

2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT

DAVID M. ABBOTT, STATE DEPUTY

My Brothers,

Greetings and welcome to the 118th “virtual” Annual State Convention. It is hard to believe that nearly a year has transpired since I was elected as your State Deputy at the 117th Annual State Convention in San Diego. I have been deeply honored to serve you in this capacity. Much has transpired in the ensuing months, including the unexpected moratorium in large group gatherings caused by the coronavirus pandemic. This year, for the first time in my memory, we will be meeting “virtually” for the convention via teleconference and the Internet.

In traveling throughout the State for installations, forums and testimonials, I have had the opportunity to speak personally with a great many of you. I am and continue to be grateful for the leadership you have all exhibited in your chapters, districts, councils, circles and assemblies. Working together, there is no problem too great, no project too large, no charitable undertaking that we cannot accomplish working in His name. I am enormously proud to have served you in the capacity of State Deputy for the great State of California in this, the 118th year, of the California jurisdiction.

To my Brother Officers, State Chaplain Father John Cantwell, State Secretary Stephen Bolton, State Treasurer Dr. Noel Panlilio, State Advocate Rene Trevino and State Warden Gregory Marracq, please accept my undying gratitude for your help and support. I am also grateful for the insight and guidance of Immediate Past State Deputy Joseph Salaiz and all the Past State Deputies in California who continue to work tirelessly on behalf of the Order. I have been further blessed this year with the help and dedication of six individuals, State Membership Director T.W. Starkweather, Assistant State Membership Director Larry Dietz, State Program Director Ricardo Saldana, State Operations Director Gene Hays, Member Benefits Chairman Todd Cabral FICF, recently retired, and taking his place during the latter half of the year, Member Benefits Chairman, Carlos Gutierrez FIC. To all a hearty thank you.

Moreover, I wish to thank every one of you! The work of the Order is truly done in the councils, circles and assemblies throughout the state. Through your tireless efforts and many volunteer hours, you make a difference in the lives of many, changing and saving lives in our parishes and communities. For this you are all to be commended. But the work is not over yet. Much remains to be done as we transition into a new year, new leadership and an end to the current year which has been turned on edge by the coronavirus pandemic.

I chose as our benefactor this year the Good Shepherd, an ancient icon of Christ dating back to the first century. I believe it signifies the servant leadership to which all Catholic men and women are called. I chose as my motto “Knights of Faith – Knights of Charity – Knights of Action. Assisting our priests and religious is central to our mission as Knights of Columbus, and at the very core of our common beliefs. As we grow the Order, so too do we increase our ability to be the defender of our Catholic faith and to help others. In his encyclical – ‘Caritas In Veritate’ (Love in Truth) – Pope Benedict reminded us that “Charity is at the heart of the Church’s social doctrine. Every responsibility and every commitment spelled out by that doctrine is derived from charity which, according to the teaching of Jesus, is the synthesis of the entire law.”

As our membership theme for the year I chose *“One new member per council per month.”* Every council has been asked to recruit at least one new member per month or at least twelve

new members for the year. In my travels throughout the state I have often asked members why they joined the Knights of Columbus. The most common response is 'to give back, to be a member of a community of like-minded Catholic men.' Our Order remains and shall forever be united in service to our Church and fellowmen. I am grateful to all the councils who accepted the challenge to grow the Order to further our charitable mission and commitment to a Catholic Brotherhood.

For many of us, the year began well in advance of July 1, 2019. Approximately one year ago, over Memorial Day weekend, the State Officers and Directors met in a retreat at South Lake Tahoe to plan and finalize the selection process for the District Deputies, Committee Chairmen and State Committeemen that would spearhead our many programs and activities in the coming year. For the District Deputies, 156 in all, it was at this meeting recommendations were made and finalized for submission to Supreme.

Before my official term began on July 1, 2019. Both my wife Debbie and I attended an orientation meeting held in New Haven, Connecticut, hosted by our Supreme Knight, Carl Anderson. It was well attended by State and Territorial Deputies from jurisdictions around the world as well as Officers, Directors and staff from Supreme. It was at this meeting we were given our goals and quotas for the year, including membership recruitment and net membership gain. In addition, we were asked to complete an 'Action Plan' for California addressing programs, membership growth and leadership which we worked on while we were there. As you can imagine, the orientation was a very intense but extremely worthwhile experience.

Last June, on the weekend of the 22nd and 23rd in Ontario, we held our first of two meetings for the District Deputies in California. The State hierarchy and District Deputies were joined by chairmen, committeemen and Chapter representatives from throughout the state, who set about familiarizing the incoming leadership with the many programs and activities available to councils and their members. We were honored by the attendance of many Past State Deputies and Supreme Director of Membership Growth for the US, Matthew St. John, and Territorial Growth Director, Robert Kish.

When July 1st finally arrived and we officially started the Columbian Year, it was my pleasure to install my fellow State Officers at my home parish of Our Divine Savior Church in Chico. My thanks to all who made the long trip to such a rural region of California. The installation was presided over by the State Chaplain, Father John Cantwell, along with my Pastor, Father Martin Ramat, and the religious of Our Divine Savior Parish.

In August, along with the rest of the State Officers, wives and Supreme delegates from California I attended the Supreme Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota. In addition to the business sessions, each state hosts a hospitality suite serving food and beverages specific to their local area. Suffice it to say, the California suite under the supervision of State Warden Greg Marracq and his wife Antoinette served California wines and cheeses which were very well received. We were joined by delegations from Poland and Ukraine which offered their exotic faire as well. We were also privileged to host a farewell reception for Supreme Director Jim Scroggin and his wife Lisa on the occasion of his retirement from the Supreme Board of Directors. If you have never had an opportunity to attend a Supreme Convention, I would encourage you to do so.

In November, along with State Chaplain Father John Cantwell, several of the State Officers and Knights of Columbus from throughout the nation, I was privileged to attend a wheelchair distribution in Guadalajara, Mexico. The hospitality of our hosts including State Deputy Francisco Alonso Moreno-Munoz and the State Officers of Mexico West was outstanding, and it

was extremely gratifying to see the new hope and excitement given with the gift of mobility via this worthwhile program.

In November, Debbie and I attended the Supreme mid-term meeting in Orlando, Florida. We heard excellent talks from the Supreme Knight and program chairmen and learned how we were doing as a state overall. The groundbreaking combined Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity was introduced at that meeting which has subsequently been adopted by nearly every council in the California jurisdiction. This was followed by our own District Deputy mid-term meeting held in Ontario on January 4th and 5th. The program included excellent talks by Territorial Growth Director Robert Kish, Supreme Trainer for the Western Region Ken White, State Membership Director T.W. Starkweather, State Program Director Ricardo Saldana, State Operations Director Gene Hays and our Supreme General Agents. The presentations were accompanied by breakout sessions for informal questions and discussion along with a program "Expo" featuring the many charitable programs and activities in which councils can participate.

On January 25th, Debbie and I along with the other State Officers and Directors joined 50,000 prolife enthusiasts at the Walk for Life West Coast in San Francisco. This was my sixth walk, and each time I come away awe inspired at the growing number of people, both young and old, that are determined to change this nation and public policy to a culture of life. As members of the Knights of Columbus, we believe that every life is sacred, from the moment of conception until natural death. As Knights of Columbus, we are called to defend the dignity of every human life.

Tragically, Past Supreme Knight Virgil Dechant died unexpectedly in his sleep on February 15, 2020. Brother Dechant was the 12th and longest serving Supreme Knight holding office from January 21, 1977 until his retirement on September 30, 2000. He was succeeded by Supreme Knight Carl Anderson. Brother Dechant was a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of Pope Pius IX, Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St. Gregory the Great, Knight of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre and received the National Right to Life Award along with Senator Jesse Helms in 1998. He had the honor of escorting President George W. Bush to the funeral of Pope John Paul II. In 2012 he was awarded the Knights of Columbus highest honor, the Gaudium et Spes Award, by Supreme Knight Carl Anderson. The Gaudium et Spes Award was established by then Supreme Knight Dechant in 1992, with Mother Teresa as its first recipient. Our prayers and sympathy go out to his wife Ann along with his children and grandchildren who are and continue to be very much a part of our fraternal family.

