

**Resolutions to be Considered at the 124th Annual Meeting of
the District of Columbia State Council of
the Knights of Columbus**

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Recommended Actions Proposed by the Committee on Resolutions

Felicitations, Greetings, and Church-Related

1. Felicitations to the Archbishop of Washington and His Brother Bishops
Recommended Action: **ADOPT**
Submitted by: State Executive Committee

2. Felicitations to the Archbishop of the Military Services USA and His Brother Bishops
Recommended Action: **ADOPT**
Submitted by: State Executive Committee

3. Expressing Support for our Bishops and Priests
Recommended Action: **ADOPT**
Submitted by: State Executive Committee

4. Cause of Blessed Michael McGivney, Priest and Founder of the Knights of Columbus
Recommended Action: **ADOPT**
Submitted by: State Executive Committee

Recognition of Military and the Civil and Foreign Service

5. Honoring our Armed Forces
Recommended Action: **ADOPT**
Submitted by: State Executive Committee

6. In Recognition of Foreign Service Officers and Other Civil Servants
Recommended Action: **ADOPT**
Submitted by: State Executive Committee

Christopher Columbus

7. In Honor of Christopher Columbus
Recommended Action .: **ADOPT**
Submitted by: State Executive Committee

Issues of International Concern

8. In Solidarity with Persecuted Christians
Recommended Action: **ADOPT**
Submitted by: State Executive Committee

9. In Solidarity with Ukraine
Recommended Action: **ADOPT**
Submitted by: State Executive Committee

Culture of Life, Religious Liberty and Other Matters of Church Social Teaching

10. Decency in the Media and on the Internet
Recommended Action: **ADOPT**
Submitted by: State Executive Committee

11. In Defense of Religious Liberty
Recommended Action: **ADOPT**
Submitted by: State Executive Committee

12. Building up a Culture of Life
Recommended Action: **ADOPT**
Submitted by: State Executive Committee

13. In Defense of Marriage
Recommended Action: **ADOPT**
Submitted by: State Executive Committee

Matters of State Council Governance

14. Assessment of State Council Per Capita Dues in Light of Affiliate Membership
Recommended Action: **ADOPT**
Submitted by: State Executive Committee

RESOLUTION 1:
FELICITATIONS TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF WASHINGTON
AND HIS BROTHER BISHOPS

WHEREAS, the Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church, as successors of the Apostles, define the magisterial teachings of the Church and are charged with leading their churches for the greater glory of God; and

WHEREAS, the Knights of Columbus form the, “strong right arm of the Church,” and, as such, stand together in support of our bishops.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we express to our local ordinary His Eminence Wilton Cardinal Gregory, Archbishop of Washington, our gratitude and affection for his pastoral care and leadership of the Church with special recognition of his concern for the welfare and growth of the Knights of Columbus in the District of Columbia; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we also express our felicitations and support for the Auxiliary Bishops of Washington: the Most Reverend Roy Campbell, Jr, the Most Reverend Juan R. Esposito-Garcia, the Most Reverend Evelio Menjivar-Ayala; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we also express our felicitations to and support for our former local ordinary, His Eminence Donald Cardinal Wuerl, Archbishop Emeritus, and retired Auxiliary Bishop, the Most Reverend Francisco González, S.F., D.D.

RESOLUTION 2:
FELICITATIONS AND GRATITUDE TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF THE MILITARY SERVICES, USA, AND HIS BROTHER BISHOPS

WHEREAS, the Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church, as successors of the Apostles, define the magisterial teachings of the Church and are charged with leading their churches for the greater glory of God; and,

WHEREAS, the Knights of Columbus form the, “strong right arm of the Church,” and, as such, stand together in support of our bishops; and,

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia State Council has pledged itself, in a particular way, along with the Order at-large, to serve the Archdiocese of the Military Services, USA, whose headquarters is located within our territorial boundaries, but whose archdiocese is spread throughout the world.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we express to the Most Reverend Timothy Paul Broglio, J.C.D., Archbishop of the Military Services, USA, and President of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, our gratitude and affection for his pastoral care and leadership of the Church with special recognition of his concern for the welfare and growth of the Catholic military chaplaincy throughout the world; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we also express our felicitations and support for the Auxiliary Bishops of the Military Services, USA:, the Most Reverend F. Richard Spencer, the Most Reverend Neal Buckon, the Most Reverend William Muhm, and the Most Reverend Joseph Coffey.

