



"The opportunity to serve together"

Portsmouth Knightly News

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Two Men of March

This March we celebrate the feast days of two of the Catholic Church's great saints, St. Patrick and St. Joseph. The following are excerpts on the lives of these two holy men.



Saint Patrick (about 389-461) is the patron saint of Ireland. Patrick was chiefly responsible for converting the Irish people to Christianity. The Irish knew him as the Apostle. His name in Latin is Patricius.

Patrick was born in Britain. His father was a wealthy alderman and a Christian. When Patrick was 16 years old, pirates captured him during a raid and sold him as a slave in Ireland. He served as a shepherd of an Irish chieftain in Ulster. During his captivity, Patrick dedicated himself to religion. He escaped after six years of slavery and returned to his home in Britain.

As a result of his experiences in Ireland, Patrick became driven by the idea of converting the Irish to Christianity. To prepare himself for that task, he studied in the monastery of Lerins, on an island off the southeast coast of France. Patrick also went to Auxerre, France, and studied religion under Saint Germanus, a French bishop. Partly because Patrick's earlier education was inadequate, his religious superiors were reluctant to let him return to Ireland as a missionary. But Palladius, the first Irish missionary bishop died in 431. Pope Celestine I then sent Patrick to Ireland.

Patrick began his work in northern and western Ireland, where no one had ever preached Christianity. He gained the trust and friendship of several tribal leaders and soon made many converts. Patrick is said to have founded more than 300 churches and baptized more than 120,000 people. Patrick brought clergymen from England and France for his new churches. He succeeded in

his mission in Ireland, even though many British clergymen opposed him and the way he organized his churches. Patrick preached in Ireland for the rest of his life.

His writings serve as the most important sources of information about Patrick's life and work. During his later years, he wrote *Confession*, an account of his spiritual development. Patrick wrote this book to justify his mission to Ireland. In the book, Patrick expressed his humility and thankfulness that God called him to serve the Irish. Patrick also wrote *Letter to Coroticus*. In this letter, he criticized a raid on Ireland conducted by Coroticus, a British chieftain. Several of Patrick's converts were killed during the raid. The letter also shows Patrick's resentment of the scornful attitude of British clergymen and nobility toward the Irish.

Many stories about Patrick are based only on legend. One of the best-known tales tells how he charmed the snakes of Ireland into the sea so they were drowned. According to another legend, Patrick used a three-leaf shamrock to illustrate the idea of the Trinity. Many people believe the shamrock came to be the traditional symbol of Ireland as a result of this legend. Today, Irish Catholics throughout the world celebrate Saint Patrick's Day on his feast day, March 17.

Saint Joseph was the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus. In the New Testament Joseph is mentioned as the father of Jesus in John 1:45 and 6:42, in Luke 4:22, and in Luke's genealogy of Jesus (Luke 3:23). Otherwise he appears only in the infancy narratives of Matthew 1-2 and Luke 1-2. Both (Matthew 1:2-16, 20; Luke 1:27; 3:23-38) report that he was of Davidic descent. Luke indicates that, although his native town was Bethlehem, he and Mary lived in Nazareth.



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Grand Knight's Message



Brothers All,

First and foremost I want to wish all our brothers a peaceful, healthy and prosperous New Year.

In the spirit of the New Year, I am again appealing to all our members to include in their resolutions a renewed commitment to the Knights of Columbus. Our council is proud of its long history and commitment to its parishes and the community. We remain a vibrant council but, because there are so few active knights, it demands from them a great personal toll of time and energy.

In our last newsletter I sent out an appeal to all our members, hoping to rekindle their commitment to the Knights of Columbus. If your age and health no longer permit you to attend our meetings and help with our sponsored events, I ask you to pass on the torch to a friend or member of your family. You can still do very important services to the Knights of Columbus. You can be part of our Membership Committee or you can sponsor a new member. You can send us your ideas and contribute to our Bulletin.