As I have already mentioned, in my travels throughout the state to attend installations, testimonials, degrees, anniversaries and State Deputy forums I have had an opportunity to talk with many of you. I am ever impressed by your energy, dedication and many good works. It is through your tireless and steadfast efforts that the Order will grow and continue to flourish in the great State of California. I wish to thank all the Brother Knights who stepped up this year to serve in the State Council, chapters, agencies, districts, councils, circles and assemblies. Your efforts have been second to none. I wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge the 78,200 plus Knights and 635 plus active councils in the State of California for their hard work and dedication to the principles of our Order: Charity, Unity, Fraternity and Patriotism.

MEMBERSHIP

To promote an engaged and vibrant Brotherhood into the future it is important we grow the Order. Increasing our membership is always a top priority. By increasing our numbers, we can carry out the vision and do the charitable work established by our founder, the Venerable Father Michael McGivney. Our Supreme Knight, Carl Anderson, has said many times over that "we

have no less than a moral obligation than to offer every Catholic man the opportunity to join our ranks.”

We have been relatively successful during the first nine months of the Fraternal Year, but the current coronavirus pandemic has limited recruitment and membership outreach efforts during the final quarter. The Supreme Council has set a very aggressive membership goal for us this year. Our goal was to recruit at least 4,254 members by year end. It is highly likely this number will be adjusted down in the coming weeks given the coronavirus pandemic. There is a saying, “as goes California so goes the Order.” With your help, I am confident we can maintain our excellent reputation.

As of May 1, 2020, 135 councils in California have satisfied the adjusted membership requirement for the Supreme Star Council Award. In all 2,440 members have been recruited to the Order statewide. The equivalent to the Star Council Award for state councils is the Supreme Circle of Honor Award. Even if the state membership goal is adjusted down, it is estimated we will still need at least 500 plus more members prior to June 30th to meet the requirements for the Supreme Circle of Honor Award. This is roughly four members per district per month, or one well attended exemplification per month in each district for the remainder of the year. Under ordinary circumstances this might be achievable, however, limitations on group gatherings and a general cessation of meetings caused by the coronavirus makes this a challenging target.

As a solution to the cessation of meetings and ceremonials, many councils, along with the Supreme Council, are conducting “virtual” exemplifications with candidates and exemplars meeting via the Internet using tools such as WebEx, Zoom and GoToMeeting. Historically during difficult times, Knights have experienced a “Mobilization for Catholic Action” redoubling recruitment efforts and seeking new members. History has a tendency to repeat itself. Online membership, under the capable leadership of Chairman Michael Brault, also offers a viable alternative for joining, especially for younger Catholic men. Let us take pride in all that we do and be proud of our many accomplishments. You are the leadership of the Knights of Columbus and through your good works we will continue to grow Father McGivney’s dream.

Although better than it has been in recent years, retention of existing members continues to be an ongoing concern. What can we do to keep our members interested and engaged after they have joined? As of May 1, 2020, approximately 680 members have been suspended, yielding a net increase of 1,760 members statewide. Both the State and Supreme goal for the year is a net increase of 2,794 members which will likely be adjusted down before year end. Factoring in deaths and transfers out of state, California grew by a total of 445 members overall through the end of April.

As councils complete their quarterly or annual billing cycle, it is important a Retention Committee be engaged to contact members in arrears and determine if any extraordinary or extenuating circumstances exist. We are a fraternal organization, and financial hardship should not be a reason for suspension. The State Retention Chairman, Joseph Hill, and his team are available to assist in whatever capacity they can, including researching updated contact information for members you have not heard from in a while. Occasionally, it is even discovered one or more members on the council retention list is deceased.

