



121st State Convention | April 26, 2020

Report of State Ceremonial Activities

The state of ceremonial activities in the District of Columbia is in a state of flux, but the future of the Order and its welcoming new members as well as educating established members is bright.

The fraternal year's beginning saw the successful execution of the Installation of State Officers and District Deputies at the St. John Paul II National Shrine as well as council investitures of officers held by District Deputies.

Due to some unfortunate scheduling issues the State Council was only able to host two Knighthood Degrees in the first half of the year, one on the campus of The Catholic University of America and one at the St. John Paul II National Shrine. Councils and District Deputies hosted their own Admission and Formation Degrees welcoming in many new members of the Order through DVD, read, and live degree exemplifications.

In a rare opportunity, State Directors of Ceremonials from across the Order were invited by the Supreme Board of Directors to attend the last day of the State Deputies Mid-Year meeting for a two-day meeting on a proposed new combined ceremonial which was encouraged by unanimous resolution at the 137th Supreme Convention. This meeting gave State Deputies and Directors of Ceremonials the opportunity to provide needed feedback on the proposed ceremonial. Fortunately, almost all of the suggestions provided by the District of Columbia's officers were implemented in the new degree which was authorized for use in late January.

This new Degree allows the Order to publicly welcome Knights into the Order and immediately bring them into the 3rd Degree before their family members and fellow parishioners. This focus on faith, family, and community are completely consistent with our Order's teachings of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity which are well-exemplified in this degree. This is the future of our Order for so many men and their families, while also providing a public opportunity to show our faith and service in our parishes - encouraging more men and families to join us by the very act of hosting the exemplification. While the new exemplification is strongly encouraged, the existing three separate degree ceremonials are also able to be exemplified by Councils, Districts, and the State Council.

On February 8th, with the assistance of 15 Brother Knights including the State Associate Chaplain, State Deputy, State Officers, Master of the Fourth Degree, two Past State Deputies, and a Field Agent (among others) the District of Columbia's first Combined Degree Ceremonial was held following a the celebration of Mass in the Redemptor Hominis church in the St. John Paul II National Shrine. At that degree we welcomed 7 new members and advanced 11 existing members into the 3rd Degree of our Order. Things were looking bright for the Order with monthly planned exemplifications and then we were asked by our Brother Knight Archbishop



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Gregory to put all public celebrations of the Mass and gatherings on hold as the COVID-19 virus began its rapid spread.

While Ceremonials across the Order came to a screeching halt, we now have a new opportunity for Order-Wide online exemplifications through the combined ceremonial. The first exemplification held on April 16th brought in 2,138 new members, 323 online members advancing, 7,009 1st and 2nd Degree Knights advancing, and 4,466 3rd and 4th Degree Knights observing for a total of 13,936 participants. While the District of Columbia only saw 2 new members join and 6 existing members advance, it is my hope that this opportunity for new men to join our Councils and for existing members to advance in the Order is embraced by our Council Officers. Our next opportunity will be Thursday, April 30th at 7pm and 10pm.

As our ceremonials have seen so much change, so must the position of State Director of Ceremonials. My suggestions for the future include:

- **Training for Ceremonials** – The State Council is in need of annual training programs for Officers and Brother Knights on the basics of our foundational ceremonies – namely the Council Meeting and the Combined Exemplification of our Degrees. As we continue to grow our Order with new Councils and rebuild and rehabilitate older Councils we must recognize that in these circumstances there is little or no institutional knowledge from which to draw. As well as being a great refresher course for all officers, this will greatly help with uniformity of excellence in the KofC experience for all of our Brothers.
- **Ceremonial Materials** - The State Council and Subordinate Councils should work to develop their own Ceremonial Kits for use in the public ceremonies of the Order. Fortunately the costs are very low - bringing it into affordability for Councils of all sizes.
- **Retirement of old Ceremonial Kits** - The State Council will gladly accept any old ceremonial items wishing to be retired by a Council. If your Council has old robes and odds-and-ends of old Ceremonial Kits - the State Council will gladly accept them and take care of them for special use by our College Councils for their degrees.
- **Protocol** - With fewer things to manage with a streamlined ceremonial, it is my belief that the State Director of Ceremonials should be training and serving as a resource and director of protocol (where appropriate) for the State Council.

I encourage you all here assembled, albeit virtually, to help us spread the vision of our Founder, the Venerable Fr. Michael J. McGivney, by exemplifying the principles of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity to those men who you would one day call Brother Knights! Help us exemplify our



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degrees in EVERY parish in the District of Columbia in 2020 and make a lasting impact in the lives of your Brothers and in the life of our Order!

Fraternally Yours,

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State Director of Ceremonials
District of Columbia State Council