

# Tennessee State Council August Newsletter

This is my first newsletter as State Deputy. Over the months, the State Council newsletter will feature articles by others, as well. Hopefully, future newsletters will be flashier, with pictures, and with a more appealing format. But this month it is pretty much a solo effort.

In this newsletter, I am going to share with you my theme for the year, “Be the Quarterback,” some recruiting tips picked up at the District 17 meeting, a story from the Supreme Convention in Denver, and a commentary from a military appreciation mass and breakfast.



## Be the Quarterback

I like the idea of having a theme for the year. Bob Rounsefell’s theme of “responsibility” was a good one. We are nothing if we do not accept the responsibility that has been entrusted to us.

I have chosen the theme of “Be the Quarterback” for the 2011 to 2012 fraternal year. I want all the Knights of Columbus in Tennessee to Be the Quarterback this year.

What does it mean to Be the Quarterback? It is best to begin by explaining what is not meant by Be the Quarterback. It is not about always winning. Sure, in movies the quarterback usually leads the team to victory. But, in real life for every quarterback that completes a touchdown pass, another quarterback is sacked. For every quarterback who wins a game, another quarterback loses a game. So, while winning is good, there is more to being a quarterback than winning the game. If you doubt this, consider the career of Archie Manning.

I want you to Be the Quarterback for four reasons:

- Quarterbacks are team players,
- Quarterbacks are leaders,
- Quarterbacks are motivators, and
- Quarterbacks must give to succeed.

First and foremost quarterbacks are team players. In football, it takes the unified play of a team to create success. Without the blocking of an offensive line, a play is doomed. A quarterback, without an offensive line playing together, is one play away from the emergency room. But, the team is more than the 11 players on offense. The quarterback relies on others when he isn’t on the field. The defense and special teams must also play together.

So it is with the Knights of Columbus. A Grand Knight can plan a storefront drive for the mentally handicapped, but if the council members do not come out to work it, the drive fails. A

membership director can recruit potential members, but if the members do not welcome the men as brothers, they will lose interest and give their time to others. First and foremost, we as Knights of Columbus must work as a team.

While a quarterback is a member of the team, he must also be the leader of the team. It is the quarterback who calls or changes the play, a play that will succeed or fail. A running back may be crucial to the success of a play, but he does not call the play. The council leaders must be willing to call or (some even more difficultly) must be willing to change the plays. We cannot guarantee that every play you call will be successful. On the contrary, some will fail. But we can guarantee you that if you don't call the plays, if you don't make decisions, and if you don't do anything, your council will not be successful.

A quarterback must motivate. We have all seen the movies, where the quarterback says just the right thing to get the team to make one last play, where he motivates the team to win the game. As members in the Knights of Columbus, we must be motivators as well. That does not necessarily mean giving rah-rah speeches if that is not your style. Some motivate by example. The Grand Knight who collects money in the rain for the mentally handicapped motivates a council as effectively as Dale Carnegie ever could.

Finally, and most importantly, a quarterback succeeds by using the gifts he has been given. A quarterback walks to the line of scrimmage with nothing in his hands. It is only after the center gives him a gift, the football, that the play can begin.

What the quarterback does with this gift, the football, is instructive.

He can keep the ball. He can run the ball every single time, and the team may enjoy some success. But, over time, the defense will adapt. The play will be stopped.

But, if the quarterback gives his gift away -- if he gives the ball to a running back or if he throws the ball to a wide receiver -- the team has a greater chance to succeed.

As members of the Knights of Columbus, you must use your gifts. God gave us all certain talents. As St. Paul so eloquently noted, we don't all have the same gifts, but we must use the gifts we have been given for the good of our family, our council, and the church.



### **Recruiting Tips**

We all know about the importance of recruiting new members. But, we don't talk much about how to recruit effectively. What are the mechanics of an effective recruiting program? I want each newsletter to pass along recruiting tips that are being used by councils across Tennessee. By no means am I an expert on recruiting, far from it. So, I am going to need your help. Send Ray Meadows, the State Membership Director, or me things that your councils are doing to

recruit new members. We will feature them in the newsletter and borrow, adapt, or steal as appropriate.