The Shining Armor Award Program, this year under the leadership of State Chairman Thomas Quintana, also provides an important means of engaging new members by recognizing those who have completed a number of activities immediately after joining, including recruiting one new member. The Shining Armor lapel pin was automatically sent to existing members who

recruited two or more members this Columbian Year. Thank you to all who are committed to growing the Order and engaging new members at the outset through the Shining Armor Award.

Equally important to membership gain is council growth. So far this year, five new councils have been added to the California Knights of Columbus family and four councils inactive for several years have been reactivated and returned to good standing. The state goal for the Fraternal Year is 20 new and reactivated councils. Again, limitations on group gatherings and a general cessation of meetings caused by the coronavirus will make this exceedingly difficult to achieve. Those projects in progress that remain incomplete will provide a good foundation for next Columbian Year.

Please join me in welcoming the newest members of our State family; St. Mel's Council 17376 in Woodland Hills, Divine Mercy Council 17387 in Oakland, San Pedro Council 17432 in San Francisco, St. Anthony of Padua Council 17436 in Imperial, and St. Thomas Aquinas Council 17458 in Monterey Park. Several councils dormant for many years have also been reactivated or merged with other councils which include All Souls Council 14356 in Alhambra, Council 4939 in Blythe, St. Felicitas Council 9481 in San Leandro and Espiritu Santo Council 15620 in Fairfield. Several more new or reactivated councils are in the works, and I am grateful to those who are working so hard in our parishes, districts and agencies to grow the number of councils located throughout the state.

In churches and parishes where there is no council, Round Tables have proven to be an important means of providing Knights of Columbus assistance. So far this year 78 Round Tables have been established throughout the state. Parish Round Tables are often a precursor to the formation of a full council and provide opportunity for councils to reach out to nearby un-served churches and ministries.

California is a culturally rich and diverse state, and it is important we embrace the varied ethnic populations where they attend church and worship. Fully one-third of the new council development and council reactivation projects currently underway are ethnically based. Language is often a barrier, and resources exist within the state to perform exemplifications and training in both Spanish and Vietnamese. Under the guidance of Supreme Hispanic and Ethnic Development Director Pona Magana, people and support can be matched with need wherever a need arises. I would particularly like to thank Supreme Vice President for Hispanic and Ethnic Development Jose Jimenez and the State Regional Coordinators and Committeemen throughout California for all the fine work done this year – and the year isn't over yet.

SERVICE PROGRAMS

We have had a successful year in our State Service Programs. I want to particularly thank and recognize all the Councils that participated in the State Awards Program. This is a great way to recognize and reward your membership for their hard work and achievements during the Columbian Year. I want to acknowledge the dedication of the following individuals who provided extraordinary leadership and guidance during the year; State Program Director Ricardo Saldana, Assistant State Program Director Jim Larson, Awards Chairman Larry Mastin and Forms and Reports Chairman Hector Poblete. I wish to extend my gratitude also to all the many committeemen who served so capably overseeing their respective program and for their hard work and diligence during the year.

We have had a remarkably busy and successful year in Faith Programs. An overarching goal for this year was promoting the continued adoption of the Supreme Council's *Faith in Action* program which is now in its second year. Among the many faith-based programs conducted

during the Columbian Year, Past State Deputy Ross Willour served as Chairman for the Retreats Program, coordinating events with the help of committeemen in the northern, central and southern part of the state.

Our Lady has manifested Herself in many ways in many cultures and is an endearing part our Catholic faith. She is manifested this year in the form of our Silver Rose Program and the Our Lady of Persecuted Christians Icon Program, both under the capable leadership of Past Chapter President Jerry Fong. Debbie and I had the pleasure of picking up the Silver Rose at a small church near Reno, Nevada and being part of its entrance into California. Let us never forget the impact Our Lady, in Her many manifestations, has had on the western hemisphere, particularly Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas.

