



18 October 2021

Dear Brothers in Christ,

As we conclude the Year of St. Joseph, I know that many of you are looking for ways to grow in your faith and become more active in our Catholic Church. I invite you to consider membership in the Knights of Columbus as a means of achieving both of those goals. In the years that I have been involved with the Knights, and particularly in the years since my ordination as a bishop, I have come to appreciate the many ways in which the organization not only bears fruit for its members (me included) and their families, but also strengthens the local Church and its parishes.

Since its founding in 1882 by Blessed Michael McGivney in a single Connecticut parish, the Knights of Columbus have grown into a global organization with nearly two million members. Last year, despite the challenges of the pandemic, the Knights donated more than \$150 million to charity and provided more than 47 million volunteer hours of hands-on charitable service! It would be hard to imagine a more significant response to Pope Francis' call to "overcome our fear of getting our hands dirty so as to help those in need."

The shared commitment to serve is strengthened by the extraordinary fraternal support that has always been a hallmark of the Knights of Columbus. While there is a seriousness in their shared purpose and priorities, most especially in their defense of life, religious liberty, and the family, the Knights always seem to enjoy each other's company. I can honestly say that I have never been with the Knights and not had a great time. It is amazing how Christ-centered men can so joyfully inspire one another to be better husbands, fathers, friends, citizens, and Catholics. I know that the Knights have inspired me to be a better priest and bishop. With that in mind, I regularly encourage our seminarians and priests to stay close to the Knights.

Given the breadth of the membership, moreover, I would suspect that any Catholic man could find himself at home with the Knights—praying with them, serving with them, laughing with them, and growing with them.

For all of the above reasons, I strongly encourage each man in this Archdiocese over the age of 18 to prayerfully consider joining the ranks of this fine organization. My experience suggests that it may be just the boost that you need—and what our Church needs as well!

With every best wish and prayer, I remain,

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Bernard A. Hebda
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis