

A Christian Education Series



Twenty Sixth Edition

Saskatchewan State Council
(With the permission of the Alberta/Northwest Territories State Council)
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

THE FORMATION
PROGRAMME
2011 - 2012

“Men of Integrity”



Holiness of Life through the Sacraments

THE FORMATION PROGRAMME

HOW IT WORKS

Our Formation Programme, now in its 26th 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

In the renewal of our rituals the sacraments play a great role. And since we are a sacramental Church, it would be fitting to reflect again on the sacraments and what they mean in our daily lives.

The Sacraments are our energizing agents for our activities to bring into our world and families which were expressed at the Supreme Convention in Denver as theme: **“So that the world may know new hope”**
(Blessed John Paul II)

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

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

“Holiness through God’s Grace”

STUDY GUIDE

September	2011	Christ the Primordial Sacrament
October	2011	Sacraments as sign of the Church and Salvation
November	2011	Baptism
December	2011	Confirmation
January	2012	Eucharist
February	2012	Reconciliation
March	2012	Anointing of the sick
April	2012	Ordination to the priesthood
May	2012	Marriage
June	2012	Sacramentals

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 may be 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 of Saskatchewan;

At this Spring's State Convention we were Blessed to have the guidance of Fr. John Grace, OSA, who spoke clearly on the need to have Spiritual Education as a part of every Council Meeting. Ideally this is attained through the guidance of our Council Chaplain. However, on those occasions that he cannot be in attendance, a program of spiritual study can be used. This "Formation Programme" is offered to assist the Grand Knight and the Council.

We are indeed fortunate to have received permission from the State of Alberta, to use the 26th Edition of their Formation Programme. I wish to thank Alberta's State Deputy, Gary Johnson and State Chaplain, Fr. Henry Rosenbaum, for allowing us to share this program with all the Knights in Saskatchewan. Please use this program to strengthen the faith of our Members and of our Councils so that we are prepared to go out and spread the good news through our actions.

Recently Sask. State Chaplain Bishop Bayda reminded the State Board that "... we are all called to lives of Holiness." I pray that the use of this Formation Programme will lead us to better live our Faith and experience the joy of the Risen Lord.

Vivat Jesus!

Edward Gibney
Saskatchewan State Deputy



Sacraments,

St. Augustin said once "The word enjoins the element and makes it to a sacrament." A statement that could well be easily remembered, but what does it all mean? We see often the externals but forget the inner meaning. That is the purpose of our programme: to make our Catholic life more meaningful, more graced by the spirit and therefore more effective in our action.

May your life and that of our families be enriched and fulfilled by the grace of the sacraments.

Vivat Jesus!

Henry H. Rosenbaum, SAC, State Chaplain



September 2011 Meeting Christ the Primordial Sacrament

Opening Prayer

Lord, teach us to pray:
Our Father...

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 overcome it. And 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 eternal word becomes flesh. God's word is not only sound and reverberation, music to our ears but it is living creation; the word became flesh, it became the person of Christ, someone to touch, to experience, to love as a human being. So Christ is the word and grace of God who came into this world and is still there through his Church, which we call the body of Christ.

If the sacraments confer grace through Christ is this primordial sacrament given to us by God at the beginning of time as word, in time as the human being of Christ and continues in the Church.

During his lifetime Christ gave himself in his healing, his teaching, his calling people to

holiness and the only condition was to accept him and his word as message of God. "He was," as St. Vincent Pallotti states, "the Apostle of the Eternal Father." In his death on the cross, Christ gave himself in the last sacramental action to all of humanity. The preface of the Sacred Heart tells us:

"Lifted high on the cross, Christ gave his life for us, so much did he love us. From his wounded side flowed blood and water, the fountain of **sacramental life** in the Church."

Now we see that the sacraments are signs of God's love for us, his life in us and a pledge of future glory. If there is any hope for the world it is to accept the Grace of God through the sacraments Christ gave us.