RESOLUTION 3:
EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR OUR BISHOPS AND PRIESTS

WHEREAS, the call to the priesthood is a holy call from God that should be encouraged, nurtured and celebrated by Catholic families and the entire Catholic Church community; and

WHEREAS, the Knights of Columbus was founded by a parish priest whose own life and ministry mirrored that of St. John Vianney, the patron saint of priests, and has inspired our Order's long history of support for the priesthood as part of our critical mission of service to the Church.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Knights of Columbus expresses our gratitude and appreciation for the many wonderful and gifted bishops and priests who have labored in our parishes and in our various dioceses; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call upon all Knights of Columbus families to pray for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life, and for all councils to support those in formation for the priesthood through the Refund Support Vocations Program with the hope that more young men in the mold of St. John Vianney and Blessed Michael McGivney come forward to guide the faithful and become the future leaders of our Church; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be submitted for adoption by the Supreme Council.

RESOLUTION 4:
CAUSE OF BLESSED MICHAEL MCGIVNEY, PRIEST AND FOUNDER OF THE
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

WHEREAS, on Oct. 31, 2020, Father Michael J. McGivney, diocesan priest of Hartford and Founder of the Knights of Columbus, was raised to the honors of the altar and accorded the title “Blessed” by decree of Pope Francis at a Mass celebrated in the Cathedral of Saint Joseph in Hartford, Connecticut; and

WHEREAS, this auspicious event marked a significant step in our Founder’s Cause for Canonization, which was opened in the Archdiocese of Hartford in 1997, with the Knights of Columbus serving as Actor; and

WHEREAS, Father McGivney is only the third U.S.-born male to be beatified, and needs a second miracle attributed to his intercession to become eligible for canonization.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the members and families of the Knights of Columbus join in offering fervent prayers of thanksgiving for the beatification of the Order’s Founder; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, with full knowledge that a second miracle is needed for canonization, call upon all Knights and their families to invoke the proven intercession of Blessed Michael McGivney for their own needs and intentions, and to promptly report all favors received to the Father McGivney Guild, in the hope that our Founder’s cause will continue to advance so that he might soon number among the saints; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Order fully supports the mission of the Blessed Michael McGivney Pilgrimage Center, previously known as the Knights of Columbus Museum, as it provides greater focus on the spirituality and charitable vision of our Founder, while continuing the museum’s original mission of preserving and presenting the Order’s history.

RESOLUTION 5:
HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

WHEREAS, many of our brother Knights, along with thousands of other servicemen and women, are presently deployed in hostile and unstable regions around the world in efforts to combat terrorism, maintain order, and promote peace; and

WHEREAS, many of these men and women have heroically given their lives or sustained serious or debilitating injury while deployed in the service of their country; and

WHEREAS, Knights of Columbus support for the armed forces dates to World War I and the establishment of more than 100 Knights of Columbus morale centers supporting the welfare of Allied troops under the banner, “Everybody Welcome, Everything Free;” and

WHEREAS, we are committed to the spiritual welfare of the armed forces through our ongoing support of the Archdiocese for the Military Services Co-Sponsored Seminarian Program, which is critical to the formation of new military chaplains; and

WHEREAS, since 2004 the Order has distributed more than 600,000 copies of its *Armed With the Faith* military prayer books to Catholic troops around the world, including more than 65,000 copies of a bilingual edition for the Canadian military; and

WHEREAS, since 2013, we have worked with the Archdiocese for the Military Services, to sponsor the Warriors to Lourdes Pilgrimage, which provides an opportunity for non-wounded, wounded, ill, or injured military personnel to travel to this special Marian shrine for spiritual renewal and healing; and

