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## Chaplain April 2023 Message

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### Key #6 B

- **Make your views known without trying to take control of council activities. Allow the men to respond out of respect for you and your teaching office, rather than attempting to dominate.**

Once again, it is important to remember that the Knights of Columbus is a lay organization. This has given rise to certain misunderstandings both on the part of the Knights and the clergy. However, the council members must be in total union with the parish and the pastor. Most often, the pastor is the chaplain of the local council.

The chaplain can have a great influence on the council, without trying to control it, and the council can be of great spiritual, ministerial and social strength for the parish. Some priests are wary of the Knights and in some rare instances there has been friction between a council and a pastor. In parishes, again in rare cases, some pastors may have tried to completely control every aspect of the local council. Some councils have not reflected the Order's goal of being the "strong right arm of the Church" in their parish, and a few others may have held themselves completely independent of the parish where the council is situated. I believe that every parish stands to benefit greatly from the presence of a Knights of Columbus council. It is also beneficial to both the council and the parish that parish facilities be used for the monthly general meeting. This provides a greater tie for the council to the parish, and greater visibility for the Knights to their fellow parishioners and potential new members.

We are all aware that problems can arise. We wish to address these situations and bring a new element of spirituality and cooperation so that there may not be any antipathy or lack of understanding. Some priests may have had an unfortunate past experience with a council or an individual Knight, but that is not a reason to condemn or reject the Knights of Columbus.

Some years ago, our Supreme Chaplain, Archbishop Lori wrote this, as he addressed the Knights: "*... be aware of the great gift that priests represent for the Church and the world. Through their ministry the Lord continues to save mankind, to make Himself present, to*

*sanctify. Give thanks to God and above all remain close to your priests with prayer and support, especially in moments of difficulty, that they may increasingly become pastors in keeping with God's heart.*"

I believe the Knights desire to implement this fully. As chaplains, we also realize this, and respond with our priestly commitment to their good will.

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## Chaplain April 2023 Message Continued

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We are celebrating this blessed Easter season, and I wish to extend to all our chaplains heartfelt good wishes. May it be a joyous and holy season, full of peace and bringing many blessings to yourselves personally, to your parish, your council, your family, and especially to the poor and the lonely.

Pray for us, and guide us, Blessed Father Michael McGivney, that we may continue to be imbued with your spirit.

God bless and keep you all.

Rev. John P. Grace, O.S.A.

State Chaplain

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