



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA STATE COUNCIL

## 123rd State Convention/April 30-May 1, 2022 Report of the District Deputy #2, Thomas L. Jones

Upon assuming the position of District Deputy #2, I became well acquainted with the six councils under my jurisdiction, which enabled me to provide the necessary leadership to help each of the councils fulfill certain requirements according to the guidelines set forth by the Executive Board of the District of Columbia State Council. Although District #2 Councils were met with challenging situations, such as the adverse effects of the Covid-19, we were still able to garner support to fulfill requirements that have enabled the councils to show improvement and achieve a level of success, despite any setbacks brought about by the pandemic.

However, the D.C. State Council shall continue to be supportive in giving guidance through the efforts of District Deputy #2 and helping to the full extent of what it entails for a council to be recognized as "Star Council." In looking at the status of each council, I will give an overview of where each council and what they have done, thus far.

### **CARROLL COUNCIL #00377**

Carroll Council #00377 is in-compliance with the submission of Officers Chosen for the Term, Service Program Personnel, Semiannual Audits, Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity and working with other council deadlines. However, in the Safe Environment Program, one position is "pending," while action is needed in the two remaining areas. This should be addressed as soon as possible! However, the council is maintaining involvement in activities to help boost their involvement as an active council. Through the leadership of Grand Knight James "Eddie" Oxford, there is strong evidence of the desire to maintain cohesion and a determination to become a viable council, despite challenging situations brought about by the pandemic. Both the Grand Knight and the Financial Secretary Charles M. Coleman, Jr strive to adhere to the timeline of submitting reports and handling financial matters in a timely manner; keep their council informed of their expectations; seek ways to increase membership; evaluate what is needed to become a "Star Council;" and give serious thought to the prospect of promoting the Delta Church Drive to help support the recruitment process. Since there is a recruitment quota of "4" the Delta Church Drive would be beneficial to Carroll Council greatly. However, most importantly the officers are doing their utmost to keep their council intact despite the

persistent obstacles they face, accordingly. St. Gabriel's Church, where Carroll Council #00377 meets, partnered with Nativity's "Friday Knight Fish Fry" and the "Establishment of a Round Table." Carroll Council #00377 takes pride in their support and promotion of "Coats for Kids," Special Olympics, Food for families, Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for needy families. In support of my recommendations for improvement, it is suggested that Carroll Council #00377 should do the following: continue being a cohesive unit by seeking additional candidates to assume positions of leadership as officers and directors; seek ways of holding "In-Person" meetings; and adopt a model for Faith in Action. The leadership of Grand Knight James "Eddie" Oxford Jr has demonstrated that Carroll Council #00377 can overcome all odds and possibly aspire to achieve "Star Council" recognition!

### **KEANE COUNCIL #00353**

Keane Council #00353 was recently assigned to District #2, and I am proud to point out that both Grand Knight Peter Gervais and Financial Secretary Robert Newman are working in support of their council. Keane Council #00353 is in-compliance with the submission of the Report of Officers Chosen for the Term and the Report of Service Program Personnel. However, the last two Semiannual Audits, the Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity, and the Safe Environment Program will be addressed accordingly. This breakdown was due to the adverse effects of Covid-19, and the placement of Grand Knight Peter Gervais in the leadership position to bring about unity, stability and cohesiveness. The council officers do meet regularly with their membership to plan for programs, activities, events and point out their expectations, such as membership growth through fundraisers, and the inclusion of Faith in Action programs. The membership quota for this council is "10" and the Delta Church Drive would be very beneficial. Council officers are aware of what it takes to become a "Star Council," and they do their best to address this understanding despite the challenges they have faced as a council during the pandemic. The council promotes "Coats for Kids," provides Thanksgiving meals for the church community, as well as establishing "Round Tables at both Nativity and St. Gabriel's." Fr. Pawel Sass, the pastor of Nativity and Chaplain of Keane Council #353 is very much involved in council meetings, and they have invited guest speakers, such as the Faithful Navigator Venantius Chief Okey Onunaku of Washington Assembly #151, State Deputy Chris Pierno, and District Deputy #2. Quite recently, a very successful "Friday Knight Fish Fry" was held at Nativity during Lent, which was a council fundraiser. (This also served as a means of recruiting new members.) The event was very successful, because the sale of foods was very organized, with selected council members playing an important role in its operation. They also involved parish families in this event by having the youth of the parish provide the entertainment. And through this fundraiser, Keane Council #353 was able to support both Nativity and St. Gabriel's Church. Keane Council #353 also has a host of "Upcoming Activities," such as a Fraternal Benefits Knight on April 26 at St. JP II, Nominations for Council Officers, Degree Ceremonials on May 25 at St. JP II and a Blood Drive on May 28. Therefore, it is recommended that Keane Council #353 continue to encourage the members to work as a cohesive body in addressing areas that may

require more support. Under the leadership of Grand Knight Peter Gervais, Keane Council #353 can possibly aspire to achieve “Star Council” recognition!