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, we rejoice in your gifts of love which we have received through your son, the living word. Open our hearts to share his life and continue to bless us with his love.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

October 2011 Meeting

The Sacrament as signs of the Church and Salvation

Opening Prayer

Lord teach us to pray:
Our Father...

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 of 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. And we speak about them not with words taught by human wisdom, but with words taught by the Spirit, describing spiritual realities in spiritual terms.

(1 Corinthians 2, 6-13)

The Reflection

(to be read by the leader)

The Eastern Churches, Orthodox as well as Catholics call the sacraments: mysteries. As in the Roman Rite the priest calls out after the consecration: This is the mystery of Faith! Faith and Sacraments belong to each other. That also indicates the Latin word sacramentum from which our word sacrament is derived. It was originally used indicating a soldier's oath of allegiance, and indicated a rite of initiation. So we see that Faith and Dedication lead us to

following Christ through passion and cross into the Easter mystery.

Since according to St. Augustine sacraments are the “sensible forms of grace” there has to be a sign instituted by Christ to confer grace. The signs are usually accompanied by words which might be directly from scripture or from the tradition of the Church. The Church has always considered herself as the custodian of the sacraments. And the meaning would be lost without the churches custody; particularly the number seven which were mentioned in the “Apostolic Tradition” = Didache. In the first century A. D. Formally the number was established in the twelfth century. Today we organize them around their function. The three Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, confirmation (Chrismation) Eucharist. In the Eastern Churches and the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) all three sacraments are administered in one ritual action.

Second the sacraments of Healing. As broken human beings we are in need of penance for our sins in the sacrament of reconciliation and the brokenness of our body should be supported by the sacrament of Anointing. The third group are the sacraments of service to the community. Ordination to the sacred service and marriage for the grace to Family Life.

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 heavenly Father, you sent your son, to bring us your grace and lead us through the mystery of faith, to the grace of our final union with you. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen

November 2011 Meeting

The First Sacrament of Initiation: Baptism

Opening Prayer

Lord teach us to pray:
Our Father...

The Reading

(to be read by the Leader)

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted. Then Jesus approached and said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always until the end of the age."

(Matthew 28, 16-20)

The Reflection

(to be read by the leader)

We just have heard the command of Christ to his disciples to baptise and to teach as the legacy he left to them before he ascended to heaven. This legacy contains the mission of the Church through the centuries. The invocation of the Holy Trinity accompanies the sign of water.

There were baptismal practices before the apostolic times e.g. the baptism of John, but John's baptism was only a sign it had no power to confer grace.

Today baptism is practiced by immersion or by pouring or sprinkling on of water. The water indicated the cleansing of the body as a sign of God's grace, cleansing the soul. All sins are forgiven through this sacrament: from original sin which connects us to the fall at the beginning of humanity to every of our personal sins which we have committed.

Baptism also initiates us into the Church community. We become members of a new family, the family of God, the community of all the baptised, therefore we all have responsibilities to live a Christian life, not only the parents and god-parents, as an example to all other baptised people. We have to teach through our life style.

The ordinary ministers of baptism are the bishops, priests and deacons. But in extraordinary circumstances everybody even an unbaptised person can do so if one wants to do what the Church does. Do you know what to do in an emergency baptism? The English languages use for baptism sometimes the word Christening = giving a Christian name. No matter what fanciful name parents want to give their children there should be always a name of a saint to be an example to the child and a heavenly protector.

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,
Lord God, in baptism we die with Christ to rise again in him. Strengthen us by your spirit to walk in the newness of life as your adopted children. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.
Amen

December 2011 Meeting The Second Sacrament of Initiation: Confirmation

Opening Prayer

Lord teach us to pray:
Our Father...

The Reading

(to be read by the Leader)

Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they send them Peter and John, who went down and prayed for them, that they might receive the holy Spirit, for it had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. So when they had testified and proclaimed the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem and preached the good news to many Samaritan villages.