In Community Activities, the Food for Families Program experienced a record year with councils reporting a phenomenal amount of food collected statewide and donated to those in need. At the peak of the coronavirus pandemic Knights of Columbus assisted with food pantries throughout the state as well as delivering food to the homes of clergy, elderly and those in need. I am grateful to Chairman Jacob Billeter for a fine job. Again, through the generosity of chapters, councils, assemblies and circles statewide, we collected over \$450,000 for the American Wheelchair Mission – enough to purchase six containers of wheelchairs for distribution to veterans throughout the state. Brother Lou Salvatore has served as the State Wheelchair Chairman for multiple years and has done a remarkable job. Under the stewardship of Past State Deputy Dr. Raymond Warriner, the annual Fund Drive for People with Intellectual Disabilities raised over \$600,000 for schools, work training centers, residential care facilities, ARCs, camp recreations and Special Olympics organizations in California.

Family Activities this Columbian Year were under the direction of Past Chapter President Ken Morris. Council bulletins and year books were judged this year by Chairman Thomas Quintana and Committeeman John Giltner. Chairman Froilan Panlilio coordinated review of applications for the State Scholarships. In activities targeted for our youth, Chairman Claire Tryon coordinated the Essay Contest and Chairman Bob Pineschi the Poster Contest. California had one International winner in the Keep Christ in Christmas Poster Contest from Council 12938 in Guasti. I am grateful to all the councils who promoted these programs and participated.

The State Basketball Free Throw Championship, under the leadership of Chairman Roman Bejarano, regrestfully had to be cancelled due to the prohibition in large group gatherings caused by the coronavirus pandemic. State certificates were instead awarded to Chapter and District winners. Thank you to all who volunteered and participated. The State Soccer Challenge under the leadership of Chairman Percy Park resulted in two International winners from Councils 9202 in Lincoln and 14292 in Corona.

Life Activities hit new highs this year under the leadership of Life Director Richard Marciniak. As of May 1, with help from councils throughout the state twenty-one ultrasound machines have been purchased for pregnancy centers in California. All three walks for life, the West Coast Walk for Life, San Diego Walk for Life and One Life LA were all well attended and supported by the Knights of Columbus. A proposed Sacramento Walk for life at California's capitol planned for June has been postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic. Special Olympics Chairman Jim Larson has also done a remarkable job organizing funding and volunteer manpower to assist at Special Olympic events in northern and southern California including the new *Feed the Athletes* program, now in its second year.

OPERATIONS

I would like to thank all the chairmen and committeemen who have given so freely of their time in support of State Operations, especially State Operations Director Gene Hays. I am grateful for their leadership and guidance during Columbian Year 2019-2020.

As you all know, the state convention originally planned at the Sacramento Doubletree Hotel May 14-16, 2020 had to be cancelled due to COVID-19. Instead we are holding "virtual" events on Saturday, May 16, to conduct the essential business of the state council which includes election of state officers, voting on resolutions and approval of the 2020-2021 state budget. We look forward to the 2020-2021 state convention which is planned at the Doubletree Hotel in Ontario May 20-22, 2021.

I also offer my profound gratitude to Brother Peter Dreisbach who has served in so many capacities as Audio-Visual Chairman, State Ceremonials Coordinator, Conferring Officer and Exemplar of the Fourth Degree. Brother Peter and his wife Lorna relocated to Washington State earlier this year where he continues to consult remotely on events and activities in California requiring his expertise. Thank you, Peter, for all your help over the years. You will be missed.

My thanks also go out to the State Webmaster Thomas Quintana, assisted by Brother Larry Young, for ably maintaining the state website at www.californiaknights.org. In addition, Brother Thomas manages our state social media platforms which include Facebook, Instagram and Twitter along with YouTube which was newly added this year. All provide resources for learning what the latest and greatest Knights events are in the State of California. I would like to thank our Public Relations Committee, Isaac Cuevas, Jimmy Aitchison and Anthony Watts for keeping California Knights and their charitable acts at the center of attention, particularly during the coronavirus pandemic. Thanks to all who have contributed to improve our website and social media presence which is a constant work in progress.

