

(Reverend Father,) Worthy GK, My Brothers All:

I bring you greetings from our Worthy State Deputy Ed Haynes. I want to gratefully acknowledge the SD for placing his trust in me as his Deputy for this district, and I commit to you, that I will - with your help - do all that I can to live up to that trust. I also thank the generosity and fraternal spirit of Tom Devlin for returning as our District Warden. His return to the District enables my enthusiasm for working with all of you councils in District 27 this year. The SD's motto is "Living Our Faith" and throughout the year we will talk about different ways we can do just that.

(As your own GK can tell you,) we just came off of a great weekend in Emmittsburg, at the Grand Knights' Seminar. It was there I learned that in addition to being the head Columbian Knight in MD, Ed Haynes is also a Knight of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. These Knights are especially dedicated to establishing peace in the Holy Land, and Ed Haynes brought to the GK seminar two dynamic speakers who are on the State Team. They spoke of the need for councils to sponsor orphan children from the Holy Land. (Your GK will be able to provide further information if you're interested, but for right now) I highly encourage you to invite either of these men to visit your social meeting or even your parish council, and to talk about the Holy Land Orphan Children program. For a mere fifty dollars per year, each council can have a hand in District 27 sponsoring Christian education and health care for one of these parent-less children who live in the land where Christ lived. Please consider this worthy charity.

It may be no surprise that Ed Haynes' focus this year will be on Membership, and so we will be discussing this topic nearly every month. **Membership is what keeps our Order afloat, so don't let the water run out!** Remember that **every time you recruit or retain a member, you strengthen our Brotherhood.** Recruiting and retention are not merely duties; **we are obligated** to share with others the rewards and the benefits of Knighthood that we ourselves enjoy. The State **membership Blitz this year will be from Sep 1 to Oct 8**, and your F/S should order the appropriate recruiting materials immediately if he has not already done so. I highly encourage you to take advantage of the State Membership Team in your drive this year. The Cardinal has written a strong, new letter to diocesan parishioners, asking men to consider joining the KofC, and this letter you can put in your parish bulletin. New this year: In addition to the Shining Armor Award from Supreme to new members who complete some very simple tasks within their first year of membership, State Council has developed a corresponding program for current members, called the Silver Knight Award program. This is an award for current members who successfully recruit two new members sometime during the year. State has created an attractive button for this award, and I'll tell you this: I often give credit for new recruits to my brother council members, but **my first two recruits this year I'm keeping, so I can earn my Silver Knight Award. I encourage you all to do the same.** I have many more things to discuss regarding membership, but for now I want to leave you with my two main philosophies about membership: First, my brothers, **make every activity a recruiting and a retention opportunity, by having recruiting material available at your activity, and by inviting a member that you haven't seen lately to your activity.** Second, it may be hard to believe, but it is true: **People are anxious and willing to spend their time, money, and efforts on organizations that appear positive and successful**, although similarly, they avoid organizations that appear unsuccessful – so my brothers, I implore you to make every contact positive, and every activity a success!

You can see the web site calendar for upcoming State Council activities, such as: the State Softball Tourney at Carroll County Sports Complex; F/S Seminars; This council's officers are invited to a **Membership & Program Seminar Thurs, Aug 24** at St Andrew Kim Church, off 108 in Olney – and **this event, all your program officers are invited** to; the Testimonial Dinner

for IPSD Ron White; the State Picnic – who here has participated in a State-wide activity before? Whether you have gone to a State Council activity or not, if you're going to take part in any this year, please consider the State Picnic at Cabin John Park near Rockville; you can bring your family, it's cheap, and it's lots of fun. After that we have the Columbus Day Ball in Glen Burnie, and the Parade in Baltimore (always a great experience). These I have information on now, plus more that I'll save for future meetings.

In order to meet membership objectives for the state, I have set my own personal goals. This year one of my goals is to look at every activity of every council, and try to promote them within our district. For example, suppose we have only one council in the district this year that plans a couples' dance, or one council is short on manpower for a fundraiser – **You and the other councils will hear about it from me.** One way I plan to provide this information is, with the help of my own council's Webmaster (Resurrection DGK Drew Scurachio), to create a District web page, which will emphasize the activities of the councils. Why would I do this? It goes back to what we said about strengthening our councils. Like I said before, if councils hold successful activities, these are things that other men will want to be a part of.

I have taken the liberty of ordering Tootsie Rolls for the annual Mentally Handicapped fundraiser. Brothers, I'd like you to consider who your recipient is this year, and ask you to invite members of that organization to join you in our collection efforts.

I also want to mention how critical it is that this and other councils sponsor at least one degree this year. **Degrees are not only the links that bind every brother to one another; Degrees are the tools that teach and remind us why we joined the Knights in the first place.** Experience has shown me that those men who take the time to sponsor and observe degrees AFTER becoming full-fledged knights, THEY have absolutely the best records for recruiting new members. I believe sponsoring one or more degrees at your council is a critical element, a key, to a successful membership program: It's **good for both retention as well as recruitment.** Sponsoring a degree takes nothing more than a little bit of paperwork, some food for the degree team, and a place to hold the degree (we have two out of three of those right now!). I have this council scheduled for (the 5th of October), but please let me know if you need to change that.

One quick reminder: the Annual Trustee Audit results are due by August 15. (I also need to know the date you plan to hold your Council Officer installation, I need confirmation that the council officers can attend the Program seminar on the 24th, some idea of when we can hold a District meeting, and a commitment from you on a district ad for the Columbus Day Ball program).

In closing, I read on the Supreme web site that yesterday William Cardinal Keeler celebrated Mass – not so unusual you say? Well, he did so in Orlando, Florida, at the Supreme K/C Convention, going on this week. This was one of the few times this year that the Cardinal has left the state – one other time was to visit Pope Benedict. Can anyone wonder in what **esteem Cardinal Keeler holds for Knights** or question where the Knights fit among the Cardinal's priorities? That is a point you should feel free to make when talking to prospective members.

Brothers, thank you for your attention. Please pray a decade of the rosary every day, and be sure daily to be, Living Our Faith.