**2022 – 2023 Columbian year activities and accomplishments - John Groel**

Four Primary Programs of the Knights of Columbus – Faith, Family, Community and Life

**Our Faith Chairperson is Paul Kolodziej**

“The Faith program is centered on building a stronger Catholic Faith.” Some of the highlighted programs which we do are:

* Support a diocesan seminarian by donating money towards his education
* Support of St Luke’s First Friday Adoration
* Support families during – Sacramental gifts. We provide First Holy Communion Gift Sets containing a prayer book, set of rosary beads, scapular and First Holy Communion pin to each child.
* Support our retired priests at Nazareth Village by driving them to medical appointments.

**Our Family Chairperson is Dan Bigos**

“The Family program is centered on strengthening the bonds of families in the parish.” Some of the highlighted programs which we do are:

* Food for the hungry. We held two very successful Food Drives and collected over 4,300 pounds of food and collected $2,700 to purchase additional food for those in need.
* To promote the true spirit of Christmas and Easter in our parish and community, one of our council members and his family organized a beautiful Christmas Nativity Play and Passion Play with the children of the parish.
* Held another successful Dinner and Movie Night with Santa for the children of the parish.
* Awarded two $1,000 scholarships to our graduating high school seniors to continue their education
* Several members attended the annual statewide Knights of Columbus, Spiritual Weekend Retreat at the San Alfonso Retreat Center

**Our Community Chairperson is Bernie Schettino**

“Knights are called to serve others. Our first principle is Charity – at home with our families and in our communities. When Knights of Columbus members come together, they accomplish great things.” Some of the Community programs we do are:

* Held a winter Coat Drive at our churches and collected over 450 coats and purchased 24 new. All were donated to those in need
* Held a month-long sock drive to collect socks for the needy
* Despite the tough weather conditions, our council participated in organizing another Wreaths Across America event honoring the fallen soldiers in our town’s cemeteries by placing wreaths on each grave.
* Assisted our brothers from Operation Chillout at another Vests Fest event to help the homeless vets
* We honored our 3 local Scout troops with engraved plaques recognizing them as new Eagle Scouts
* Conducted another annual Knights of Columbus Free Throw Basketball Championship event on both a local and a district level
* Conducted an Annual Free Throw Special Needs Fun Night for our special needs parishioners.
* Several of our more, sturdy members – Mike Leyden, Bill Harding and Mike Lennon joined Team Chilly Cheeks in the State Polar Bear Plunge raising over $19,438 to support the NJ Special Olympics.
* Held another Intellectually Challenged Drive collecting $1,879 which was donated to the Morris County ARC
* Donated money to Smile Train to help support surgery for those in poor countries afflicted with Cleft.

**Our Life Chairpersons are Pat Gibbons and Patrick Conboy**

“The Knights of Columbus vigorously defends the dignity of each human being at every stage of life.” Some of the Life Programs we do are:

* Sponsor monthly masses for the unborn
* Organize and attend an annual March for Life trip to Washington, DC
* Raise money for Right to Life causes by conducting Roses for Life Drives
* Donated $6,400 and partnered with the State and Supreme Councils to purchase a new state of the art Ultra Sound Machine for the Lighthouse Pregnancy Resource Center in Patterson.

**Additional events and activities our council conducts which do not fall into those categories:**

* We formed a CUF Degree Exemplification Team under the leadership of Tom Sanders. We hold Exemplifications for new members joining the Knights.
* We contributed over 2,000 hours of service to Hackettstown, Long Valley and Chester area communities.
* We donated monies to our churches for building renovations and audio/visual equipment.
* We attended the NJ State Knights of Columbus Convention in Wildwood, NJ
* We held an annual family Pot Luck Dinner in January to celebrate all our hard work throughout the year

**Fund Raisers to support all our programs**

* We held our 31st Annual Community Benefit Auction which is our primary fund raiser for the year.
* We held our 2nd Annual Fish and Chips Dinner a popular and enjoyable evening and fund raiser.
* We also raised funds by supporting the Fourth Degree’s Shoprite bagging program.