

FR. MATTHEW J. O'KEEFE ASSEMBLY # 1162



“RELIGIOUSLY DEVOTED. PATRIOTICALLY PROUD”



FR. MATTHEW J. O'KEEFE

ASSEMBLY 1162



May 2024
Volume 7, No. 11

4th Degree Knights of Columbus
Norfolk, Virginia-Assembly 1162

Fr. Matthew J. O'Keefe Assembly No. 1162

Faithful Navigator's Message

Worthy Sir Knights, Families, and Friends,

The Chalice Ceremony and Patriotism

Last week, the Assembly conducted a Chalice Ceremony for a recently deceased Brother Sir Knight. The Ceremony was very well attended by family, friends, parishioners, Knights from the home Council, and Sir Knights from the Assembly. It was a strong showing of support by all those who knew SK Robert Morrison. Just as importantly, the Assembly ceremonial team excellently executed, precisely performed, and piously conducted another Chalice Ceremony. Everything that night was an extraordinary demonstration and fitting testimony to the Fourth Degree's mandate to honor our dead. It could not have been better.

Why is it so important and even critical to honor our dead? Does the uniqueness of the Fourth Degree Chalice Ceremony make such honoring more meaningful and fulfilling for all the participants to include the grieving spouse? Is the formality of posting guards, displaying the accouterments of the Fourth Degree, and the recitation of a poem required to properly show respect for the dead? Does the mere act of scheduling, practicing, and executing the Chalice Ceremony somehow prove our devotion to honoring our dead? How does patriotism factor into the execution of the Ceremony?

All of these are important questions pertaining to the validity of honoring our deceased Sir Knights in a uniquely special way. While honoring the dead is not solely the purview of the Fourth Degree, our Chalice Ceremony is a very symbolic and richly meaningful way to do so. The physical actions, speaking parts, and accompanying props are all critical to the proper display of honor, piety, and patriotism. Each part melded together results in ceremonial grandeur fitting for a king's funeral. That's the true intent of the Chalice Ceremony. By conducting it with military-like precision, effectively executing the speaking parts, and respectfully deferring to the deceased spouse's grief, the Ceremony proves our love for our fellow Sir Knight, exemplifies the highest tradition of honoring the dead, is patriotic at its core, and brings prestige to the Fourth Degree Assembly. All of those are heartfelt reasons to conduct the Chalice Ceremony. We did a great job during the last one and shall endeavor to continue to do so in the future. That's our duty.

What makes the Chalice Ceremony so special is its laser focus on honoring a single deceased Sir Knight. The entire purpose of conducting the Ceremony is to demonstrate the Assembly's intense devotion to a Brother who has gone onto his eternal rest. Honoring the dead has a long military tradition. The use of flag draped caissons to remove the dead from the battlefield at Gettysburg during the Civil War, the riderless horse during a formal burial procession, the playing of taps by a lone bugler, the rendering of a twenty-one gun salute by a rifle company, the precision folding of the United States flag by an honor guard, and its solemn final presentation to a grieving spouse are all facets of a military funeral used to honor a fallen hero. Similarly, the symbolic emblems of the Fourth Degree: ORD uniform, beret, baldric, sword, gloves, rosary, rose, and the chalice itself are the unique items which are used to distinguish the Chalice Ceremony from more ordinary funerals. That's the point of it all.

The uniqueness of the Chalice Ceremony begins with the staging of the event. Most normally, the Ceremony is conducted as part of a wake for the deceased Sir Knight. Typically, that includes the casket with the deceased on display in the funeral home. That provides the Assembly with the opportunity to post guards at the head and foot of the casket. Using a military precise posting procedure, the Color Corps Commander marches the guards to the casket, renders a salute, and then directs their posting to the ends of the casket to stand vigilantly and silently over the body of the Sir Knight. Depending on the time available, the CCC will direct the relieving of one set of guards and the posting of a new set at various intervals prior to the start of the Ceremony. The posting of guards at the casket has a distinct military look but it is not typically a procedure that is conducted for deceased service members. It is, however, more often used at funerals for police and fire fighters. There are various procedures used for the posting and relieving of guards but the method the Assembly uses is very straight forward and relatively simple to execute with three Sir Knights. Once the final relief is accomplished and the guards are clear of the chamber area, the actual Chalice Ceremony itself can commence. That's when the real uniqueness of the event is evident.

The Ceremony begins with a short exposition by the Faithful Navigator during which he offers condolences to the family, explains the purpose of the Ceremony, and describes the symbolic features of the Fourth Degree which are on display on a table at the head of the viewing area. He then commands the Color Corps Commander to conduct the Ceremony.

