



The Ladies Secret Guide to the Knights of Columbus

For Wives, Families
& Friends of New Knights

By: Greg & Sue Taillon
N.H. State Council

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- Husband: **Honey, I've been asked to join the Knights of Columbus.**
Wife: *What are the Knights of Columbus?*
Husband: **Well all I really know is that it's a men's group that helps the Church & Community, I'll be taking my 1st Degree next Monday.**
Wife: *What's a First Degree?*
Husband: **Well, frankly I don't know. But when I find out, I won't be able to tell you.**
- Wife: *Wo, you're joining a group of men that supposedly does good things and you can't tell me anything about it? Well, please don't forget that you have a wife and a family!*
- Husband: **Well, I'm told that it is a FAMILY oriented organization!**
Wife: *And how does your wife and kids get involved and what kinds of family activities do the Knights put on?*
- Husband: **Well. I'm not sure, but I'll find out**
3 months later.....
- Young Child: **Mommy, where's Daddy going again tonight?**
Wife: *He's at another Knight's meeting Sweetie.*
- Young Child: **Mommy, what does he do at Knight's meetings?**
Wife: *Well, Honey, I'm not really sure. Why don't you and I ask him tomorrow night!*

When your husband, father or maybe your older brother joins the Knights of Columbus, he is joining the largest Catholic, Family, Service Fraternity in the World. What does all that mean?" Simply put, he's doing a good thing! This organization is Catholic and supports our Church. This group of men believes in the Family, and need their family's involvement and support. The Knights is a Service organization that also supports the community. With these as its high ideals, it is the responsibility of the local council that he will join to run programs and activities that support Church, Community, Family, Youth and the needs of their local Council.

But let's get back to the sample dialogue above. It could represent what happens to many new knights and their families. Unfortunately and often unintentionally, many families are kept in the dark about the Knights. Councils are encouraged to provide the ladies and families of new knights with orientation sessions at the time he joins. And thus, the intent of this brief guide is to further help make you more knowledgeable about the organization that he and your family are joining.

First of all let's clarify an incorrect belief about the Knights of Columbus. While knights keep secret their degree ceremonials, ***it is NOT a Secret Organization!*** If your knight isn't sharing with you everything else, then **ASK HIM!** Make him explain to you and his family about his Knights involvement. What happened at the last business meeting what activities, events and programs are being planned by the council; how the council is meeting the needs of the pastor and (parish community where you go to church: what family and youth events are coming up and what the officers and directors are responsible for in his council. And for any other question you may have, simply ASK HIM! He should welcome your interest and involvement!

Secondly, it is a FAMILY oriented organization. A Knight's wife and family should always be involved in the programs and activities of his local council. If the local council is not sponsoring enough Family and Youth events/activities, your knight has the right and responsibility to step forward and initiate them. Your involvement is critical to the success of his local council the needs of its Church and Community!

Finally, the more his family knows about the Knights, the more likely they will share and support his involvement. So with this in mind, below you will find a number of terms, titles and expressions that will hopefully make it easier for you and your kids to talk about and understand what your new Knight is involved in.:

- **The Knights are a FAMILY oriented. Catholic, Service fraternity**
- **Nothing is secret about the Knights, except their degree ceremonials**
- **A man enters the Knights when he takes his 1st Degree (*like a Page of Old*). As he learns more about the Knights, he takes his 2nd Degree (*like a Squire of Old*). Finally when his council feels he is ready, he will take his 3rd Degree and become a full Knight (*Like a Knight of Old*).**
 - **1st and 2nd Degree Knights can not hold a Council Officer position but can serve as a Council Director or Chairman to a Council Activity.**
 - **A 3rd Degree member can hold a local Council Officer position or a State Officer position and can serve as a District Deputy.**
- **Councils are expected to run Church, Community, Family, Youth and Council Activities and Programs. Any knight, whether 1st, 2nd, or 3rd can chair and run an event or activities with the support of his council.**
- **Knights also sponsor Ladies Auxiliaries. Columbiettes (Both Women's organizations), Squires (Boys 10-18 organization) and Columbus Girls Circles (Young ladies organization).**
- **Like many organizations the Knights have a hierarchical structure. The major leadership positions are:**

Grand Knight - Head of a local council within a town or parish.

District Deputy - Supports 4 to 5 councils & works with their Grand Knights

State Deputy - Head of a State Jurisdiction (ex. David Onofrio, North Carolina)

Supreme Knight – Head of the entire Worldwide KofC organization.