(Acts 8, 14-17, 25)

The Reflection

(to be read by the leader)

Confirmation or Chrismation as the Eastern Churches call this sacrament is the special gift of the Holy Spirit to receive his gifts to be sealed for a Christian life in the world. The sign is twofold: anointing with Chrism and laying on of hands. Again these signs not only give the gifts of the Spirit but also confirm you deeper into the Church community as the first letter of Peter says: "but you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (I Pet 2, 9). The holy chrism connects us as members from a parish community to a wider diocesan community.

The Bishop has blessed the Chrism and usually the bishop administers confirmation it may also be done by a priest. The grace which is given through this sacrament is the power of the Holy Spirit to strengthen the person for Christian witness in everyday life.

Today some people look upon this sacrament only as a kind of youth- dedication but it is far from being just a religious act for young adults, it is truly a sacrament which confers grace.

Do you remember your own confirmation? The date, the bishop or priest who confirmed you? Does the Holy Spirit play any role in your prayer life? Have a look at the logo of the IV degree. By confirmation you have been made a missionary of the Church. Spread the message of hope.

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,
Lord, fulfill your promise. Send your Holy Spirit to make us witnesses before the world to the good news proclaimed by Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

January 2012 Meeting

The Third Sacrament of Initiation: The Eucharist

Opening Prayer

Lord teach us to pray:
Our Father...

The Reading

(to be read by the Leader)

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.

(I Cor. II, 23-26)

The Reflection

(to be read by the leader)

This sacrament shows the epitomy of God's love for us. In this sacrament we not receive not only some grace, but the fullness of Grace, in Christ itself.

The Eucharist can be described in many ways but it is basically the one sacrifice of Christ on the cross made present, the memorial of his death and resurrection, the bond of unity and charity for the church, a paschal banquet in which the body and blood of Christ is consumed under the signs of consecrated bread and wine.

In the celebration of the Eucharist we have two tables. The table of the word (ambo), and the table of bread and wine (altar), both belong together.

The action is being done by the bishop or priest as presider who act in the person of Christ supported by the whole congregation and all the special liturgical ministers available. This is the Sacrament of Sacraments the true thanksgiving (eucharistia) the presence of Christ in our lives and out hearts.

Again we ask ourselves what is my personal relationship to Christ in this sacrament. Do I really believe when the minister of communion says "The Body (The Blood) of Christ" Do I express my belief when I say-Amen (Yes I do).

Of the prophet Elijah is said that with the strength of God's food he wandered to Mount Horeb to see God pass by. Here we have God himself as food on our pilgrimage through Life. This should give us strength to master all difficulties.

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

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus Christ, you gave us the Eucharist as the memorial of your suffering and death. May our worship of this sacrament of your body and blood help us to experience the salvation you won for us and the peace of the kingdom where you live with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and God, for ever and ever Amen.

February 2012 Meeting

The First Sacrament of Healing: Reconciliation

Opening Prayer

Lord teach us to pray:
Our Father...

The Reading

(to be read by the Leader)

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples* were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. [Jesus] said to them again, "Peace be with you As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."

(John 20, 19-23)

The Reflection

(to be read by the leader)

The sacrament of Reconciliation is the direct outcome of the Pascal Mystery. On Easter Jesus entrusted the disciples with the forgiveness of sins. Jesus had died for the sins of all humanity from the beginning till the end of time. The fruit of this grace is the Forgiveness of Sins. The result of Christ's reconciliation is as he expresses it: Peace. Peace with God, peace with our sisters and brothers, peace with the universe.

The Priest again acts in the person of Christ- "I absolve your sins." And he uses the same Trinitarian formula: In the name of our father etc. We see the connection between the baptism and reconciliation.

We call this sacrament also 'Penance' because contrition before and an act of penance afterwards. I am sorry, I am forgiven, I make up for my sins.

In the early Church Reconciliation was a sacrament only once in a lifetime given and consisted of the "public" confession of sins, a year or more long

Penance and the "Public" Reconciliation on Holy Thursday by the Bishop. Later in the early middle ages through the practise of the monks, the confession and penance became private and was repeated according to the situation of the sinner. For this reason the sacrament is called also: Confession.

