



ARCHDIOCESE
OF
SAINT PAUL &
MINNEAPOLIS

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

January 8, 2018

Dear Brothers in Christ,

As we begin the new year, 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 humble beginning in a single Connecticut parish in 1882, the Knights of Columbus have grown into an organization with nearly 2 million members in 17 countries. Last year, the Knights donated more than \$177.5 million to charity and provided more than 75 million volunteer hours of charitable service worldwide! 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. 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.

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. Given the breadth of the membership, 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 in the new year.

With every best wish and prayer for a blessed 2018, I remain

Fraternally in Christ,

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