WHEREAS, we are committed to “serving those who served” through the Veterans Affairs Voluntary Services program, with brother Knights donating nearly 100,000 hours of volunteer service at over 100 Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers in recent years; and

WHEREAS, we maintain 65 active military councils around the world which provide both material and spiritual support to answer the special needs of their local military and civilian communities.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Knights of Columbus reaffirms our unequivocal gratitude, support, and encouragement for the men and women of the armed forces who defend our liberties and freedoms; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we will never waver in our commitment to recognize the contributions of every service member on active duty, in the Guard, in the Reserves, and all veterans and retired service members; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we prayerfully support and encourage the families of those servicemen and women who are deployed; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we continue to pray for the mission success and the safe return of all military personnel throughout the world, especially those deployed to combat zones; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we now pay tribute to those men and women who have served, especially those who have suffered serious combat injuries, and we pray for the souls of those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice by giving their lives in the service of their country; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be forwarded to the Supreme Council for consideration at its annual meeting.

RESOLUTION 6:
**IN RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS AND OTHER CIVIL
SERVANTS**

WHEREAS, the United States operates embassies and consular offices throughout the world which are staffed by professional foreign service officers who work hard every day to represent our country to the outside world; and

WHEREAS, the United States government relies on the dedicated service of many civil servants throughout the world whose service is critical to the preservation of peace and the American way of life; and

WHEREAS, these Foreign Service Officers and civil servants put their lives on the line every day and, in some cases, pay the ultimate price in defense of American ideals and peace; and

WHEREAS, many members of the Order are current or former Foreign Service Officers or members of the civil service; and

WHEREAS, in at least in one instance Former District Warden and State Ceremonials Director Brian D. Adkins of the District of Columbia, a member of the United States Foreign Service, gave his life in this service of peace.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we thank our foreign service officers and civil servants for all their efforts to preserve peace in the world; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be submitted for adoption by the Supreme Council.

RESOLUTION 7:
IN HONOR OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

WHEREAS, in 1492 Christopher Columbus obtained permission and financial support from the King and Queen of Spain to sail west across the Atlantic Ocean in search of new trade routes; and

WHEREAS, on October 12 of that year, Columbus' expedition landed in what is today the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, immediately erecting a cross and naming the island San Salvador, in honor of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the World; and

WHEREAS, Columbus established a policy that his men were to treat the native people in the new world with respect, pursuant to which he sentenced to death men who disobeyed this order, which resulted in his own arrest and return to Spain in chains; and

WHEREAS, the 16th-century historian Bartolomé de las Casas, who exposed terrible abuses of native peoples, defended Columbus's motivations saying, "...I knew him well and I know his intentions are good;" and

WHEREAS, on the 400th anniversary of Columbus' first voyage to the Americas, Pope Leo XIII reflected on Columbus's strong Catholic faith writing, "it is fitting that we should confess and celebrate in an especial manner the will and designs of the Eternal Wisdom, under whose guidance the discoverer of the New World placed himself with a devotion so touching," and ordered the celebration of Solemn Mass of the Most Holy Trinity in honor of the occasion; and

WHEREAS, U.S. President Benjamin Harrison similarly commemorated the anniversary by declaring a national Columbus holiday that year to provide, "expressions of gratitude to Divine Providence for the devout faith of the discoverer, and for the divine care and guidance which has directed our history and so abundantly blessed our people;" and

WHEREAS, following this anniversary of Columbus's voyage, memorials and celebrations in honor of Columbus became popular in the United States as ways to celebrate the Catholic history of the Western Hemisphere and to counter-act anti-Catholicism in the United States; and

WHEREAS, at the height of the nativist and anti-Catholic sentiment of the late 19th century, Columbus was chosen as the Order's namesake because he was one of the few Catholics considered a hero of American history, and because the founding members of the Order wished to show that faithful Catholics can also be patriotic American citizens; and

WHEREAS, in 1906 the Knights of Columbus advocated for the construction of a monument in Washington, DC in honor of Columbus and, when it was completed in 1912, President William Howard Taft presided at the dedication ceremony, which was attended by several foreign ambassadors, thousands of Knights of Columbus, and thousands more spectators, leading to the observation that "every possible vantage point was filled;" and

