



Our Service to Youth

Strengthening collaboration with parishes will allow K of C councils to better serve young people

by Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson



DURING THE November midyear State Deputies meeting, I announced our new Orderwide initiative, *Building the Domestic Church While Strengthening Our Parish*. My remarks were reprinted in last month's *Columbia* and are available on kofc.org.

At the heart of this new program is a commitment to strengthen the Catholic identity of our families by integrating our activities more fully into the sacramental and social life of our parishes. In this way, we will not only help families, but also further the mission of the new evangelization and revitalize parish life.

The Knights of Columbus has always been an organization dedicated to the family and to helping our brother Knights be better husbands and fathers. Our new initiative is refocusing on this core mission.

A major aspect of the family as "domestic church" is our responsibility to transmit the *practice* of the faith to our children and grandchildren.

In November, I said that our youth need a stronger relationship with their parish and that parishes need more effective youth ministry programs. The Knights of Columbus is providentially positioned today to further both of these goals.

As part of the Building the Domestic Church While Strengthening Our Parish initiative, grand knights should meet with pastors to discuss how their councils can support parish-based youth ministry activities. This can incorporate Knights of Columbus youth programs

such as the Free Throw Championship and the Soccer Challenge. Youth Activity chairmen should act as liaisons with the parish youth ministry teams to determine how councils can appropriately support parish youth activities.

To promote better integration into parish life, the Board of Directors has concluded that the Knights of Columbus will no longer be the chartered organization for Boy Scout troops. This does not mean that the Order has aban-

youth ministry. If so, the grand knight should coordinate with troop leadership and the local Scouting council to designate the parish as the chartered organization for the troop. Once this change has been made, the council should continue to provide volunteer and financial support.

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doned Catholic Scouting. Rather, we intend closer alignment of our youth activities with the goals of each parish.

To the extent that pastors wish to provide Catholic Scouting in their parish, councils are *strongly* encouraged to continue volunteer and financial support for Scout troops, under the guidance of their pastors. This change is meant to strengthen the relationship between the parish and the troop. Our goal? To provide for a more robust and sustainable Catholic Scouting experience.

Where a council presently sponsors a Scout troop, the grand knight should meet with the pastor to discern whether Catholic Scouting fits into the parish's

If a council has an active Squires circle, the grand knight and Squires counselor should meet with the pastor to discuss how Squires activities may be better integrated into the parish's youth ministry. Active Squires circles may continue serving boys according to current practice, reporting to the council and recruiting new members. The Supreme Council will continue to provide support materials to these circles. However, councils are encouraged *not* to form new circles, and inactive circles should be disbanded.

Our new approach to youth evangelization is one important part of our Building the Domestic Church While Strengthening Our Parish initiative. Over time, this initiative will develop a multifaceted approach in support of parish life that will make the Knights of Columbus the strong right arm of our parish church. This will also set a firm foundation for the future growth of strong parish-based councils.

Vivat Jesus!