### **DIVINE MERCY AFRICAN COUNCIL #17611**

Divine Mercy Council #17611 is one of the new councils assigned to District #2. Also, Grand Knight Venantius Chief Okey Onunaku garnered support from both the State Deputy and District Deputy #2 to make sure he had a representative corps of officers and directors to begin the process of becoming a viable council. (It is to be noted that Grand Knight Venantius Chief Okey Onunaku also accepted the position of Faithful Navigator of Washington Assembly 151, which brought about many challenges in getting the council up and running.) Nevertheless, Divine Mercy Council #17611 is in-compliance with the submission of the Report of Officers Chosen for the Term, Report of Service Program Personnel, Semiannual Audits for the Period, and the Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity. Also, this council is in-compliance with the Safe Environment Program. With support from D.C. State Executive Board, the Grand Knight was able to acquire the appointment of Keith Erubaemmy to assume the position of Financial Secretary. Presently, he is in the process of receiving additional training to assist him in the fulfillment of his financial secretarial duties and responsibilities. Despite the pandemic that is still upon us, Divine Mercy African Council #17611 manages to hold “In-Person” meetings to keep the members informed and carryout programs and activities that benefit the parish communities. Last fraternal year and with a membership quota of 3, there was also a net gain of one insured member. Currently, the Grand Knight has identified six candidates for membership, who may be participating in the upcoming Exemplification of the “Combined Degree.” Also, the council will be promoting a Faith in Action Program model at St. Luke’s. In addition, the Chaplain, Rev. Cornelius Kelechi Ejiogu, SSJ, is very supportive of the new council, where a Round Table has been established. Last fraternal year, the council was very productive in bringing about programs and activities, which enabled the council to receive the McGivney Award. The Grand Knight and his council officers continue striving for recognition for their involvement in council activities and events. We certainly commend the Grand Knight for his dedication and accepting the position to meet the needs of his council. Therefore, through his determination, he is demonstrating that Divine Mercy African Council #17611 can also possibly aspire to achieve “Star Council” recognition!

### **ST. AUGUSTINE COUNCIL #15723**

Through the years, St. Augustine Council #15723 received much praise and awards recognition, under the leadership of Past Grand Knight Anthony Bigsby, including their efforts to be in-compliance in all areas of achievement that enabled St. Augustine Council #15723 to receive recognition as a “Star Council!” However, due to the adverse effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, changes came about and many of the programs and activities were brought to a sudden halt, as with many other D.C. State Councils. Nevertheless, St. Augustine Council #15723 was able to recoup under the direction of Deputy Grand Knight Samuel B. Gaillard Jr. who is rallying his council members to regain their involvement and participation in council activities with support from Financial Secretary Ernest Hoosman. For example, the submission of reports includes the Report of Officers Chosen for the Term, the Report of Service Program Personnel, the Semiannual Audits, and the Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity. And in the Safe Environment Program, St. Augustine Council #15723 is In-Compliance. Moreover, the council is utilizing recruitment strategies to meet their membership quota of 3. Quite recently and on two different occasions, St. Augustine Council #15723 advanced two members through the Exemplification of “Combined Degrees” at St. John Paul II Shrine of which District Deputy #2 was a participant. Deputy Grand Knight Samuel B. Gaillard Jr. and council officers meet regularly with their pastor and Chaplain, Rev. Patrick Smith regarding council matters. Also, in my position as District Deputy #2, I have been in frequent contact with both the Deputy Grand Knight and the Financial Secretary regarding submission of required reports and financial obligations, and the outcome has been very positive. Deputy Grand Knight Samuel B. Gaillard Jr. is serving in a position of leadership, and he has represented his council well! Officers and Program Personnel Directors have been placed in key positions, and the outcome has been favorable. Also, it is duly noted that the Deputy Grand Knight has achieved much recognition for his leadership skills in promoting cohesiveness in bringing about council unity and viability. Since St. Augustine Council #15723 has proven itself in having had a rich history of accomplishments and achievements through awards recognition, it behooves the officers to bring St. Augustine Council #15723 back to its rightful place as a viable council, especially in all areas of leadership, and once again aspire to receive “Star Council” recognition!