WHEREAS, in the following decades, several states established holidays in honor of Columbus and, following the strong urging of the Knights of Columbus and several civic organizations, the United States declared Columbus Day a federal holiday in 1937; and

WHEREAS, the strong Catholic identity associated with Columbus Day led the Ku Klux Klan to denounce the celebration of the holiday as a "papal fraud" and to commit acts of violence and intimidation, including burning a cross at a Knights of Columbus celebration of Columbus Day in Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, to further accomplish its anti-Catholic goals in the United States, the Klan, and other nativist forces, initiated a campaign to disparage Columbus, claiming that he was not a hero, but rather just another foreign conqueror who was guilty of genocide, slavery, and oppression; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, these claims have been repeated, with misinformation about Columbus, leading to the elimination of favorable references to Columbus and the removal of monuments commemorating him, many of which were first established by Catholic immigrants seeking to establish their place in American society; and

WHEREAS, the Knights of Columbus includes many members of Native American and First Nation tribes among its ranks and works with these brother Knights and their families to address the challenges faced by indigenous communities, as well as to develop specific programs promoting the unique traditions of their Catholic faith; and

WHEREAS, in the spirit of Columbus, who sought to partner with the peaceful indigenous people he encountered, the Knights of Columbus is sharing the culture of Native American and First Nation communities through its documentary, *Enduring Faith: The Story of Native American Catholicism*, promoting devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe, and establishing a shrine dedicated to St. Kateri Tekakwitha, the first indigenous American saint.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Knights of Columbus remains steadfast in its support of Christopher Columbus as our namesake, state and federal holidays established in his honor, and, public monuments and commemorations dedicated to his life and historical contributions; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we will, without diminishing the unique contributions of native peoples to the remarkable cultural tapestry of the Americas, encourage our

public officials to preserve the intended spirit of the public holiday tradition with its cultural and patriotic implications, and not allow it to be undermined or diminished by neglect, dilution, or replacement; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call on state and local leaders to establish separate monuments, or other commemorations, that properly honor the contributions and centuries-long history of the native people of North America; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we commit our prayers for greater civility, peace, and understanding between all peoples to the intercession of our Blessed Mother, Patroness of the Americas, and namesake of Columbus' lead ship on that historic 15th century journey; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be submitted for adoption by the Supreme Council.

RESOLUTION 8:
IN SOLIDARITY WITH PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

WHEREAS, people of faith are widely targeted for persecution around the world by non-state actors such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and Boko Haram, and by the policies and actions of states classified by the U.S. Department of State as “countries of particular concern;” and

WHEREAS, on several occasions Pope Francis has urged the international community to respond to the persecution of Christians, including during his recent apostolic journey to Iraq; and

WHEREAS, the Knights of Columbus played a major role in the United States’ 2016 declaration that ISIS was committing genocide against Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East by preparing and distributing a 300-page report detailing the atrocities and by successfully advocating for unanimous passage of congressional resolutions in support of such a declaration; and

WHEREAS, the Knights of Columbus signed a memorandum of understanding with the U.S. Agency for International Development to collaborate on relief efforts and to share information to help increase the effectiveness of the government’s response to this crisis; and

WHEREAS, persecution of Christians in Africa continues unabated, especially in Nigeria where the terrorist organization Boko Haram, the West African branch of ISIS, and other anti-Christian entities have murdered nearly 60,000 Christians since 2010 and where nearly 80% of all religiously-motivated murders of Christians occurred in 2021; and

WHEREAS, religious persecution in East Asia is enabled by dictatorial regimes that reject the tenets of religious freedom and enact punitive laws that ban religion, decree certain practices illegal, or subvert religious observances in favor of fealty to the state; and

WHEREAS, the Knights of Columbus dedicated its 18th Marian Prayer Program to Our Lady, Help of Persecuted Christians, thereby encouraging all Knights of Columbus families to pray that the Blessed Mother intercede on behalf of all those persecuted for their faith in her divine Son; and