Our strength lies in our faith, our mission and our commitment. We will renew our commitment and continue to draw from the well of hope, positive thinking and creative energy. We will continue to rise to each challenge and celebrate each and every success. However, ultimately, our survival lies in our recruitment efforts.

Fraternally,
Paulo S. De Sousa
Grand Knight

Message from the Financial Secretary

The Knights of Columbus Portsmouth Council 3618 notification of dues have been mailed. The period is for one year which runs from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2008. I wish to thank all members for their prompt payment of dues from yesteryear.

Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year to my brothers and their families.

Brother Ed Silveria, FS

Council Activities

Your Council has been very active during the past year.

In January 2007, the Council sponsored a benefit breakfast for the Portsmouth Boy Scouts, Troop 1. The Boy Scouts helped serve the meal and did a great job cleaning up after the breakfast.

Our Tootsie Roll Drive is alive a well. We were able to make a donation to a mentally handicapped person as a result of the money collected in this drive.

In February 2008, the Council sponsored three fish dinners. The money collected from these dinners was given to St. Barnabas Church, St. Anthony Church and the CYO basketball team.

During the yard sale at St. Anthony Church in November, this Council set up a food table. The money from this event went to St. Anthony Church

The Council donated flags to the Portsmouth Schools at the beginning of the school year. We do this every year.

The Council makes annual donations to St. Anthony and St. Barnabas St. Vincent de Paul society for Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter baskets for the needy.

In October, our Brother Cdr. Younes, who is stationed in Baghdad, made a request to the Council for clothes and toys for a Catholic Organization in Baghdad. The Council responded with 3,000 pounds of clothes, shoes and toys. The Council also paid the postage expenses for the boxes shipped to Baghdad.

In December we sponsored a Christmas party for seniors at Anthony House. On Sunday, 2 December we fed 23 members a Christmas Dinner, gave gifts and delivered 10 meals to apartments who could not make the party.

The council makes donations to the following organizations during a year:

Mother of Life Center
Pro-Life
Little Sisters of the Poor
New England Boys and Girls Home
Priest for Life
Boy Scout Troop 1 in Portsmouth
Portsmouth Little League
Catholic Charity Fund

During the year, we make donations to St Barnabas and St Anthony Church for various projects that they may have.

Fr. Christopher S. Rooney Council 3618 Schedule of Upcoming Events

DATE	EVENT	TIME	POINT OF CONTACT	COMMENTS
Sat. 19 Jan	Basketball Free Throw Competition	3:30 – 4:30	Paul Gallagher	Portsmouth Middle School
Sun. 20 Jan	Pancake Breakfast	8:00 – 11:30 AM	Bob Rucando	Senior Center, Portsmouth. Brother Knights needed as early as 7:00 AM.
Fri. 8 Feb	Lenten Fish Dinner #1	5-7 PM	Keith Roberts	St. Barnabas Hall. Brother Knights needed as early as 3:30 PM. Potato peeling starts early on Friday.
Fri. 29 Feb	Lenten Fish Dinner #2	5-7 PM	Paulo De Sousa	Senior Center, Portsmouth. Brother Knights needed as early as 3:30 PM. Potato peeling starts early on Friday.
Fri. 14 Mar	Lenten Fish Dinner #3	5-7 PM	TBD	St. Barnabas Hall. Brother Knights needed as early as 3:30 PM. Potato peeling starts early on Friday.

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They returned to Bethlehem to register for the census (Luke 2:1). Matthew suggests that they lived in Bethlehem and only moved to Nazareth after return from their flight to Egypt (Matthew 2:22-23).

Mary was found to be pregnant after she had been betrothed (promised in marriage) to Joseph, but before they were married. Joseph was not the child's father. Joseph took steps to break the betrothal, but in a way that would not put Mary to shame. An angel revealed to Joseph that the child was the Son of God. Joseph then took Mary as his wife and legally accepted her child as his own by naming Him. Joseph and Mary raised Jesus according to traditional Jewish customs and rites. Jesus was circumcised and presented at the Temple for the prescribed rites of purification and dedication of the first-born.