On Monday, August 8, Jim Bruun (my ace Administrative Assistant) and I made the short trip to Lenoir City to attend DD Jerry Dougherty's meeting for District 17. District 17 consists of Council 3175, Oak Ridge; Council 3832, Alcoa; Council 8781, Farragut; and Council 12633, Lenoir City. I learned that several of the councils work closely with the parish and are informed when new families join the parish. The councils send each new family a welcome card or a packet of information about the Knights. The councils then follow up with the men of the new families about joining the Knights. I would note that the information packets include information about the Order's insurance program.

Council 3175 has found a council program to be an unexpected recruiting tool. The Council sponsored a men's bible study as a way to help men in the parish learn more about their faith. Most of the council's new members over the past year have been men who attended this bible study.

Also, one of the councils in District 17 has already contacted its pastor about conducting its first weekend recruiting drive. It is never too early to plan for membership.

Finally, Council 12633 was trying to determine the opportunity to start a roundtable at a small neighboring parish.

Will any of these ideas work in your council? Does your council have any ideas that will help these councils? Let us know.



### **From the Supreme Convention**

The Supreme Convention this year was held in Denver, Colorado. I have no idea what Denver is like in the winter. But, in the summer, Denver is a great place to be. We have all heard the saying, "It's not the heat, it's the humidity." Well, in Denver the humidity is low. This makes for great "Chamber of Commerce" summer days. And the Chamber of Commerce rolled out a series of great summer days for the Knights.

During the Supreme Convention, there are no scheduled activities on Wednesday evening. This allows each state delegation to go out to dinner as a group. We went to the Buckhorn Exchange. The Buckhorn Exchange is the oldest restaurant in Denver. It has an exotic menu, featuring yak, elk, buffalo, quail, alligator, and (unfortunately) rocky mountain oysters.

Several of us, led by Mike Porter, decided to travel to the Buckhorn Exchange by taking Denver's light rail system. The light rail system is in between a subway and Chicago's "L." It is

above ground, but it is not elevated. I don't know about you, but the first time I use public transportation in a new city, I find that the automated ticket machines can be a little intimidating.

We hit the Denver light rail ticket kiosk during rush hour and promptly looked like the tourists we were. We couldn't find where we going on the system map, we tried to buy tickets, we cancelled purchases, and we watched trains go by. Finally, a gentleman came forward and offered to help. I realized how special this was going to be when I saw the red tip of his white cane. He asked me to direct his fingers to the braille keys and to turn on the audio directions for him. Within 30 seconds this blind man showed those who could "see" how to buy the tickets we needed. There was never a better example of charity or of the blind (physically) leading the blind (figuratively).

In the next few newsletters, there will be other stories from the Supreme Convention, stories about going out for German food, the saints and sinners tour, pitching horseshoes, the Cardinal and the server, and the ins and outs of convention software.



### **A Military Appreciation Breakfast**

My home parish, All Saints, has a military support ministry. With the recent deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, it has become very active. For the last several years it has hosted a breakfast for veterans and their families, active duty military and their families, and the families of those who are deployed. For the last three years, the Knights of Columbus of Council 5207 cooked the pancakes and sausage, served the breakfast, and helped clean up. This is the first year I attended the breakfast. (I have found that as State Deputy I am attending several events I haven't attended before. By the way, I am still pretty good with a broom.)

Part of the program was listening to the veterans and active duty personnel talk about their service to the country and what it meant or means to them. It was inspirational to hear them speak about what they did, what our country means to them, and the importance of their faith to their service.

I knew I would be asked to speak and had prepared a few remarks. The longer they spoke, the briefer I decided my remarks needed to be. When I was called upon to speak, all I wanted to say, all I needed to say, was "On behalf of the 11,000 Knights in Tennessee, I humbly and sincerely thank you for your service and your sacrifice." These are the remarks I offer to all Knights who have served or who are serving our country.

Vivat Jesus!