WHEREAS, Pope Francis has expressed his appreciation to the Knights of Columbus for our support of those “brothers and sisters in Christ throughout the world suffering from...violent persecution,” which has been accomplished through our Christian Refugee Relief Fund, which committed nearly \$30 million to support these communities in need.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Knights of Columbus stands in solidarity with all Christians around the world who are suffering from violent persecution, and we call on all Christians and people of good will to do the same; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we commend those nations providing support to religious minorities seeking to rebuild their lives after persecution and call on all governments and legislative bodies around the world to recognize this genocide against Christians and other religious minorities and to assist these persecuted communities; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call on the Government of the United States to continue an aggressive pursuit of religious liberty abroad through its engagement in international organizations and by the authority granted it in the International Religious Freedom Act, the Iraq and Syria Refugee Relief and Accountability Act, and other applicable statutes; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Knights of Columbus pledges to continue providing assistance to those who are victims of atrocities, especially those Christians who have faced violent persecution because of their faith; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be submitted for adoption by the Supreme Council.

RESOLUTION 9:
IN SOLIDARITY WITH UKRAINE

WHEREAS, at the 123rd Supreme Convention held in Chicago in 2005, the late Major Archbishop of Kyiv-Halyč, His Eminence Lubomyr Cardinal Husar, expressed his fervent desire that the Knights of Columbus be established in Ukraine to provide the Catholic men of his country the proper formation to serve the Church as lay leaders; and

WHEREAS, in May 2012 His Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk, Major Archbishop of Kyiv-Halyč and head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, and His Excellency Mieczysław Mokrzycki, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Lviv, joined the Knights of Columbus during historic First and Second Degree ceremonies in Ukraine, conveying the message of charity and unity that has become the essential hallmark of the Order's development in Ukraine; and

WHEREAS, in 2016 the Board of Directors established Ukraine as a territorial jurisdiction of the Order and, two years later in 2018, established Ukraine as a state council which today has more than 1,900 members across 44 local councils; and

WHEREAS, on February 24, 2022, the largest refugee and humanitarian crisis since the Second World War erupted in Europe, sparked by the outbreak of violent conflict in Ukraine, which Pope Francis has decried as an "abhorrent war;" and

WHEREAS, on February 25 Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly delivered a message of hope and unity to the Knights and families of Ukraine pledging that the Supreme Council, and all brother Knights, would stand with them and announced the creation of the Ukraine Solidarity Fund which, to date, has raised more than \$20 million in direct aid for Ukrainians; and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Council partnered with Knights in Poland and Ukraine and immediately established Mercy Centers on the border of the two countries to respond to the ensuing humanitarian crisis, which has seen more than six million Ukrainians flee their country; and

WHEREAS, while the immediate need at the border was abating, Polish Knights quickly pivoted by establishing Mercy Centers in parishes throughout Poland to provide aid, shelter, and resources to displaced Ukrainians; and

WHEREAS, Polish and Ukrainian Knights have continued to partner via KofC Charity Convoys to relay thousands of pounds of food and other humanitarian supplies from Poland into Lviv, and then around the war-torn country; and

WHEREAS, in 2022 the Supreme Knight traveled to Ukraine and Poland during Holy Week to meet with brother Knights and their families to personally express the Order's solidarity with them and to thank them for all of their efforts, including the distribution of more than 10,000 Easter baskets containing food and supplies to those in need; and

WHEREAS, in a private audience with the Supreme Knight, Pope Francis expressed his heartfelt support for the Order's efforts in Ukraine, extolling all Knights to continue this important mission; and

WHEREAS, as the conflict enters its second year, both the Supreme Knight and Supreme Chaplain have made additional visits to Ukraine to reiterate the Order's commitment which includes engaging in new projects such as efforts to remove landmines while continuing vital humanitarian assistance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Knights of Columbus reaffirms its solidarity with the people of Ukraine as they courageously confront an ongoing humanitarian crisis; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Knights of Columbus calls for an immediate end to all hostilities and for full and unfettered access to humanitarian assistance for all affected civilians, especially children, the elderly, people with disabilities, and the most vulnerable; and