### **ST. THOMAS MORE COUNCIL #11578**

St. Thomas More Council #11578 has consistently been in communication with District Deputy #2 regarding the adverse effects of covid-19, which has caused interruptions among the parish communities, especially in council gatherings at St. Thomas More Church. Nevertheless, through the efforts of Grand Knight Kenneth A. Berry and Financial Secretary Robert “Bob”

Fuller, council deadlines have been addressed regarding the submissions of reports and financial obligations, accordingly, such as the submission of the Report of Officers Chosen for the Term, the Report of Service Program Personnel, Semiannual Audits, and the Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity. However, in the Safe Environment Program, St. Thomas More Council is not in-compliance, and necessary steps should be taken as soon as possible. Although it has been difficult to meet with all council officers, those who have been available were able to make a difference. For example, members of St. Thomas More Council #11578 came together to help support the parish in replenishing the pantry by storing food items and sharing food donations with the community. This support was very meaning to the parishioners. The parish is also promoting recruitment effort, in which it held a Delta Church Drive with support from District Deputy #2 during the Dr. Martin Luther King Celebration and Mass with Auxiliary Bishop Roy Campbell as the Celebrant. Moreover, the membership quota of 3 could possibly be met with additional support from the council members in their recruitment efforts. The support of the "Parish Pantry" is the Faith in Action program, and the council will be working with the parish, through the council. The Grand Knight and Financial Secretary are doing their best to keep council members involved. Although the effects of the pandemic have brought about a slowdown in council activities, which has hampered council meetings, Grand Knight Kenneth A. Berry and the Financial Secretary Robert "Bob" Fuller are using whatever means available, such as telephone conference to make the necessary contacts and to keep the members informed. During various times, the Financial Secretary has kept in contact with District Deputy #2 regarding the handling of required reports, upcoming D.C. State Council programs and the notification to the Field Agent of fallen brother Knights. Despite the difficulty the pandemic has brought about in meeting on a regular basis, St. Thomas More Council #11578 continues to demonstrate a positive outlook on their involvement in the community with hopes of resuming effective council activities and programs, so that they can also aspire to achieve "Star Council" recognition!

#### **IMMACULATE CONCEPTION SHRINE COUNCIL #4944**

Shrine Council #4944 has been working very diligently to fulfill the guidelines according to the expectations of the D.C. State Council. Although the pandemic has had an adverse effect on council's plans and operations to a certain extent, Grand Knight Arthur H. Robinson has made certain that guidelines be fulfilled, such as the submission of the Report of Officers Chosen for the Term, the Report of Service Program Personnel, the Semiannual Audits, and the Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity with assistance from Financial Secretary Thomas L. Jones. However, Shrine Council is not in-compliance with the Safe Environment Program, and this will be addressed as soon as possible through the efforts of the Financial Secretary, who also serves as District Deputy #2. Thus far, the council is performing accordingly, and utilizes recruitment techniques thorough the Delta Church Drive at St. Francis de Sales Church. Recently, the Faith

in Action program was held at St. Francis de Sales Church, whereby the “Silver Rose” program was held for parishioners and brother Knights from District #2. Also, brother Knights from other councils and their families were invited to participate. Shrine Council #4944 serves two parishes, and the other one is St. Martin’s, where we will be holding recruitment efforts upon receipt of authorization from the pastor. However, there are plans to establish council Round Tables at both. Shrine Council #4944 has been holding membership meetings by way of “Zoom” due to the pandemic. However, we are looking forward to resuming “In-Person” council meetings at St. Joseph’s Seminary, soon. However, it has been noted that a larger number of brother knights take part in the “Zoom” and telephone conferences because it is so accessible. It is also noted that Shrine Council supports many other programs, such as “Thanksgiving Baskets for Families,” “Delivery of Thanksgiving Dinners for Shut-Ins” to the SFDS Church community, “Coats for Kids,” and the latest “Box of Joy” program in which 34 boxes of items were donated and a photo shoot was held with the sponsor. However, it is recommended that Shrine Council #4944 continue to promote support from Program Directors in key positions, and work hard toward fulfilling recruitment quotas and beyond, so that the council will be able to sustain itself in the future with viable members that will enable Immaculate Conception Shrine Council #4944 to be recognized as a “Star Council.”

I would like to sincerely thank State Deputy Chris Pierno and the members of the D.C. State Council Executive Team for their leadership and guidance. The Grand Knights and Financial secretaries with whom I have been working, truly demonstrated their dedication to their councils, church and the community they serve.

Vivat Jesus!

Respectfully Submitted,

Thomas L. Jones  
District Deputy #2