



Roanoke Valley Knights



John B. McGuirk Council #7232, Roanoke Rapids, NC March 2024

SPIRITUAL MESSAGE

CELEBRATION OF PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

*St Peter's Square
Sunday, 2 April 2023*

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (*Mt 27:46*). This is the cry that today’s liturgy has us repeat in the responsorial psalm (cf. *Ps 22:2*), the only cry that Jesus makes from the cross in the Gospel we have heard. Those words bring us to the very heart of Christ’s passion, the culmination of the sufferings he endured for our salvation. “Why have you forsaken me?”

The sufferings of Jesus were many, and whenever we listen to the account of the Passion, they pierce our hearts. There were *sufferings of the body*: let us think of the slaps and beatings, the flogging and the crowning with thorns, and in the end, the cruelty of the crucifixion. There were also *sufferings of the soul*: the betrayal of Judas, the denials of Peter, the condemnation of the religious and civil authorities, the mockery of the guards, the jeering at the foot of the cross, the rejection of the crowd, utter failure and the flight of the disciples. Yet, amid all these sorrows, Jesus remained certain of one thing: the closeness of the Father. Now, however, the unthinkable has taken place. Before dying, he cries out: “*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*” The forsakenness of Jesus.

This is the most searing of all sufferings, *the suffering of the spirit*. At his most tragic hour, Jesus experiences abandonment by God. Prior to that moment, he had never called the Father by his generic name, “God”. To convey the impact of this, the Gospel also reports his words in Aramaic. These are the only words of Jesus from the cross that have come down to us in the original language. The real event is the extreme abasement, being forsaken by the Father, forsaken by God. We find it hard even to grasp what great suffering he embraced out of love for us. He sees the gates of heaven close, he finds himself at the bitter edge, the shipwreck of life, the collapse of certainty. And he cries out: “Why?” A “why” that embraces every other “why” ever spoken. “Why, God?”

“*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*” In the Bible, the word “forsake” is powerful. We hear it at moments of extreme pain: love that fails, or is rejected or betrayed; children who are rejected and aborted; situations of repudiation, the lot of widows and orphans; broken marriages, forms of social exclusion, injustice and oppression; the solitude of sickness. In a word, in the drastic severing of the bonds that unite us to others. There, this word is spoken: “abandonment”. Christ brought all of this to the cross; upon his shoulders, he bore the sins of the world. And at the supreme moment, Jesus, the only-begotten, beloved Son of the Father, experienced a situation utterly alien to his very being: abandonment, the distance of God.

Why did it have to come to this? *He did it for us*. There is no other answer. For us. Brothers and sisters, today this is not merely a show. Every one of us, hearing of Jesus’ abandonment, can say: *for me*. This abandonment is the price he paid for me. He became one with each of us in order to be completely and definitively one with us *to the very end*. He experienced abandonment in order not to leave us prey to despair, in order to stay at our side forever. He did this for me, for you, because whenever you or I or anyone else seems pinned to the wall, lost in a blind alley, plunged into the abyss of abandonment, sucked into a whirlwind of so many “whys” without an answer, there can still be a hope: Jesus himself, for you, for me. It is not the end, because Jesus was there and even now, he is at your side. He endured the distance of abandonment in order to take up into his love every possible distance that we can feel. So that each of us might say: in my failings, and each of us has failed many times, in my desolation, whenever I feel betrayed or betrayed others, whenever I feel cast aside or have cast aside **(Continued on next page.)**

others, whenever I feel forsaken or have abandoned others, let us think of Jesus, who was abandoned, betrayed and cast aside. There, we find him. When I feel lost and confused, when I feel that I can't go on, he is beside me. Amid all my unanswered questions "why...?", he is there.

That is how the Lord saves us, from within our questioning "why?" From within that questioning, he opens the horizon of hope that does not disappoint. On the cross, even as he felt utter abandonment – this is the ultimate end – Jesus refused to yield to despair; instead, he prayed and trusted. He cried out his "why?" in the words of the Psalm (22:2), and commended himself into the hands of the Father, despite how distant he felt him to be (cf. *Lk 23:46*) or rather, whom he did not feel, for instead he felt himself abandoned. In the hour of his abandonment, Jesus continued to trust. At the hour of abandonment, he continued to love his disciples who had fled, leaving him alone. In his abandonment he forgave those who crucified him (v. 34). Here we see the abyss of our many evils immersed in a greater love, with the result that our isolation becomes fellowship.