The CCC then processes into the chamber towards the casket followed in line by the Lecturer, Poet, and Chalice Bearer. At the casket, a salute is rendered and then the actors take their positions at the head and foot of the casket preparatory to the commencement of their dialog. First to speak is the Lecturer who expounds on the solemn nature of life and death. With colorful verse, he describes the final journey that the deceased has now taken and what it all means. He takes pains to acknowledge the ultimate power of God to decide in His ultimate wisdom that it was time for the Sir Knight to embark on the journey to a shore from which he will not return.

During his discourse, the Lecturer clearly explains both the sadness of the death of the physical body and the consolation of the final resting alongside God. Listening closely to his words, one can only conclude that the Sir Knight is eternally at peace with God. With a final exhortation, he quotes prescient words from Saint Ambrose which will be emphasized later by the Chalice Bearer during his speech: “We love him in life; let us not forget him in death.” That is a key feature of the Chalice Ceremony.

Next, the Poet is called upon to recite lyrical verse which initially and symbolically describes the din of everyday life which is overcome by the reality of death. The refrain “Pray for us” reminds us of the finality of death. The second verse then subtly beckons God to hasten the welcome for the deceased Sir Knight to His blessed dwelling place. No longer will His face be hidden from the deceased. A second plea to “Pray for us” is used to bring conclusion to life. The poem is a fitting eulogy for our Brother who has now gone to his final rest.

The Chalice Bearer is then called upon to offer an explanation for the significance of the chalice and its importance to the deceased Sir Knight. In some renditions of the Chalice Bearer’s speech, he is in close proximity to the casket and speaks directly to the deceased Brother when he intones his solemn words. He takes pains to explain that we are not engaged in a pagan ritual by offering a chalice as a token gift but are instead mourning a Christian man with the most iconic symbol of our Catholicism. Moreover, the real importance of the chalice is that it will be engraved with the name of the deceased Sir Knight. After that, the chalice will then be presented to a priest somewhere in the world to be used in the celebration of a daily Catholic mass. By doing so, the Sir Knight will be remembered in perpetuity. That is the most significant part of the entire Chalice Ceremony and is what the Lecturer admonished us about during his speech: not to forget our Brother Knight in death. It is a fitting end to the life of a Sir Knight to be remembered forever.

Once the Chalice Bearer has completed his soliloquy, he retrieves the chalice and brings it to where the grieving spouse is seated to show the engravings of the names of other deceased Sir Knights. He then solemnly reiterates the significance of the engravings and the eventual gifting of the chalice to a priest. He carefully reminds the spouse that by doing all that, her husband will always be remembered. Finally, the CCC presents the rose to the spouse signifying the sanctity of life. Death and life are integral parts of the Chalice Ceremony. The final presentation of the chalice and the rose emphasize that juxtaposition. The Ceremony is complete at that point.

The symbology, verbiage, and practiced execution of the Chalice Ceremony are all testament to the honor with which the Fourth Degree ascribes to a deceased Brother. Just as importantly, it gives credence to our belief in the fundamental tenants of our Catholic faith and demonstrates the principle of patriotism which is the basis of the Fourth Degree. By conducting the Ceremony, we Sir Knights of the Assembly are simultaneously bearing witness to our faith and our patriotism. As Catholics and members of the Fourth Degree, that is our duty. We did a great job of demonstrating both at the Chalice Ceremony we conducted for Sir Knight Robert Morrison. Let's continue to do that. Thanks.

Vivat Jesus,
Dan Doyle
Faithful Navigator

RECEIVING THE CIVIC AWARD



Purpose and Mission of the Fourth Degree

Purpose

Promote and strengthen patriotic spirit and civic responsibility within the community.

Educate members and others in the teachings of the Church and the history of the USA.

Promote through example and with programs the highest type of citizenship which is necessary for the preservation and perpetuation of the republic form of government and its democratic institutions.

Oppose the dissemination and spread of doctrine dangerous and contrary to the United States government and to the divine law of the Catholic faith and morality in general.

Support by word and deed the duly constituted authorities of local, state, and national government, and recognize excellence in public life.

Promote Catholic citizenship through programs, events, and activities in parishes and schools.

Mission

Demonstrate through individual action as a Sir Knight and collective action as an Assembly support for all religious, civic, and charitable causes using programs, activities, and events to engage Knights, parishioners, children, and citizens in every way possible to enhance faith, nurture patriotism, demonstrate admiration for the military services and veterans, increase civic responsibility, and spearhead recruiting of new Fourth Degree members.

