

Pastor's Notes: The Knights of Columbus - Part 2 of 2

March 14, 2021

On Feb. 24, 2021, I interviewed Adam Foster, Basilica parishioner and active member of the Knights of Columbus. The first part of our interview was presented in my pastor's notes for March 7. Below is the conclusion of our interview. I encourage all Catholic men to get involved in our Fr. Patrick J. Ryan Council 610, of which I'm proud to be a member. You can find your local council at KofC.org.

Fr. Carter: What do the Knights of Columbus do?



Adam Foster (continuing his answer begun in the March 7 pastor's notes): In the coming year, we plan to do some fundraisers in support of the Under One Roof initiative at the Basilica. Something that I've been talking about doing for a while now is a Father's Day fishing tournament at our private campground, Camp Columbus. It's out across from Chester Frost Park on Lake Chickamauga. Any member of our council has access to both Camp Columbus and our clubhouse, which now we call Father Patrick Ryan Hall, which is located in North Chattanooga. If any Catholic man wants to join our council, they get access to those great facilities. Also, on the first Friday of every month, we provide a meal and go eat with the residents of the Catholic Charities Home Place. It provides people who are experiencing homelessness and AIDS with a safe place to live. Donate to Catholic Charities, and get involved with the Knights. Annually, we provide help with parking for the Special Olympics. Pretty much anytime a need arises at the Basilica, we help. We have around 200 members in our council.

Fr. Carter: It sounds like the Knights of Columbus are the strong right hand of any parish. They do a lot of the charitable work, but they also provide a lot of fraternal opportunities for men to have social time with good like-minded/valued Catholic men to grow in their faith. How would a man join the council? And what kind of man is the council looking for?

Adam Foster: To be able to join the Knights of Columbus, you have to be a practical Catholic man over the age of 18. To be a practical Catholic, you have to observe the five precepts of the Church. And if you are in good standing with the Church - if you're able to receive Communion, if you go to church when you're supposed to - you can join online now. They have online membership. Additionally, we have a group in the myParish app. Knights of Columbus 610 is the group on Facebook. Any wives that want to keep up with what we're doing, any parishioners that need to ask for help - they could come to the Facebook group and say, "Hey, a tree fell in our yard. Is anybody able to help?" and we could get a group of guys out there to help them out with whatever they need.

A Labor Day picnic is the most important fundraiser we do every year. We fund seminarians with it. We're currently helping out Nicholas Hickman, an altar server at the Basilica, currently in seminary. We've helped people with their power bills, tons of stuff.

Fr. Carter: I've called upon the Knights of Columbus on several occasions, and you all have answered the call and gone out there. And most recently, I was very impressed, when we had those tornadoes come through Chattanooga, by the response of the Knights of Columbus to go out and help people clear trees and fallen limbs and things so they can get back to their properties and start the cleanup and reconstruction of their homes that had gotten destroyed. You all jump right in, that right arm of the parish and of the community.

Adam Foster: That Labor Day picnic is really important, like any parishioners at the Basilica. Even if you don't have a family member who's a member of the Knights of Columbus, please come out to our Labor Day picnic. There's great barbecue. We stay out there at Camp Columbus all weekend and smoke the meat. It's delicious. There's a cake walk. There's all kinds of Bingo, different games, activities for kids, usually some sort of live music. The Labor Day picnic and our July 3 fireworks show are our two big fundraisers.

Fr. Carter: We're here to advertise that and let everybody know about the opportunity to have fun, have social time with their family, enjoy a good wholesome environment that the Knights of Columbus can provide, but also, through it, help fund the charitable activities of the Knights of Columbus order and help so many people beyond their own small group or community. So that's awesome. Well, Adam, thanks for taking the time to talk to us about the Knights of Columbus. I think about the history of the order. During World War One, they were known to help the troops that were over there, to give them respite for when they came off the front lines, and to give them a warm plate and a cool drink and a place to relax. During the Mexican Revolution, during the cristero movement, they were very involved in helping those Catholics who were caught up in the midst of that political turmoil to help alleviate the suffering there. And, like you mentioned, the right-to-life issues in the second half of the last century, the protecting of the sanctity of life - the list goes on. The Knights of Columbus have just been involved in the life of faith and serving our fellow human beings in the name of Christ. And it's a great thing that we want to see continue.

Adam Foster: Yes, it's been a great experience for me. I've made a lot of great friends. Since I've joined the Knights, when I've hit some hard times in my life, I've had great men there to help support me through it. And I think any Catholic man should join the Knights. It's been a great experience for me.

Fr. Carter: Well, you've been a great witness to that and a testimony just by the way you live your life, and you're definitely showing forth and exemplifying yourself the ideals of the order. Thank you for joining us, God bless you and keep up the good work.

Following the interview, Mr. Foster added that the Council 610 is a member council of the Traditional Knights Latin Mass Network: <https://www.latinmassknights.org/>. The full video and transcript of the interview is available on the Basilica's website.