Brothers and sisters, a love like this, embracing us totally and to the very end, the love of Jesus, can turn our stony hearts into hearts of flesh. His is a love of mercy, tenderness and compassion. This is God's style: closeness, compassion and tenderness. God is like this. Christ, in his abandonment, stirs us to seek him and to love him and those who are themselves abandoned. For in them we see not only people in need, but Jesus himself, abandoned: Jesus, who saved us by descending to the depths of our human condition. He is with each of them, abandoned even to death... I think of the German so-called "street person", who died under the colonnade, alone and abandoned. He is Jesus for each of us. So many need our closeness, so many are abandoned. I too need Jesus to caress me and draw close to me, and for this reason I go to find him in the abandoned, in the lonely. He wants us to care for our brothers and sisters who resemble him most, those experiencing extreme suffering and solitude. Today, dear brothers and sisters, their numbers are legion. Entire peoples are exploited and abandoned; the poor live on our streets and we look the other way; there are migrants who are no longer faces but numbers; there are prisoners who are disowned; people written off as problems. Countless other abandoned persons are in our midst, invisible, hidden, discarded with white gloves: unborn children, the elderly who live alone: they could perhaps be your father or mother, your grandfather or grandmother, left alone in retirement homes, the sick whom no one visits, the disabled who are ignored, and the young burdened by great interior emptiness, with no one prepared to listen to their cry of pain. And they find no path other than suicide. The abandoned of our day. The "Christs" of our day.

Jesus, in his abandonment, asks us to open our eyes and hearts to all who find themselves abandoned. For us, as disciples of the "forsaken" Lord, no man, woman or child can be regarded as an outcast, no one left to himself or herself. Let us remember that the rejected and the excluded are living icons of Christ: they remind us of his reckless love, his forsakenness that delivers us from every form of loneliness and isolation. Brothers and sisters, today let us implore this grace: to love Jesus in his abandonment and to love Jesus in the abandoned all around us. Let us ask for the grace to see and acknowledge the Lord who continues to cry out in them. May we not allow his voice to go unheard amid the deafening silence of indifference. God has not left us alone; let us care, then, for those who feel alone and abandoned. Then, and only then, will we be of one mind and heart with the one who, for our sake, "emptied himself" (*Phil 2:7*). He emptied himself completely for us.

GRAND KNIGHT'S MESSAGE

Worthy Brothers:

I hope that everyone is enjoying a fruitful Lenten Season. As Father Marlon said during the Palm Sunday Mass, "We now prepare for Holy Week and a special time of renewal and spiritual growth. If you have failed on your Lenten Sacrifice it is not too late to reset yourself and continue on your Lenten journey during this special time. Also, please take advantage of all that the Church has to offer in terms of spiritual activities during Holy Week."

If you have not yet paid your dues for this fraternal year please send out your checks to: Wencil Stanek F.S., K of C 7232, 428 Windward Dr., Henrico, NC 27842 or drop it off at the Parish Office. For Council 7232 the dues are \$30. Honorary are \$10 and for the Assembly 2538 the dues are \$20. Assembly dues must be on a separate check. You can put both checks in one envelop. I appreciate your prompt attention to this matter. Also, please send in your sold raffle tickets and collected money as well.

GK Jerris



CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE

I once again want to thank the Knights for the continued support of the Donut Socials after the 9am Mass on the first of each month. Thank you to parishioners, including Knights, for your generosity in improving the parish's financial status. The last Finance Council meeting showed that finances are looking good.

"Holy Cow" raffle. Two winners, with each winner getting ½ of a cow. Tickets will be sold from 1st Sunday of Lent until 1st Sunday after Easter (Sunday of Divine Mercy). Tickets are priced at 1 for \$25 or 5 for \$100, 800 tickets initially printed. All funds will go towards parish's building fund. A Facebook Live drawing on 4/7 for winners. This raffle will be advertised in the local paper, Facebook, and other media. Contact Katie with questions and also to pay for tickets with credit card.

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

Hispanic Brother Knights continue to have breakfast together every month at Cracker Barrel to talk about our knighthood, our families, our lives, etc. Any Brother Knight is welcome to attend this fellowship meeting. Please bring a friend to attend these breakfasts who may be interested in joining the Order. Next one tentatively scheduled for 4/28/2024 at 8am at Cracker Barrel. For additional information please contact Clemente Vasquez (252-529-4024).

The next Knights Mass will be held on Sunday, April 7 at 9am. Also, there is a Rosary Service and Bible Study every Tuesday at 7pm in the Hall. There is also a floating Rosary at different locations. Coordinator for these rosary events is Clemente Vasquez (252-529-4024).

There is always a need to perform work on and around the Parish campus. Please let DGK Scooter know if you are interested in helping out. See the monthly meeting minutes to see all what is going on and how you can help out. DGK Scooter would like to thank all the volunteers that came out and helped at all or any of the building projects especially the painting of the Church both knights and non-knights.