Little is known about Joseph's life after he and his family settled in Nazareth. Joseph was a carpenter (Matthew 13:55), a trade followed by Jesus (Mark 6:3). The Gospel accounts seem to indicate that he was still alive when Jesus, at the age of 12, spoke to scholars in the Temple (Luke 2: 41-51), and perhaps at the start of Jesus' public ministry (John 1: 45), and even during Jesus' ministry (John 6: 42). But there are no later mentions of Joseph, though the Gospels mention Mary. There is no mention of Joseph at Jesus' death and no indication of his presence among the first Christian community in Jerusalem. Jesus entrusted Mary to the care of the apostle John during the Crucifixion, indicating that Joseph had probably died before this time.

Early Christian legends portrayed Joseph as an aged widower with children when betrothed to Mary. But based on marriage customs of the times, Joseph must have been in his midteens when he married Mary.

The Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Episcopal churches honor Joseph as a saint. Since the Middle Ages, Christian devotion of Joseph has grown. Pope Pius IX declared Joseph patron saint of the Universal Church. Pope John XXIII honored Joseph by decreeing that Joseph's name be included immediately after Mary in the list of saints in the Canon of the Mass. His main feast day is March 19.

The author acknowledges a lot of help in writing this article from the following sources:

St. Patrick: William J. Courtenay, "Patrick, Saint," *World Book Online Americas Edition*

St. Joseph: M. Robert Mulholland, Jr., "Joseph," *World Book Online Americas Edition*

St Joseph: Encyclopedia of the Catholic Church, 1995

The Story of

Our Lady of Grace

This is the first of four major apparitions of the Blessed Virgin that took place in France. It is considered the first major apparition of the modern era.

Twenty-four-year-old Catherine Labouré slept very well every night at her new home, the motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity (of St. Vincent De Paul) in Paris, France. Every night, that is, but July 18th, 1830, when she was awakened at half past eleven by a small boy about six years old.

“Come,” said the boy, who was robed in pure white, “The Blessed Virgin awaits you!” This angelic figure radiated so brilliantly that the entire corridor through which he led the young novice glimmered with light. He directed her to the chapel, where, bowing before the Eucharist, fell to her knees, placing her hands on

“My child, God wishes to entrust a Madonna. But it wasn’t until late what exactly her mission would be.

That November evening at about silent as the novices prayed. when she heard the same rustling of memorable night. There on the right beautiful person she had met four simple ivory gown, fit to her waist and cuffs; her auburn hair, peeking hood, framed her blue mantle, and precious jewels - all sizes and colors - (symbolizing graces pouring forth). gracefully on a white sphere over

Memorare

Remember
O Most gracious Virgin Mary,
that never was it known that
anyone who fled to your protection,
implored your help,
or sought your intercession,
was left unaided.
Inspired with this confidence,
I fly to you,
O Virgin of virgins, my Mother.
To you I come,
before you I stand,
sinful and sorrowful.
O Mother of the Word Incarnate,
despise not my petitions,
but in your mercy
hear and answer me.

Amen

was the Blessed Virgin. Catherine the Madonna’s knees.

mission to you,” said the Beautiful November that Catherine discovered

5:30, the chapel was completely Catherine looked up immediately silk as she had heard on that hand side of the altar, stood the same months back. The Virgin wore a and trimmed in gold at the neckline out from underneath a delicate white from her hands adorned with beamed forth luminous rays of light The Lady balanced herself which coiled a yellow-green serpent.

An oval frame gradually enclosed the Virgin, and around its border Catherine read the words: “O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.” Everything then reversed, and Catherine saw a large letter M surmounted by a bar and a cross, beneath which appeared the Immaculate Hearts of Mary and Jesus - one crowned with thorns, the other pierced with a sword. Around the border were twelve stars representing the twelve apostles. “Have a medal struck after this model,” an inner voice said to the novice. “All who wear it will receive great graces.”

