

Brother Knights and Ladies,

My son, who is an officer in the Navy, recently discussed an article that talked about the practical attributes of a good soldier: honor, competence, and commitment. That conversation made me think about what makes a good Catholic and a good Knight: there are three theological or supernatural virtues: faith, hope, and love (1 Cor 13:13) and four natural or cardinal virtues: wisdom, justice, courage, and temperance. (Wisdom 8:7) "Life," we read there, "can offer us nothing more valuable than these." From these primordial virtues spring corollary virtues, enabling us to discern and to do that which is good, true, and pleasing to God.

These reminded me of the four pillars of being a Knight of Columbus: charity, unity, fraternity, and **PATRIOTISM**. This contemplation is because I have been thinking a lot about recruiting Brother Knights and what my response would be if someone asked what being a 4th Degree Sir Knight means to me.

At its base, it is not about recognition, it is not about the memorial program or being a member of the honor guard or color corps (which are amazing by the way). It is my conviction that my own welfare and that of my family, my Church, and my Country are dependent upon the preservation and expansion of the culture and influence of the groups that I am part of. I would give up all that I have for my family, my Church, and my Country.

How does becoming a 4th Degree Brother Sir Knight help me to be a patriotic American? It starts by giving me an avenue to be a good example for my family and those that I interact with. It provides me the opportunity to serve those who have and are currently serving this great Nation so that I have the freedom to live, practice, and evangelize ("promote" for those who don't like the term "evangelize") Catholicism. It offers countless opportunities to give of my time, talents, and treasures in partnership with the Veterans Administration, the USO, joint activities with the VFW, helping to establish a post for the Catholic War Veterans (www.cwvusa.org) locally (more on this exciting opportunity later), to educate in schools, and other opportunities only limited by our members imagination and desire to serve. **You get so much more in return than what you give.**

I view Catholicism and Patriotism side by side. As Brother Sir Knights we educate our members and others in the teachings of Holy Mother Church and how those teachings are intertwined in the history of our nation. We work to preserve and promote our Church and our Republic form of government and its democratic institutions. We support by word and deed the duly constituted authorities of the Church and of our local, state, and national government.

What are the costs and benefits? With recent changes the costs for the upcoming 4th Degree Exemplification are marginal - there is no tuxedo rental required if you own a dark suit, and the annual organization dues are minimal. The benefits – **ETERNAL!**

Please consider becoming a 4th Degree Knight of Columbus and for those that already are, please share what it means to you and bring someone in so that they can share in the benefits.

Best Regards,

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Faithful Navigator