are friends or family members.

O Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, help those whom the Master invites to the service of the Gospel to echo your own trusting "YES" that the work of evangelization may inspire every tongue to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the Glory of God. Amen.

# COUNCIL PRAYERS

## OPENING PRAYER

*Christ Jesus*, the Way, the Truth and the Life...Teach us to live the charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism required of us as Knights of Columbus. During this meeting, guide our discussions so that we may thoroughly understand the matters in hand – judge them with knowledge and wisdom and prudence, and make decisions that will truly give glory to our Father in heaven. **Amen.**

## CLOSING PRAYER

*Christ Jesus*...You commanded us to love our neighbor as ourselves. Strengthen us now as we leave this meeting. Help us to live our lives as an expression of our love for you and our brothers and sisters. Give us the courage and generosity to act with perseverance. Bless our actions so that our influence is felt within and beyond this Council. Make renewal within the Church and the work of the Knights of Columbus instruments of your love for all mankind. **Amen.**

## A PRAYER FOR OUR PRIESTS

We thank you, God our Father, for those who have responded to your call to priestly ministry. Accept this prayer we offer on their behalf: Fill your priests with the sure knowledge of your love. Open their hearts to the power and consolation of the Holy Spirit. Lead them to new depths of union with your Son. Increase in them profound faith in the Sacraments they celebrate as they nourish, strengthen and heal us.

Lord Jesus Christ, grant that these, your priests, may inspire us to strive for holiness by the power of their example, as men of prayer who ponder your word and follow your will.

O Mary, Mother of Christ and our mother, guard with your maternal care these chosen ones, so dear to the heart of your Son. Intercede for our priests that, offering the Sacrifice of your Son, they may be conformed more each day to the image of your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.



Knights of Columbus  
Alberta-Northwest Territories State Council