
My BROTHER KNIGHTS



On the occasion of Carl A. Anderson's appointment as Supreme Knight succeeding Virgil C. Dechant who had filled this position these past twenty-five years, I want to pay tribute to the Knights of Columbus, especially those in the Diocese of Edmundston. At the same time I want to mention the priorities which the new Supreme Knight hopes to carry out.

DECISIVE PRIORITIES

Following a greeting filled with respect and loyalty Mr. Anderson writes: « *My administration will be dedicated to Our Lady, and in honor of the Synod of America it will be dedicated to her under her title of our Lady of Guadalupe.... I pledge my administration to bringing the resources of our Order to promote devotion to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. In this way we will complement and continue to promote vocations to the priesthood and devotion to the mother of Our Lord.*

The year 2002 will mark the 150th anniversary of the birth of Father McGivney. We will promote vocations to the priesthood and religious life during the next two years in honor of this anniversary. We will explore new ways of doing so by nurturing vocations... In the days ahead we will strive for greater solidarity with our priests and bishops so that each of them will experience the Knights of Columbus as that shining example of faithful lay people envisioned by Pope John Paul II in his 1989 apostolic exhortation "Christifideles Laici"

THE FOUNDER'S DREAM

Mr. Anderson continues in these words: « *We continue to pursue the dream of our founder, Father Michael J. McGivney, because like him we are dedicated to serving the Church at the parish level in its pastoral mission to the people of God... Membership must continue to be of the greatest priority if we are to continue in this new century to be the strong right arm of the Church... We must open wide the doors to our council homes and meeting rooms to more and more Hispanic Catholics, Asian Catholics and Catholics of African descent. We have nothing less than a moral obligation to realistically offer every eligible Catholic man the opportunity and the privilege of membership in the Knights of Columbus.*

A PEOPLE OF LIFE AND A PEOPLE FOR LIFE

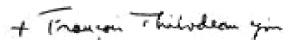
We will review and update our pro-life materials, and we will begin to build new pro-life and pro-family initiatives at every level of the organization. At the same time, we will continue our partnership with the pro-life activities of our various bishops' conferences and with the Holy See... By establishing closer links between the Order and every parish, we must establish links between the order and every Catholic school. Let our Catholic students learn from us lessons in patriotism, civic responsibility, and community service. The youth of our countries are looking for guides whom they can admire and from whom they can learn. What better men to be guides than our brother knights. We will succeed in this endeavor only if we pray and collaborate together in order to bring out to the maximum the potential of our order. »

ADMIRATION AND HOPE

In addressing my brother knights in the diocese I want to tell them how much this letter of the Supreme Knight is for each of them an ideal to be pursued day by day. Following the Order's founder, Father McGivney, Mr. Anderson stresses that the Order is founded on Baptism which makes us "Christ's disciples". How important it would be for each knight to discover anew the grandeur of this sacrament and the demands it makes, in their daily lives. Mr. Anderson also mentions the Eucharist as the source of vocations: a double challenge made to all knights! Participation in this great sacrament and active work on behalf of vocations. There is also reference to the Virgin Mary: it is important that every knight have an intense faith and prayer life. Mr. Anderson notes the work done with families for the implementation of the Gospel in one's life: this too is an urgent task to which he calls the members of the Order, for the respect and the quality of all human life at each stage of its development. Our diocese has only public schools, a difference from the United States, but the need is the same to guarantee our children quality family- and parish-based religious education.

MY HOPES AS BISHOP

I know that my brother knights like to recall the words of their founder: they must be "the strong right arm of the Church". This is a marvellous ideal, an outstanding privilege which we must be able to confirm and assess in the members' commitments. This is an honour but also a grave responsibility which can be substantiated. The Lord who fathoms hearts and minds knows the degree of commitment of each one, their intentions, their projects. Many activities are carried out "in secret", activities which only the Father knows of: prayer, almsgiving, aid to others... and He is happy that this be so. The Gospel should be lived in the daily activities of the home and the parish: on the move. So much the better if it has consequences on the outside, as long as the glory of God is sought first and foremost. It is important that my brother knights in the diocese continue to show interest in and promote Church life, especially through support of our family- and parish-based religious education programmes, as well as aid to the needy and youth, and commitment to future priests. May Mr. Anderson's letter stimulate our enthusiasm, fraternity, and apostolic commitment. With the agreement of their local authorities, may they continue their community commitment as they are now doing so well. May Supreme Knight Anderson's letter awaken their fraternity, and their apostolic enthusiasm.



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Bishop of Edmundston

« From A Bishop's Journal » (361) (13 December 2000)