

Good morning, my name is John Morris, and I am the Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus here at St. Matthews. I would like to take a few minutes to (1) share some information about the Knights and (2) to extend a warm invitation to every man here to join our Council.

We have 119 Knights in our Council. If you are a member of the Knights of Columbus, would you please stand up?"

- Thank you, Brother Knights, for helping us serve our parish and our community.
- It is important to note that our charitable works would not be possible without the wonderful support of our wives, our families, and our priests. We are very grateful to all of you. Thank you.

Please allow me a few minutes to tell you about The Bishop Keating Council here at St. Matthews. We live by the core principles of Charity,

Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism. If you believe in any of these core principles, then you have a very strong reason to join our Council.

Charity

Probably the most important reason to join our Council is the principle of charity. We do many good deeds for our parish and our community.

For example,

- Since July, we have delivered over 7,000 pounds of food to the St. Matthew Food Pantry.
- We donated \$1,000 to support our Seminarian, Ian Grosskopf.
- We raised \$550 for charity by collecting 110 bags of litter from Spotsylvania County roads.
- We raised \$1,700 for charity through our “Keep Christ in Christmas” programs.
- We collaborated with the St. Faustina Conference here at St. Matthew’s and helped them collect and distribute the following items to needy families in Spotsylvania County:

- 35 Turkey Dinners
- 273 Winter Coats
- Christmas toys and gifts for 167 children
- and 92 Easter baskets.
- Most importantly, our association with the St. Faustina Conference has given the Knights an opportunity to have personal contact with our needy neighbors. *We have seen the suffering of Christ on the faces of the poor, and they have seen the love of Christ on ours.*

Unity

The second reason to join the Knights of Columbus is the principle of Unity.

- Our Council is unified through our love of Christ, our devotion to the Holy Mother, and our desire to become stronger Catholic men.

- As Brother Knights, we are united in our primary mission to support Father Eversole and Father Duesterhaus as they shepherd our parish. We support them in many ways such as:
 - Ushering at the Masses
 - Distributing Blue Bags for the Food Pantry
 - Setting up chairs for the outdoor Rosaries
 - Providing protective masks in the vestibule
 - Collecting signatures to help beautify the Parish Grounds
 - And hopefully, we will soon help unify our parish by serving our world-famous Gourmet Breakfasts again.
- Prayer is perhaps the most important example of our unity. Whenever a Brother Knight or his family is sick or has passed away, we pray for them.

Fraternity

A third reason to join our Council is Fraternity. Let me ask you a question, “Why do you think that most men have watched movies like “Band of Brothers” and “Lord of the Rings” multiple times?” (pause)

- The reason is: They want to be in the movie.
- Every man wants to belong to a band of brothers with whom he can trust and share a common cause. Every man wants to have life-long friends.
- Unfortunately, many men in our parish don't know the first names of the men sitting around them.
- However, our Council is blessed to have a strong “band of brothers.” For example, once a month, the Knights distribute food to the poor through the SHARE program. Although 3 Knights could run the program, we normally have 10 or 12 who show up at the Parish Center at 6:45 in the morning just for a chance to be together. While we are waiting for families to pick up their food boxes, we sit around in a big circle of chairs, drink coffee, eat donuts, and enjoy each other's company.

Patriotism

The final reason to join our Council is Patriotism. We belong to The Fathers Cilinski Assembly 3568. The Assembly is chartered to support

the parishes of St. Matthew and St. Jude during patriotic and religious events. For example,

- Every year, The Fathers Cilinski Assembly honors our deceased veterans just before Memorial Day by placing flags on 300 headstones in the Quantico National Cemetery.
- In March, members of Assembly 3568 participated in the “Eucharistic Procession for Life” in downtown Fredericksburg.

Due to COVID-19, our activities have been restricted. However, we are re-activating our Color Guard and you will soon see us providing ceremonial support at confirmations, funerals, and patriotic events.

Summary

In summary, if you want to belong to a “band of brothers” who have fun and live by the principles of Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism, then please join us. **Let me emphasize** that there is no pressure to volunteer for any of our events, but you are always welcome.

Requests

After mass, we have Knights from our Council standing outside. I have two requests:

1. Please ask a Knight to give you a card with his contact information on it.
2. If you are interested in learning more about the Knights, please give him your phone number and email address.

Thank you for allowing me to share information about our Council and God Bless!