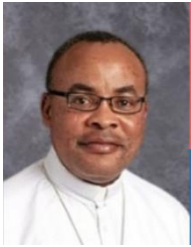




Knights Corner

FATHER SCHUMAKER COUNCIL NO. 6772 ST. ALPHONSUS PARISH
BROOKLYN CENTER, MN 55429 July & August 2023

Chaplain's Message: Fr. Marcel E. Okwara, CSsR



Dear brother Knights,

In the Book of Isaiah particularly chapters 40 to 55, we consistently find the view that God is infinitely close to us and at the same time infinitely transcendent. To demonstrate God's nearness, Isaiah says, "Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near" (55:6). In Isaiah 49:15, we read the famous quote, "Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even though she forgets, I (Yahweh) will never forget you" Why? Because "upon the palms of my hands I have engraved you" (49:16). This is how close we are to God and how close God is to us. To amplify and intensify this notion, the great St. Augustine said that "God is nearer to me than I am to myself." Where does the rubber meet the road? Where is God's closeness to us really tested? Around the problem of suffering! Suffering is a reality that affects all and sundry. Everybody suffers! Even a newborn child suffers. The first thing a child does the moment he or she is expelled from the mother's womb is to cry. Why? Because for the first time, the baby is exposed to a harsher environment. To suffer is to live in a harsh environment that can sometimes be life threatening.

Many people, including religious people often wrestle with the question: if God is infinitely close to all things, close to us, and engraves us on his palm, if God is our Father, the one who sustains us, then how in the world could God be presiding over this disaster? We are told that God is closer to us more than we are closer to ourselves, but why is he allowing us to go through suffering? The answer to this question is in the book of Isaiah: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord" (55:8). Is God close to us in our suffering? Yes, indeed! But will we understand God's purpose for allowing our suffering? Not always! Because "As high as the heavens are above the earth,

so high are my ways above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:9). loopy

Let me give this silly analogy to buttress my point. Of all the lower animals that God created, dogs are humanity's best friend. Dogs are amazing animals. When I was in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, I had a male dog named Max. I bought him as a puppy, and he grew up with me. Max knew I loved him so dearly. But there is this experience I will never forget. I took him to the veterinary doctor for regular checkups and shots. As soon as I lifted him up and placed him on the doctor's table, he started whimpering. He knew what was coming: the shots. Before the shots, the doctor wanted blood samples to run some tests. He asked me to hold Max. As soon as the doctor started to draw blood from him, my dog looked at me with this deep sadness. Without doubt, the look on his face was communicating a question like, "You that love me, why are you doing this to me?" Max knew I was his master, his friend, his companion, and care-taker, but I was at the same time presiding over his pain and suffering. The look on his face obviously means, "How could you be doing this to me?" Even though I stroked Max's back, it wasn't enough to explain to him why I was taking part in his anguish. Though I tried to talk and explain to Max that the shots are good for him, all my efforts failed to produce the desired result. When we got into the car, Max avoided me. Not until we got home and I gave him his favorite bone that he forgot about what transpired previously. There was no way I could have explained the situation to the understanding of my dog because there is a qualitative difference between his capacity to understand and my mind. There is something totally different from the way I see and imagine the world and his. This may not be a compelling example, but it's an analogy that gives us a hint of God's relationship to us. Do we go through suffering in a way that we look at God as presiding over our calamity? Yes! Do we look at God with the same look that Max gave me? Yeah!

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Parents often struggle to explain to their kids the need to take pills or injections when they are sick because they are too young to understand the purpose of the pain of injection or swallowing medicines. They are too young to understand why they should endure all that. This too is an analogy to God's relationship to us when we suffer. The problem with suffering is our inability to comprehend it. When we suffer, we question God's nearness to us. We question how could God forget us; we ask why and how God who promises never to forget us will preside over the adversity that has befallen us. But is God close to us? Absolutely, yes! Even if a mother forgets her child, God promises he will not forget us. But at the same time, let's not

forget that as high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are God's ways above our ways and God's thoughts above our thoughts." If someone asks you, "How come we suffer?" feel free to answer, *I don't know. I am like a child who does not know and understand the need to take medicine and allow shots to be given to him. But there is someone who loves me, who is present to my situation, who may not even in principle begin to make sense of it to me because of the radical difference between him and me.*

Rev. Marcel Divine Emeka Okwara, CSsR



Pictured – Left to Right
Grand Knight – George Morris
New Brother Knight – Chinedu Osuocha
New Brother Knight – Robert Morgan
Trustee – Edward Dennis



Fraternal Benefit Events

Hello Worthy Brothers and welcome to the new Fraternal year.

There is a new requirement about Fraternal Benefit Event (FBE) attendance with an interesting factor. As you know each council needs to host two FBEs every fraternal year; that has not changed but the attendance part has. Councils must have 14 members/prospects attend if they have 100 or more members assigned. 10 members/prospects must attend if they council has 99 members or fewer. The attendance number is the sum total of BOTH FBEs. This is to qualify for the Founders Award, one of six criteria for Star Council.

So if my council has 56 members, then over the two FBEs that I hold I need a sum total of 10 attendees, could be three at one and seven at the other. The Minnesota GAs will be hosting 10 ZOOM FBEs this year in addition to what Supreme may provide. There is no reason why a council should not get the Founders Award.