Under Leadership Training, Chairman Ed Broadhurst took the program to new highs this Columbian Year. In addition to identifying trainers and scheduling training in California's sixteen chapters, several "online" trainings were provided through the course of the year targeted for District Deputies, Grand Knights, Financial Secretaries and council officers. He was further Assisted by the Supreme Trainer for the Western Region, Ken White and Territorial Growth Director Robert Kish, both of whom provided highly desirable training in recruiting, membership growth and development. The GoToWebinar platform used for online training was adapted during the height of the coronavirus pandemic to provide the State Planning Meeting, Fourth Degree Biennial Meetings, State Convention and a Fourth Degree Exemplification.

Let us not forget our founder, The Venerable Father Michael J. McGivney and the Father McGivney Guild. Thanks to Chairman George "Skip" Frates, we have seen more members join the Guild to pray for the canonization of our founder than we have seen in recent years.

I would also like to thank Chairman Roark Galloway for publishing the Golden State Knight Letter. Through his efforts, we continue to get informative news to our members of all the great works of charity that you, my Brothers, provide for those in need. I can tell you from personal experience, this is no easy task and we owe Brother Roark a great amount of thanks for all his hard work.

Finally, I would like to thank the other committees under Operations: Information Technology, Protocol, Resolutions, Good of the Order, Historical and Archives, State Convention and Nominating and Election Committee. They work quietly behind the scenes for our State Council to make your annual State Convention, this year a "virtual" Annual Meeting, one to remember.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

I am grateful for the help and assistance of the Administrative and Finance Committee this Columbian Year comprised of myself, Immediate Past State Deputy Joseph Salaiz, State Secretary Stephen Bolton, State Treasurer Dr. Noel Panlilio, Orange County Chapter President Thomas Collins and Past State Deputy Edward Huestis. The committee oversees the financial activity of the California State Council authorizing expenditures and long-term contractual obligations and reviewing monthly financial statements and bank activity as the year progresses. I am particularly indebted to our State Secretary Stephen Bolton and Brother Thomas Collins for their leadership in revamping the State Council account structure to conform to the Supreme Council's new Faith in Action activity structure. The changes will be adopted with the start of our new fiscal year on July 1, 2020.

STATE OFFICE

The State Office continues to be central in handling the day-to-day affairs of the Knights of Columbus in the State of California. Our State Administrative Assistant, Danalynn Hayes, and the part time employees and volunteers who assist in the State Office are indispensable. They maintain the State reports and records, respond to emails, answer phone calls and questions, compile our publications, distribute mailings, and generally serve the membership in the State of California. As a headquarters for the State Council and affiliated corporations, they have made my job as State Deputy much easier this Columbian Year.

BOARD OF CHAPLAINS

The Board of Chaplains under the guidance of State Chaplain Father John Cantwell has provided the spiritual leadership for the State Council this year. My thanks to the priests and religious that function at all levels in our state, including chapters, councils, circles and assemblies. Through your help and guidance, we are more informed in our faith, and have a growing understanding of the spiritual formation comprising the Church and works of our Order. The Board of Chaplains serves as a mechanism to bring priests serving the Order together for discussion and advice on the important decisions we face as Knights of Columbus. Father Cantwell has participated actively in the many meetings, activities and events of the State Council this Columbian Year. I am sure I speak for both myself and the rest of the State Officers in saying how grateful we are for his help and advice.

AGENCIES

There were several changes to the insurance agencies located throughout California during Columbian Year 2019-2020. California Assembly Bill 5 had a major impact on our insurance program requiring our General Agents and Field Agents to cease working as independent contractors and become direct paid employees of the Supreme Council. After serving the Order for many years, General Agents Todd Cabral and Ben Baca chose to retire effective with the change on December 31, 2019. The area formerly covered by the Cabral Agency in northern California was taken over by General Agent Carlos Gutierrez, and Field Agent Ron Sandoval in southern California was promoted to General Agent taking over the area formerly served by Ben Baca. General Agents Pablo Contreras and Steve Owens continue to ably serve their respective areas of the state.