The matter to be confessed are all serious (mortal) sins. One may confess also the lesser sins and imperfections. The priest will give a short exhortation to help the confessing person to improve their spiritual life.

Since in the precepts of the Church we are asked to receive the sacrament at least once a year if we have committed a mortal sin. We have come to the practice to prepare ourselves for confession in a communal celebration or penitential service. We should make use of this service which is usually done before Easter and Christmas.

Be reconciled in Christ!

Meditation Period

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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;

Lord, hear the prayers of those who call on you, forgive the sins of those who confess to you, and in your merciful love give us your pardon and peace, we ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

March 2012 Meeting

The Second Sacrament of Healing: Anointing of the Sick

Opening Prayer

Lord teach us to pray:
Our Father...

The Reading (to be read by the Leader)

Is anyone among you sick? He should summon the presbyters of the church, and they should pray over him and anoint (him) with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed any sins, he will be forgiven.

(James 5, 14-15)

The Reflection (to be read by the leader)

The reading which we always hear at the celebration of this sacrament makes its meaning very clear. It is for sick persons and healing of body and soul. (Forgiveness of sins). The signs are laying on of hands and the anointing with the Oil for the sick, either blessed by the Bishop during the Chrism- mass or by the Priest who administers the sacrament. The oil a symbol of healing is being applied to the forehead and the hands or any other part of the body which is diseased or gives pain.

When should we receive this sacrament? The ritual tells us at three occasions:

- 1) Serious illness (repeated at any new crisis)
- 2) Before not after, an operation and
- 3) In debilitating old age.

This sacrament is very often given in hospitals or during mass in a communal celebration on the Day for the sick (February 11-Memorial of our Lady of Lourdes).

The sacrament is not really for the dying, although it is being administered then too. The sacrament to prepare us for death is the Viaticum - Holy Communion as food for the journey, to heaven.

There are also prayers for the dying during death and a blessing and prayers after death. As Catholics we should be aware of the spiritual needs of our sick sisters and brothers. We should visit them, pray for them. I am still grateful for all the prayers and visits which I received when I was seriously ill a few years ago.

Be also vigilant to alert the Parish Priest or the hospital Chaplain when you are aware of anybody who is sick.

May this sacrament be a consolation and healing for all our sick.

Meditation Period

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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 compassion, you take every family under your care and know our physical and spiritual needs. Transform our weakness by the strength of your grace and confirm us in your covenant so that we may grow in faith and love. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

April 2012 Meeting The First Sacrament of Service: Ordination

Opening Prayer

Lord teach us to pray:
Our Father...

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."

(Hebrews 5, 1-6)

The Reflection

(to be read by the leader)

The Sacrament of Ordination (or Holy Orders) is administered in three steps the ordination to the diaconate (transitional or permanent), to the priesthood, and the episcopacy.

We all have an image of a priest how he should love and teach and preach and deal with the members of his congregation. Our relationship to Priests, Deacons and Bishops has been shaped by the experience with the real persons in our lives. The extremes are that we put them as saints already on the altar or use them as foot mats for our anger and frustration. The reading told us the priest is "taken from men," he is a human being first. He is a "representative of the people before God." He prays and offers sacrifices. Or as Vatican II teaches about Bishops: They are there to teach, to sanctify and rule. The priests participate in this three fold task under the direction of the Bishop. What do these three

things mean- To teach means the proclamation of the good news in scripture and homily which really means translating the scripture for guidance in our time. The mission of spreading the word where it is unknown, missionary efforts. Sanctify means being vessels of God's grace for their people, leading them to a life of holiness by example and sacrament. And ruling means being shepherds, administrators of the church community, pillars of morals and standards of Christian living.

All ordained should be living examples of Christ, the good shepherd. Ordination (as baptism and confirmation) impress an indelible sign on the soul, that these sacraments brand a person for the community of Christ, they belong to him, forever.

Pray for Vocations to the priesthood, for their perseverance in priestly life and their loving care for the people entrusted to them.