Learning about the mission was much easier than carrying it out, the young novice soon discovered after numerous attempts to have the medal made. She first approached Father Aladel, her confessor, who had great difficulty believing her story. He surmised that these made-up reports were, perhaps, a way for the shy, homely girl to feel important in her community.

The Blessed Virgin appeared to Catherine three more times, each time expressing her disappointment that no progress had yet been made on behalf of the medal. Catherine finally approached her confessor in tears, reporting the Lady’s despondency. Taken by the girl’s sheer distress, he approached the Archbishop of Paris, who, in a couple of months, had 1,500 medals made. Five years later, in Paris alone, more than two million medals had been struck, and it became known as the “Miraculous Medal” for which numerous miraculous cure have been attributed.

Catherine did not admit that it was she who first saw Our Lady of Grace, the Lady of the Miraculous Medal, until 1876, 46 years after the first apparition. She later died on 31 December of that same year. Her life of service and peaceful death evidenced her grace-filled encounters with the Mother of God.

Catherine Labouré was canonized on July 27, 1947. She is known as the Saint of Silence. Her uncorrupted body can be seen in the chapel of the motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity at 140 Rue du Bac, Paris. Pope John Paul II visited the site of Our Lady of Grace on May 31, 1980. The editor of this newsletter visited the site on December 10, 1997 and found it to be moving experience.

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Opinions expressed are those of the individual author and do not necessarily reflect those of Fr. Christopher S. Rooney Council, its Officers, or the Knights of Columbus. Contributions to the *Portsmouth Knightly News* by Brother Knights are welcome. Articles may be on a variety of topics: upcoming events, council related, personal experience, religious, etc. Please send all articles for consideration in PC format via e-mail directly to the Newsletter Editor.

LENT IS UPON US, GET READY!



February 6 this year is Ash Wednesday. It will mark the beginning of Lent. It only seems like the Christmas season has just passed and we are now getting read to celebrate Easter. The actual date of Easter is set by the Church and is tied to the lunar cycle. It traditionally falls on the Sunday following the full moon after the vernal equinox (between 22 March and 25 April). The exact duration and manner of observing

Lent has varied over the centuries. The examples of Christ, Elijah, and Moses determined the number of forty days. Sundays were not counted, as they were not days of penance. Today only Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast and abstinence, all Fridays are meatless. All days of Lent should be marked with authentic signs of penance.

Let us not get wrapped up in anticipation for the upcoming glorious holyday and forget the true meaning of the season we are about to begin. During the Lenten period we will commemorate the passion of Our Lord, the passion and death that has given the opportunity for salvation to each and every one of us.

Many Catholics will not even know that Lent has begun until Sunday, February 10 when they make their weekly pilgrimage to Mass. They will see the priest dressed in purple vestments and hear him lecture on the need to sacrifice and to do penance. Many Catholics, on the other hand, will be prepared for the event. It will not be because they have noticed it marked on the calendar or because they have seen news reports on television of Mardi Gras being celebrated at various locations throughout the world. They will be prepared because they have heard the call of Our Lord and are ready to take up their crosses and share in His passion as they walk with Him during the next seven weeks.

As Knights of Columbus we have a special duty to our Order, our Church, and our fellow Catholics that we exemplify through our works. By being good Knights we are expected to sacrifice throughout the year in the name of charity, unity, and fraternity. Let us not take the small sacrifices that we make on a regular basis too casually as this Lenten season approaches. Let us reflect on our lives and identify ways that we can go the extra mile as Catholics and members of the Knights of Columbus to show that we are ready to stand by Christ as He prepares to carry His cross for each and every one of us. Let us be ready when Our Lord calls us to walk along side of Him. Let us pray that we will be prepared for Ash Wednesday and the upcoming Lenten season.

The author acknowledges help from the Encyclopedia of Catholicism 1995 with parts of this article.