FURTHER REOLVED, that we offer deep appreciation to the Knights of Poland who have provided countless hours of support to the Ukrainian people by responding to the humanitarian crisis as Knights have responded to similar periods of unrest and war for decades—through charity on the frontlines that seeks to provide aid and comfort for those most impacted and those most in need; and

FURTHER REOLVED, that we commend the Knights of Ukraine for their unwavering commitment to Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism amidst the perils of the present conflict during which they have answered the call of Cardinal Husar to “raise the spirituality” of their people and “show them the real face of the Church...as it should be;” and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call on the United States, United Nations, the European Union, and all people and nations of goodwill, to respond in whatever way they are able to support the suffering people of Ukraine; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we recommit ourselves to answering the call of Pope Francis to pray for peace in Ukraine, and across all of Eastern Europe, and to continue providing support to those impacted by the conflict through our Ukraine Solidarity Fund and the ongoing daily corporal works of mercy performed by our brother Knights throughout Eastern Europe; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be forwarded to the Supreme Council for consideration at its annual meeting.

RESOLUTION 10:
DECENCY IN THE MEDIA AND ON THE INTERNET

WHEREAS, pornography, sympathetic depictions of promiscuity, excessive violence, and profanity in the entertainment media, on social network platforms, and on the Internet are leading to a coarsening of our cultural life; and

WHEREAS, the ready accessibility of pornography on the internet and the pervasive presence of objectionable sexual content, excessive violence, and profanity in movies, the music industry, the video game industry, on social media platforms, and on television and radio are making it more difficult to raise children in a healthy atmosphere that protects their innocence; and

WHEREAS, pornography, objectionable sexual content, excessive violence, and profanity in the media offends the dignity and integrity of the person and have a destructive impact on marriages and on family life; and

WHEREAS, pornography is frequently connected to other criminal activity and is often a contributing factor leading to the crimes of human trafficking and the sexual abuse of children.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Knights of Columbus condemns pornography, objectionable sexual content, excessive violence, and profanity in the media and calls upon the entertainment industry, the video game industry, social media companies, and internet providers to maintain high standards of decency that will protect children and promote healthy family life; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we commend those in the entertainment and retail industries who produce and/or sell family-friendly media products; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we commend and thank those law-enforcement officials who enforce laws against child pornography, human trafficking; and selling adult rated materials to minors; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be submitted for adoption by the Supreme Council.

RESOLUTION 11:
IN DEFENSE OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

WHEREAS, the Second Vatican Council declared in *Dignitatis Humanae* that the right to religious freedom is based upon the inherent dignity of the human person, which requires that all people are to be free from coercion in matters of belief and conscience, and that no one should be forced to act in a manner contrary to his or her own beliefs or conscience; and

WHEREAS, the right to religious freedom is guaranteed by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and other documents recognizing religious freedom; and

WHEREAS, religious freedom is not a benefit that a government confers out of a sense of mere tolerance, which can be removed, but rather it is an inalienable right, rooted in the transcendent dignity of every human being; and

WHEREAS, Pope Francis has called religious freedom “a fundamental right of man,” that is “not simply freedom of thought or private worship” but “the freedom to live according to ethical principles, both privately and publicly;” and

WHEREAS, since its founding, the Knights of Columbus has worked to defend religious freedom for all people and has done so out of a commitment to our faith and our unshakeable belief that religious freedom is a basic human right; and

WHEREAS, the Order’s work on behalf of religious freedom included efforts in the U.S. Supreme Court case *Pierce v. Society of Sisters*, which affirmed the right of children to a Catholic education in opposition to the efforts of the Ku Klux Klan; and

WHEREAS, our work for religious freedom also included protesting the persecution of Catholics in Mexico in the 1920s; efforts to combat the anti-religious worldview of Communism; and the inclusion of the phrase “under God” in the U.S. Pledge of Allegiance to distinguish the United States from anti-religious governments; and

WHEREAS, Pope Francis has urged the Knights of Columbus to draw the attention of Catholic Americans “to contribute to the reasoned defense” of religious freedom and reminded us that “to the extent that this right is menaced...there is a need for a mobilization of consciences on the part of all those citizens who, regardless of party or creed, are concerned for the overall welfare of society.”