I cannot express enough the profound gratitude I have for our General Agents and Field Agents who continued to serve the councils and families of California even during a period of change and uncertainty. Truly, you exemplify the best that California has to offer in charity and fraternity.

During difficult times – compounded even further by the coronavirus pandemic in the latter months of the year, Field Agents adapted by using “virtual” tools to meet online and over the phone with families to assess their financial needs. There are now four Agencies and nearly seventy Field Agents serving the Order in the State of California. Please join me in thanking General Agents Carlos Gutierrez, Pablo Contreras, Steve Owens and Ron Sandoval and their staff for doing an outstanding job this year – and, once again, it isn’t over yet.

SQUIRES

I had the pleasure of attending the State Youth Retreat this Columbian Year which was held at Trinity Pines in the foothills above Sacramento. There are currently nine Supreme Squires Circles in California and twenty-three parish or school sponsored Squires and Squires Rose youth programs. Under the able leadership of State Squires Chairman Armando Mena, the program continues to provide opportunity for youth to participate in charitable activities, advance their faith formation and aspire to leadership in their local area. I can tell you after spending time with these young people I am certain our future will be secure. I am especially grateful to our Youth Chaplain for this Columbian Year, Father John Curran, who has reached out and ministered to this community emphasizing the need for discernment and vocations.

FOURTH DEGREE

The Fourth Degree under the leadership of Vice Supreme Master Sir Knight David Ryan and Masters Sir Knight T.W. Starkweather, Sir Knight Ken Rose and Sir Knight Ray Forgette also had a very successful year. Nineteen assemblies year to date have met their membership goal. The single largest exemplification for the Junipero Serra Province, which is comprised of assemblies in both California and Nevada, was hosted by Southern Master Ray Forgette on November 2, 2019 in Ontario advancing 155 candidates to the Fourth Degree. The primary purpose of the Fourth Degree is to foster a spirit of fraternity, patriotism, responsible citizenship and a love of country manifest in all that we do. I am particularly grateful to the Masters, Faithful Navigators, Color Corp Commanders and Sir Knights throughout the state for their help and so clearly exemplifying these ideals.

CHAPTERS

The principle objectives of the chapters are to bring about a closer union and more effective cooperation among the Knights of Columbus councils. They coordinate events, disseminate information on programs and activities, foster an informed leadership and generally promote the interests and general welfare of the Order. Obviously, the State Deputy cannot visit every council in the State of California during the year. Therefore, it is the chapters, led by the Chapter President, chapter officers and committeemen working hand-in-hand with our District Deputies and Field Agents who forge an important link to the council leadership, Bishops, clergy and parishes in their local area. I am grateful to all the Chapter Presidents, District Mentors and those who served in a leadership capacity in our sixteen chapters this Columbian Year for their guidance, assistance and support. From the chapter chairs come future state officers and State Deputies, ensuring continuity, leadership, vision and the success of the Order in California both now and in the future.

CORPORATIONS

California has five not-for-profit corporations affiliated with the State Council, each with its own President and Board of Directors. Columbian Properties Incorporated, Former State Secretary Patrick Brown, President, holds all the real property owned by the State Council, including the

building that houses the State Office in Fontana. Named the Frederick H. Pelletier Columbian Center, the building has approximately 20,000 square feet and is situated on approximately 1½ acres of land. The State Office occupies approximately 4,000 square feet with the remaining 16,000 square feet leased out to defray costs associated with purchase, construction and maintenance of the property. Built and occupied in 2000 a 15-year note used to purchase the property is now fully paid off. The building also houses the California Knights of Columbus Museum. This year the corporation purchased a second commercial property in Fontana to serve as income property helping finance operation of the California State Council.