Why do we have these? Good question. These FBEs are done to educate our members on the products and capabilities of our Field Force. We also bring in financial and retirement experts every so often to help inform our members on the different subjects relating to Knights of Columbus products.

This is a fraternal benefit gentlemen, and the Field Force's obligation to our members to provide information on the Knights of Columbus benefits and products available to them. The FBE Calendar will be out next issue.

Call Dan Falstad today at (612) 310-5254 or email dan.falstad@kofc.org to discuss your insurance needs or for any additional information you would like about the Knights.

Council #6772 Activities

Tuesday July 4 th	Independence Day – (give thanks for your freedoms)
Thursday July 6 th	Membership Meeting @ 7PM (rosary at 6:30PM in CSSR Hall)
Thursday July 20 th	Planning Meeting @ 7PM in CSSR Hall
Wednesday July 26 th	Feast Day – SS Joachim & Ann – parents of The Blessed Virgin Mary
Sunday July 31 st	Rosary – 5 th Sunday of the Month (after the 8AM mass)
Tuesday August 1 st	Feast Day – St. Alphonsus Liguori
Thursday August 3 rd	Membership Meeting @ 7PM (rosary at 6:30PM in CSSR Hall)
Sunday August 6 th	BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER – “COATS for KIDS”
Tuesday August 15 th	Holy Day of Obligation – the Assumption of The Blessed Virgin Mary
Thursday August 17 th	Planning Meeting @ 7PM in CSSR Hall
Tuesday August 29 th	Feast Day – The Passion of St. John the Baptist

Knight of the Month for May – Orlando Jones

Knight of the Month for June – Matthew Robinson

NEW OFFICER INSTALLATION – new officers for the 2023-2024 fraternal year will be install ahead of the membership meeting on Thursday July 6th AT 6:45 PM in CSSR Hall. Officers should arrive by 6:35PM All incoming officers are expected to attend the installation.

BLOOD DRIVE – Monday July 17th from 1:00PM – 6:00PM in CSSR Hall. For more information to register in advance to make donation in advance call Ken Bueckers at 763-560-2639. **Donations are needed. GIVE THE GIFT OF LIFE TODAY!**

Anoka County Fair – Brother Knight volunteers are needed to staff the (30) North Gate shifts. Anoka County Fair runs from Tuesday July 25th – Sunday July 30th. Gate shift times are: 8:00am- 11:30am; 11:30am – 3:00pm; 3:00pm – 6:30pm; 6:30pm – 10:00pm plus an overlap shift from 5:30pm – 9:00pm. To volunteer or for more information, please call Jim Stalberger at 763-424-8774. This is our council's largest fundraiser. Thanks for volunteering!

COATS FOR KIDS BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER – On Sunday August 6 from 8:30AM – 12:30PM in the CSsR Hall, the council will be serving pancakes, scrambled eggs and sausage plus the usual beverages. Price is \$ 5.00/person. Kids under 12 eat free. Breakfast proceeds will be used to purchase WINTER COATS. PLEASE support this worthy community cause. Additional donations accepted. (\$ 25.00 donation will purchase 2 winter coats). Thank you for your support!

STATE STAFF

District Deputy

Kevin Ahlers 612-961-2091

Insurance Field Agent

Dan Falstad 612-310-5254

Ben Djondo 612-227-6811

COUNCIL OFFICERS

Chaplain

Fr. Marcel E. Okwara, CSsR 763-561-5100

Grand Knight

George Morris 612-306-5540

Deputy Grand Knight

Richard Schwieters 763-785-2105

Chancellor

Thomas Morgan 612-242-4026

Treasurer

Chris Carlson 763-300-9274

Financial Secretary

John Vella 612-396-5325

Warden

Wesley Jah 612-987-1362

Recorder

Orlando Jones 612-483-6249

Advocate

Paul Althoff 763-228-4856

Inside Guard/Outside Guard

Matt Robinson 763-566-3921

Trustees

1 yr Edward Dennis 763-300-1356

2 yr Jim Stalberger 763-424-8774

3 yr Al Kowalczyk 763-315-0520

Council Directors

Faith: Marty Roers 763-360-5526

Comm: Orlando Jones 612-483-6249

Life: Kenneth Bueckers 763-560-2639

Family:

Prince Montgomery 612-226-3217

Membership:

Edward Dennis 763-300-1356

Sunshine Report

Sympathy cards sent to:

Marty Roers – (passing of his brother,
Brother Knight Merlin Roers)

Get Well Cards sent:

Mark Tisdell

And for others we may have missed and need our prayers.

*If you know someone who may benefit from a card, please contact:
Jim Stalberger: H #763-424-8774 or email: jstalberger720@yahoo.com*

Pope Francis's

Prayer of the month: July -**For a Eucharistic Life**

We pray that Catholics may place the celebration of the Eucharist at the heart of their lives, transforming human relationships in a very deep way and opening to the encounter with God and all their brothers and sisters.

Prayer of the month: **August – For World Youth Day**

We pray the World Youth Day in Lisbon will help young people to live and witness the Gospel in their own lives.

Our Mission Statement as A Knight of Columbus: *First, as knights we are called to support the Catholic Church and stand behind our priests; second, we are called to protect our families and third; through our charitable works, we help those less fortunate or are in need, WE ARE ABOUT CHANGING LIVES AND SAVING LIVES*