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we will remain steadfast in our support for the free exercise of religion as it is described in *Dignitatis Humanae* and enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other documents recognizing religious freedom; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we stand firm in our conviction that the full guarantee of religious liberty cannot be limited to “freedom of worship” as some have claimed, but must include full “freedom of religion,” which necessarily encompasses the public dimension of religion, the freedom from persecution or discrimination on the basis of conscience and belief, and the fact that believers are called to play an active role in building the social order; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call on the U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and U.S. Department of Education to maintain robust religious and moral exemptions as part of its regulatory rulemakings and enforcement of federal law; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we urge all government officials to enact legislation that will protect the right of religious institutions and individuals to be free from government coercion; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we will always speak out against any effort to impose religious tests on candidates or nominees for government positions; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we will remain steadfast in our opposition to future governmental actions or policies that force institutions and individuals to violate their deeply held religious beliefs; and,

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be forwarded to the Supreme Council for consideration at its annual meeting.

RESOLUTION 12:
BUILDING A CULTURE OF LIFE

WHEREAS, the Knights of Columbus has a deep and historic commitment to oppose any government action or policy that promotes abortion, embryonic stem cell research, human cloning, euthanasia, assisted suicide, or other offenses against life; and

WHEREAS, the Order supports programs that provide women facing crisis pregnancies with alternatives to abortion, including adoption, and that we support projects that provide spiritual support to those women suffering from the traumatic emotional and psychological aftereffects of abortion; and

WHEREAS, our Ultrasound Program has provided a window into the womb by placing nearly 1,700 ultrasound machines in 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Republic of Korea, and a growing number of Canadian provinces; and

WHEREAS, in July 2022 the Supreme Council launched the Aid and Support After Pregnancy (ASAP) Program to support the hundreds of pregnancy resource centers and maternity homes—collectively serving nearly two million expectant mothers, parents, and babies in the United States—by providing \$100 for every \$500 that a council gives in support of such facilities; and

WHEREAS, we reaffirm our commitment to building a “culture of life” by promoting policies that favor the family, and by recognizing that it is within strong and healthy families that moral values are taught and the spiritual heritage of the nation is transmitted; and,

WHEREAS, the Knights of Columbus has a long history of supporting marches and rallies for the cause of life in the countries where we have a formal presence and throughout the United States in state capitals and other major cities; and

WHEREAS, Pope Benedict XVI reiterated that “Catholic politicians and legislators, conscious of the grave responsibility before them, must feel particularly bound, on the basis of a properly formed conscience, to introduce and support laws inspired by values grounded in human nature;” and

WHEREAS, in his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis reminded us that, “Among the vulnerable for whom the Church wishes to care with particular love and concern are unborn children, the most defenseless and innocent among us...this defense of unborn life is closely linked to the defense of each and every other human right. It involves the conviction that a human being is always sacred and inviolable, in any situation and at every stage of development;” and

WHEREAS, in his encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, the Holy Father reiterated that “Since everything is interrelated, concern for the protection of nature is also incompatible with the justification of abortion;” and