The California Knights of Columbus Museum Association, Past State Deputy and Former Supreme Director Jim Scroggin, President, is charged with the responsibility of preserving the artifacts, records, and publications in possession of the State Council documenting the involvement of the Knights of Columbus over its rich 118 year history in the State of California and making them available for display. The Museum Association has adopted the slogan "Preserving Our Past to Educate Our Future." Under the stewardship of Curator John Shea and his wife Ann, the Association maintains a permanent exhibit at the State Office in Fontana periodically rotating memorabilia, clothing, documents, photographs, paintings, flags, pins, jewelry and other items from the collection for display. A small exhibition of items from the collection are also typically placed on display at state conventions (obviously this will not occur this year with a "virtual" state convention). The Association is a 501(c)(3) corporation and all gifts, whether monetary or historical in nature, are tax deductible.

The Frank Nigro Columbian Foundation Supporting People with Intellectual Disabilities Incorporated, Past State Deputy Dr. Raymond Warriner, President, served as a 501(c)(3) clearinghouse this Columbian Year for over \$600,000 raised by 265 participating councils through "ID Drives" for ARCs, schools, work training centers, residential care facilities, Camp ReCreations and Special Olympic organizations in their local area. Several councils have yet to report their proceeds, so this total should be even higher. Remember, in most cases, this is money collected from the general public and needs to be turned in immediately after the drive. This year marks the 33rd anniversary of the founding of the corporation. In the years since its founding, a little over \$20,000,000 has been raised for those with special needs in the State of California. Next year, rather than \$600,000, let's make it \$1,000,000!

Columbian Charities Incorporated, Former Master Stephen Peterson, President, is truly about "Brother helping Brother." Perhaps known best through the "365 Club" and Parade of Grand Knights at the state convention, the corporation assists Brother Knights in times of difficulty and financial distress. So far 46 grants have been given out this year totaling \$81,758. The total could go as high as \$150,000 by year end. Your participation, and that of your council members, is crucial in keeping this program financially solvent, particularly in these difficult economic times. Please support the "365 Club" by mailing in your contributions this Columbian Year which are needed now more than ever before.

The Columbian Retirement Home Incorporated, Past State Deputy Ross Willour, President, following a 45-year tradition of service, continues to provide senior housing through operation of the Columbian Retirement Center in Marysville. This beautiful 20 room independent living residence is available to retired Brother Knights, wives and family members. In addition, the corporation is prepared to assist Brother Knights and their families with senior advisory services through *Senior Care Solutions*, a company providing personalized guidance and referrals to a wide array of senior housing and care facilities located throughout the state. They are also able to provide information on special pricing and discount rates, where applicable, and educational symposiums in your local area. Further information can be found on the Columbian Retirement Home website at www.columbianretirementhome.org.

I am grateful to all who have provided leadership and served on the Board of Directors of these corporations this Columbian Year. All are volunteers and have given tirelessly of their time and talents to advance the charitable efforts of the Knights of Columbus in the State of California.

CONCLUSION

My Brother Knights, it has been a most interesting and fruitful year. The kindness, flexibility and commitment to our Catholic faith and Order demonstrated by all of you has served as my source of energy and inspiration this entire year. What can we not accomplish working together? The whole is truly greater than the sum of the parts. It is through your leadership, and the leadership of those who follow us that Father McGivney's dream, the Knights of Columbus, will flourish into the future.

The current COVID-19 pandemic is the third such pandemic the Order has endured during its 138-year history. Our founder, the Venerable Fr. Michael J. McGivney, succumbed at the young age of 38 to the Asiatic Flu pandemic of 1889-1890. The Order survived the H1N1, Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918, the Great Depression and two World Wars. Throughout it all we as Knights have been known for our faith, charity and service. Times are no different now – and we will get through the current crisis showing the same courage and fortitude as those who have gone before us. Thank you for your charity and service! It has been my pleasure to serve you this Columbian Year.

In all that you do be **Knights of Faith – Knights of Charity – Knights of Action.**

Respectfully submitted,

David M. Abbott, California State Deputy