

State Program Director Message

July 2026

Viva Jesus!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our outgoing State, Chapter, and Council officers for their dedicated service during the 2025–2026 Columbian Year. Your leadership, commitment, and countless hours of service have strengthened our Order and made a lasting impact on our Church, our communities, and our families.

As we welcome a new group of elected officers, it is time to continue the outstanding work that has become the hallmark of the Knights of Columbus. Together, we will continue serving our Church, our communities, our families, and our brother Knights with renewed enthusiasm and purpose.

This year, our Worthy State Deputy, Vladimir Rivera, has chosen the theme:

“Our hearts are restless, until they rest in You.”

These words from St. Augustine beautifully reflect the mission of the Knights of Columbus. Every day, through our Faith in Action programs, we live out this message. Through charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism, we discover that serving Christ through service to others is what truly fulfills the human heart.

Programs are the lifeblood of every council. They are what keep our councils active, strengthen our membership, and make our Order visible in our parishes and communities. When you became a Knight of Columbus, you learned that our first principle is Charity. Every charitable act we perform not only changes lives but also strengthens our councils by attracting new members and encouraging current members to remain active and engaged.

This Columbian Year, the entire State Program Team stands ready to assist every council with planning, promoting, and carrying out successful programs. Together, we will continue providing meaningful opportunities to serve those most in need through programs such as Helping Hands, Campesinos, Coats for Kids, Food for Families, and many others.

We will continue strengthening our faith through programs such as Praying the Rosary, Into the Breach, Holy Hours, and ¡Viva Cristo Rey! These programs help us grow spiritually while bringing others closer to Christ.

One of our most inspiring opportunities is the Global Wheelchair Mission. Imagine giving the gift of mobility to someone who has never experienced the freedom of independent movement. Our statewide goal this year is to raise \$500,000, enough to provide approximately 4,000 wheelchairs to people around the world.

When we pray the Blessed Michael McGivney Prayer, we ask God to help us become “apostles of Christian family life and to lead the young to the generous service of their neighbor.” Father McGivney founded the Knights of Columbus to strengthen and protect families, and we continue that mission through programs such as Family of the Month, Family of the Year, Bright Futures, Build-A-Bed, the

Soccer Challenge, Basketball Free Throw Championship, Poster Contest, Essay Contest, and many other youth and family initiatives.

There truly is a program for every council, regardless of its size or location.

One of my priorities this year is strengthening participation among our Spanish-speaking councils. California is blessed with 53 Spanish councils, yet only 31 are currently active. We can—and must—do more to support these councils and help them become fully engaged in the life of our Order.

Working alongside our Worthy State Secretary and our Hispanic Leadership Team, we will develop additional training, mentoring, and opportunities for collaboration between English-speaking and Spanish-speaking councils. By working together, we can build stronger councils and a stronger California State Council.

Supreme has also introduced several outstanding programs designed to strengthen Hispanic ministry, including Quinceañera Support, Imitating Saint Juan Diego, ¡Viva Cristo Rey!, and Holy Hour for Life with Our Lady of Guadalupe. I encourage every council to explore these opportunities and partner together whenever possible.

Beginning this year, we will highlight two featured programs each month—one Supreme program and one State program—to help councils focus their efforts and increase participation.

For July, our featured Supreme program is [Bright Futures](#), a new initiative that encourages councils to partner with local schools by identifying and meeting their greatest needs. Councils can support schools through tuition assistance, school supply drives, backpack collections, book drives, classroom improvement projects, or campus beautification efforts.

Our featured State initiative celebrates the [250th Anniversary of the United States](#). In partnership with our parishes, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Supreme, we encourage every council to participate in:

- 250 Hours of Eucharistic Adoration through Holy Hours, Sacred Heart Holy Hours, and other Eucharistic devotions.
- 250 Hours of Mercy through programs such as Food for Families, Helping Hands, and other charitable service projects.

July is also an excellent time for councils to begin planning their Soccer Challenge events. Program kits are available through Officers Online and can be ordered now to prepare for the fall season.

Finally, I encourage every council to submit the Fraternal Program Report (Form #10784) after completing each Faith in Action or council program. This simple report is one of the most valuable tools available. It documents your council's activity for Supreme and the California State Council, demonstrates your council's vitality, and provides essential information for State Awards and the State Service Program Award (STSP).

Please also note that the Columbian Award Application (Form SP-7) has been updated this year. Your District Deputy and State Program Team will be available to assist your council with these changes and answer any questions you may have.

My brothers, every program we conduct is an opportunity to evangelize, to serve, and to encounter Christ. Together, let us continue building stronger councils, stronger families, stronger parishes, and stronger communities throughout California.

May we never forget that our hearts truly find rest when we place Christ at the center of everything we do.

Viva Jesus!

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