Supreme Headquarters are located in New Haven, CT.

Council Officer Positions

<i>Grand Knight</i>	(GK) Head of a Local Council
<i>Deputy Grand Knight</i>	(DGK) 2nd in Charge, fills in for Grand Knight.
<i>Chancellor</i>	Gets members active in council activities.
<i>Recorder</i>	Takes minutes of Business Meetings
<i>Advocate</i>	Legal Advisor to Grand Knight
<i>Financial Secretary</i>	Appointed by Supreme, Collects dues and handles all membership & council paperwork
<i>Treasurer</i>	Responsible for all Council Funds
<i>Warden</i>	Responsible for all Council property and for setting up for all Council Meetings
<i>Guards (Inside & Outside)</i>	Assist Warden check membership cards
<i>Trustees</i>	Audit Council Books on semi-annual basis .
<i>Lecturer</i>	Provides entertaining/educational talks to <u>council at Business Meetings</u>

Council Director Positions

<i>Service Directors</i>	Coordinates programs and activities in one of the 5 service areas (Church, Community, Family, Youth & Council)
<i>Membership Director</i>	Directs all council membership programming.
<i>Recruitment Director</i>	Coordinates council efforts to recruit new members into council. Works for Membership Director.
<i>Retention Director</i>	Coordinates council efforts to win back and Reactivate existing inactive members. Works for Membership Director
<i>Other Council Directors/Committees</i>	Pro-Life Chair couple, Investment committee, Nominating Committee, Squires Counsellor, etc.

Degree Teams - One of the primary purposes of degree ceremonials is to exemplify the principles & lessons of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity. To accomplish this, Degree Teams are formed by the Grand Knight of a Council for the 1st Degree; by the District Deputy of a district (4 or 5 councils) for the 2nd Degree and by the State Ceremonials Director for a State jurisdiction (Like New Hampshire) for the 3rd Degree. After completing a degree, your new knight is eligible to learn one of the parts of that degree and join that degree team. Degree Ceremonials are the only part of the Knights that is secret to non-members.

Knights Emblem



A quick glance at the emblem indicates a shield mounted upon the Formee Cross. The shield is that associated with a medieval Knight. The Formee Cross is the representation of a traditionally artistic design of the Cross of Christ through which all graces of redemption were procured for mankind. This then represents the Catholic spirit of the Order. Mounted on the shield are three objects: a fasces standing vertically and crossed behind it, an anchor and a dagger or short sword. The fasces from Roman days is symbolic of authority which must exist in any tightly-bound organization. The anchor is the mariner's symbol for Columbus, patron of the Order, while the short sword or dagger was the weapon of the Knight when engaged upon an errand of mercy. Thus, the shield expresses Catholic Knighthood in organized merciful action, and with the letters, K. of C it proclaims this specific form of activity.

The Colors of the Knights of Columbus Emblem

Red is the Symbol of faith, of belief in Christ, in the Redemption and in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ. White is the color of the Eucharistic Host, pledge of God's Eucharistic presence among men, of the infinite love God has for each individual. White is then the symbol of Christ-like Charity. Blue is the color of Our Lady's mantle in which she wrapped her beloved Son, through Whom came salvation to a sinful world. Blue is then the symbol of Hope.

Jewels of Office

Each Council Officer position has a metal medallion which is suspended on a colored ribbon and symbolizes its responsibilities. Here are each Officer's Medallion/Color Ribbon:

Grand Knight – Anchor/Purple ribbon

Chaplain - Isabella Cross/Black ribbon

Deputy Grand Knight – Compass/Purple ribbon

Chancellor - Isabella Cross with Skull & Crossbones/White & Black ribbon

Recorder - Crossed Quills/White & Yellow ribbon

Financial Secretary - Crossed Key and Quill/White & Yellow ribbon

Treasurer - Crossed Keys/Blue ribbon

Lecturer – Lyre and Scroll/White & Blue ribbon

Advocate – Scroll/Yellow ribbon I

Warden - Axe bound with rods/Red & Black ribbon

Guards - Crossed Axes and Key/White ribbon

Trustee - Anchor on Axe bound with rods over Crossed Swords/Green ribbon
and the Council's District Deputy has a Sextant and Red Ribbon

Want to know more about the Knights? Start by sharing with your new knight the information contained in this brief guide. Next, ASK HIM questions OFTEN, and get involved with him! And finally, we wish to express to you and your family

A Warm Welcome to the Family of the Knights of Columbus!