COUNCIL & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

The next Knight's Mass will be held on Sunday, April 7 at 9am. Please try to wear gray pants, white shirt, red tie and a blue suit coat if possible. The next Council program meeting will be held on Thursday, April 4 at 6:30pm with the Council meeting held afterwards at 7pm in the hall. There are a few new prospects for membership into our Council. However, we must remember that membership is every knight's responsibility. Please let GK Jerris or DGK Scooter know if you have a fellow Catholic gentleman that is interested in joining the Council. There will be a exemplification at the April meeting for Chris Smith.

If you or someone you know is in a crisis situation and is in need of assistance with groceries, housing issues (rent/mortgage) or utility bills, please contact the church at (252) 308-8771.

Catholic Charity Food Giveaway:

- 1st Wednesday every month 8am until all gone.
- Catholic Charities bring about 75 bags of groceries.
- Brother Wencil and his wife (Trudy) will assist with giving the food out.



FAMILY & YOUTH ACTIVITIES

The Parish is sponsoring an Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 30 at 11:30am. There will also be a food plate sale as well starting at 10:30am. All proceeds will be for the Building Fund. Please come out with your family and friends and support this event. There will be an assortment of food to choose from. Please see the flyer in this edition of the newsletter.



FOURTH DEGREE & Pro-Life NEWS

The March in Raleigh will be held on May 18, 2024.

More Important than Ever

Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly addressed Knights on the second anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine Feb. 24, reviewing the courageous work of Ukrainian Knights since the war began, expressing gratitude to donors of the Ukraine Solidarity Fund, and renewing the Order's commitment to serve the Ukrainian people. "We will continue to support you and stand with you," the supreme knight told Ukrainian Knights. "And we pray for you, every day, that Our Lady of Victory will deliver to you a lasting peace."



Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly and Ukraine State Deputy Yuriy Maletskiy deliver Easter care packages to families taking refuge at a monastery in Rava-Ruska, Ukraine, in April 2022.



Ralph Haselman. Faithful Navigator

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Happy Birthday



Knights with Birthdays in March

Mr. Troy Allen	3-03-1964	60 Years	Mr. Edward G Treilinskie	3-13-1938	86 Years
Mr. Peter A Di Prima	3-17-1959	65 Years	Mr. Patrich J O'Brien	3-23-1942	82 Years

Happy Anniversary

Knights with Anniversaries in March

****We have no listed anniversaries for the month of March.



Council 7232 Prayer List:

SICK LIST: Bill & Lois Gautier, Diane Gubbins, Joseph Engrassia, Fr. Joe Fiorie, Msgr. Jerry Lewis, Robert Solkolinsky, Barry Van Scoyoc, Ron Labriola, Ed Nealis, Yayi Portela

DECEASED LIST: David Birdsong

Upcoming Events:

- Mar 28 Holy Thursday
- Mar 29 Good Friday
- Mar 30 Holy Saturday
- Mar 30 Parish Food Plate Sales (10:30am) & Easter Egg Hunt (11:30am)
- Mar 31 Easter Sunday
- Apr 4 Council Planning meeting at 6:30pm in the Hall
- Apr 4 Council Meeting at 7pm in the Hall (Chris Smith Exemplification)
- Apr 7 Knight's Mass 9:00am
- Apr 15 Tax Day
- Apr 18 Social Dinner in the Hall, 6:30pm
- Any Date 2nd RSVP Check Due
- Apr 27 Hispanic Brothers Breakfast @ Cracker Barrel 8am, All Knights are welcome and anyone in the Parish seeking to become a Knight

LENTEN FISH FRY 2024



A special Thanks to DGK Scooter for coordinating the Church painting project.

TRIDUUM SCHEDULE

March 28

Holy Thursday Mass—7:00 p.m.
*Opportunity for prayer in parish hall
until 12:00 midnight*



March 29

Day of fasting and abstinence

Stations of the Cross—2:00 p.m.
Good Friday Service—3:00 p.m.

March 30

Easter Vigil—8:00 p.m., beginning outside

March 31

Easter Sunday—8:30 a.m. (English)
Easter Sunday—10:00 a.m. (Spanish)
Easter Sunday—11:30 a.m. (English)



**Easter Egg Hunt &
Food Sale
Saturday, March 30**



Food Sale Starts at 10:30 a.m.

3 Tacos \$12 5 Enchiladas \$12 Fruta \$6 Gorditas \$10 Sodas/Aguas \$1
Elotes \$6 Esquites \$8 Chicharrones \$5 Aguas de Jamaica/Horchata \$3

Easter Egg Hunt Starts at 11:30 a.m.