WHEREAS, in remarks to the leadership of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Pope Francis reiterated that “protection of the unborn is a preeminent priority” and it is not first a religious issue, but rather an issue of human rights.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we will continue to speak out to our elected representatives about the need to enact legislation protecting human life in all its stages; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we believe women deserve better than abortion and will continue to support alternatives to abortion, including adoption, and that we support projects which provide spiritual support to those women and men suffering from the traumatic emotional and psychological aftereffects of abortion; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that through our Ultrasound Initiative and the ASAP Program, we will continue to support pregnancy care centers and maternity homes so that they can provide the necessary resources and support that help mothers to choose life and both rear and care for their children; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Knights of Columbus will continue to uphold the Catholic Church's authoritative teaching on the sanctity of life from conception to natural death, as explained in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, *Laudato Si'*, and other documents; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call on government officials at all levels to enact laws that protect unborn human life; and, where abortions may continue to be legal, we call for laws that protect the rights of conscience of medical professionals from being forced to perform abortions and for laws that prevent the use of taxpayer funding of abortion; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we reaffirm our long-standing policies of not inviting to any Knights of Columbus event, persons, especially public officials or candidates for public office, who do not support the legal protection of unborn children, or who advocate the legalization of assisted suicide or euthanasia, and that we prohibit such persons from renting or otherwise using facilities over which our members have control, or speaking at Knights of Columbus events, or bestowing on them honors or privileges of our Order of any kind, or inviting them to serve as honorary chairpersons of events, celebrations, or committees, or hold any office in the Knights of Columbus; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we once again commit ourselves to praying the Rosary frequently, to fasting and to doing penance in reparation for the evils perpetrated against the gift of life and that we seek the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who herself said "yes" to life, to intercede on our behalf for the establishment of a "culture of life," and;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be forwarded to the Supreme Council.

RESOLUTION 13:
SUPPORTING A CULTURE OF MARRIAGE

WHEREAS, marriage is a natural institution, pre-dating the state, that is based on ancient human values and that has been recognized over time as a unique and deeply rooted social, legal, and religious institution; and

WHEREAS, marriage reflects the natural biological complementarity between a man and a woman, which is woven into the social and religious fabric of every major culture and society; and

WHEREAS, on numerous occasions, Pope Francis has reminded us of the importance of the Order's role in the protection and promotion of marriage, including in his message to our 131st Annual Meeting in San Antonio, his first as pope, and invited all Knights "...to bear witness to the authentic nature of marriage and the family...and the beauty and truth of human sexuality;" and

WHEREAS, Pope Francis declared in his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* "that only the exclusive and indissoluble union between a man and a woman has a plenary role to play in society as a stable commitment that bears fruit in new life."

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Knights of Columbus renews its commitment to supporting the Catholic Church's teaching on marriage; and,

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be submitted for adoption by the Supreme Council.

RESOLUTION 14:
ASSESSMENT OF STATE COUNCIL PER CAPITA DUES
IN LIGHT OF AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP

WHEREAS, Section 57 of the Laws and Rules of the Order permit state councils to levy per capita assessments to cover or defray the costs of the programmatic, administrative, or charitable efforts of the state council; and

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia State Council has regularly assessed a per capita charge on all dues paying members in the jurisdiction to the benefit of enhanced state council meeting experiences, major charitable initiatives like Coats for Kids, direct support to parishes and seminaries, membership efforts, and administrative needs such as advertisements that benefit the entire jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, the Supreme Council began its introduction of a new class of membership called “affiliate membership” by which councils were given the opportunity to submit for re-classification to affiliate membership those members who had become inactive in the council and that fit a certain preset criteria, in turn, the Supreme Council assumed responsibility for the administration of these brother Knights’ membership and the members were removed from the rolls of the subordinate councils; and

WHEREAS, councils in the District of Columbia rightfully availed themselves of this new program resulting in the reassignment of 658 brother Knights to affiliate membership accounting for approximately 25% of all membership subject to Supreme Council and State Council per capita levies; and

WHEREAS, this reduction in membership, while beneficial for councils to rebuild and refocus their retention efforts, resulted in a loss of 25% of the District of Columbia State Council’s operating revenue; and

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia State Council last made a change to its per capita assessment during its 113th Annual Meeting held in 2012 at which time it set assessments to \$3 per member for every college council and \$4 per member for all other councils; and

WHEREAS, in the intervening years, the costs of goods and services have increased all while demands on the State Council from local parishes, the Archdiocese, and community-based organizations have increased resulting in further strain on the State Council's operations.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that, pursuant the authority granted them in Section 57 of the Laws and Rules of the Order, the delegates to the 124th Annual Meeting of the District of Columbia State Council hereby increase the state council's per capita levy by \$1 per member for a total of \$4 per member of a college council and \$5 per member of all other councils, effective the fraternal year beginning July 1, 2023 and until such time the delegates to a future annual meeting deem otherwise.