Meditation Period

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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 have taught the ministers of your Church not to desire to be served but to serve their sisters and brothers. May they be effective in their work and persevering in their prayer, performing their ministry with gentleness and concern for others. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

May 2012 Meeting Second Sacrament of Service: Matrimony

Opening Prayer

Lord teach us to pray:
Our Father...

The Reading

(to be read by the Leader)

Be subordinate to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives should be subordinate for their husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is head of his wife just as Christ is head of the Church, he himself the savior of the body. As the church is subordinate to Christ, so wives, should be subordinate to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and handed himself over to her to sanctify her, cleansing her by the bath of water with the word, that he might present to himself the church in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. So (also) husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one hates his own flesh but rather nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body.

“For this reason a man shall leave (his) father and (his) mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the church. In any case, each one of you should love his wife as himself, and the wife should respect her husband.

(Ephesians 5, 21-33)

The Reflection

(to be read by the leader)

St. Paul compares the relationship of husband and wife to the relationship between Christ and the Church. That is the reason why marriage is a sacrament and not only a civic or family arrangement. The mutual love between Christ and his Church is the basis of the mutual love of husband and wife. The sacrament is administered by the two people getting married before a qualified witness- the

Priest or Deacon and two witnesses. It may take place within or without the Eucharist.

Since marriage mirrors the love of Christ to his Church which lasts to the end of time. Marriage lasts till one of the partners dies. The Church gives permission to partners of a broken marriage, if it can be proven and is certified by a decree of nullity that the previous marriage was invalid. There is no divorce because of the oneness of a couple in marriage. The sacrament gives special grace to the married couple not only to sustain their mutual love but also to receive and educate children in the Catholic Faith, and to support each other in their Christian life and Faith to bring each other to eternal life. We should consider that marriage is a divine plan of God the creator as Christ points out “What God has joined together, let no man put as under” (Mark 10, 9).

Marriage as any other Christian lifestyle needs a Vocation. Not everybody is called to married life. And we have many single vocations in the Church. There are special safe guards for mixed (two different denominations) marriages in which the religious education of the children is the responsibility of the Catholic party. Let us always pray for all married couples that their mutual love is a sign of the love of Christ for his Church.

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, you created man and woman to love each other in the bond of marriage. Bless all married people. May their marriage become an increasingly more perfect sign of the union between Christ and his Church. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

June 2012 Meeting Sacramentals - Blessings for all Occasions

Opening Prayer

Lord teach us to pray:
Our Father...

The Reading *(to be read by the Leader)*

And people were bringing children to him that he might touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this he became indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it." Then he embraced them and blessed them, placing his hands on them.

(Mark 10, 13-16)

The Reflection *(to be read by the leader)*

Sacraments are often considered mile-stones in our Christian life and we celebrate them with anniversaries and jubilees, but there should also be as one phrased it once "liturgy of the world" the sanctification of everyday life. Here we think particularly of blessings for all things and occasions which the Church gives us as a sign for God's blessing mediated through the Church. One of the most used sacramentals is holy water which reminds us on our baptism and the grace filled dew from heaven.

The Church has given us an official Book of Blessings which contains blessings of persons e.g. those who go on a journey; blessings of things, e.g. a car or blessings of places e.g. a children's play ground and blessings on certain feasts of saints and seasons e.g. Blessing of the Advent Wreath, the nativity scene, the wine on the Feast of John the Evangelist, the houses on Epiphany, the candles on Candlemass, Feb 2nd and many more.

Some of the devotional things like crosses, Rosaries and holy pictures are blessed very often. Through these blessings these items are

taken out of the realm of earthly things into the realm of religion.

We can also count our Funeral Rites to these sacramentals. The sprinkling with holy water, the commendation, the rites at the grave all those are sacramental's accompany the body (or ashes) to its resting place.

May our whole life always be blessed by the grace of God and the intercession of the Church.

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
Lord God, in your great mercy, enrich your people with your grace and strengthen them by your blessing so that they may praise you always and everywhere. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer for the Canonization of Father Michael J. McGivney

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 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.

Become a member of the Father McGivney Guild.

Vocation Prayer

Loving 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