The Emblem of the Fourth Degree Order

The Triad Emblem of the Fourth Degree features the Dove, the Cross, and the Globe.



The Triad Emblem of the Fourth Degree features the Dove, the Cross, and the Globe. The Dove – classic symbol of the Holy Spirit and Peace is shown hovering over the orb of the earth (Globe). Both which are mounted on a variation of the Crusader's Cross – that which was found on the tunics and capes of Crusading Knights, who battled to regain the Holy Land from the pagans.

Our Honored Order cherishes as its patron Christopher Columbus. Christopher (Christ Bearer) Columbus (Dove of Peace), symbolizing the Paraclete spiritually; the sacred symbols on the emblem typify the Union of the Three Divine Persons in on God – the most Blessed Trinity.

The Orb or Globe represents God the Father the Creator of the Universe. The Cross God the Son the Redeemer of Mankind. The Dove the God the Holy Spirit and Sanctifier.

These symbols along with the red, white, & blue colors are used to stress the basic principle of the Fourth Degree

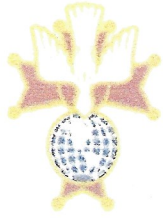


Introduction of the Chalice Ceremony. (WFN)

Welcome Father/Deacon _____, family of the deceased, friends. On behalf of the Sir Knights of the Fr. Matthew J. O'Keefe Assembly, I offer my sincere condolences to _____ and your family for your loss. Now it is our privilege to conduct this Chalice Service in honor of your beloved, _____, who exemplified the principles of our Order of the Fourth Degree and will be missed by his Brother Knights.

Before you are items that are symbolic of the Fourth Degree. The Official Regalia Dress (ORD), consisting of the beret, sword, and gloves. The Rosary of our Blessed Mother, and a rose, representing our respect to the sanctity of life. Posted is the flag of the United States.

Worthy Commander, you may proceed with the ceremony.



Knights of Columbus
F O U R T H
D E G R E E
Patriotic degree of the Order.



One Nation, Under God

Friends:

The Fr. Matthew J. O'Keefe Assembly of the *Fourth Degree* of the Knights of Columbus is once more called upon to bid a last farewell to one of its loyal members, and to pay a small tribute of respect to him who almighty God, in his infinite wisdom and mercy, has seen fit to call to his eternal reward.

The occasion that brings us here this evening is not together a sad one; though, it is sad, indeed, to realize that death has cut short another life – the life of our respected and cherished members. It is also sad to realize that the ties of friendship and fraternal affection which bound him to our Assembly have been severed, and his hallowed remains now await the final Day of judgement.

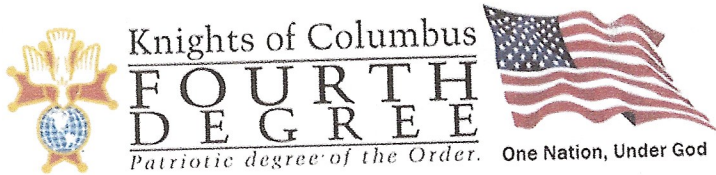
But in our sadness, we are consoled by the thought that although his days have come to an end and that he, whom we knew and loved, is now forever at rest with his creator, his labors are finished and a faithful servant has been called to meet his heavenly Father.

As we ponder the uncertainty of life and the debt we owe to our departed brother, it is an occasion such as this that compels us to dwell in serious thought on that time when we, too, shall join that endless caravan ever winding its solemn way to that undiscovered country from whose shore no traveler ever returns.

What a note of gladness, power, and confidence rings out in the words of St. Paul, "For this corruptible body must put on incorruption and this mortal body must put on immortality....but when his mortal body hath put on immortality, then shall come to pass the word that is written.... Death is swallowed up in victory.....Oh death, where is thy sting?" Truly the resurrection of Christ as described by St. Paul and the sure hope of our own resurrection robs death of its victory, robs the grave of its sting.

Tonight our hearts go out in deep sympathy to those who remain to mourn. Their loss is a heavy one. Their bereavement is great, but we ask Almighty God, in his goodness and kindness to console them.

For those who knew ~~Past Faithful Navigator Thomas Wedeking~~, may I borrow an exhortation from St. Ambrose, " We loved him in life; let us not forget him in death." With our minds reverting in tenderness and sorrow to that voice now stilled, once mingled with ours in our Assembly meetings, may I ask you one and all to harken to the voice of the Poet.



Note : The Chief Lector retires to his seat. The Poet approaches the podium and recites the following:

Wild the sea clamors from its echoing caves,
But other voices rise above the waves;
As now you are, O friends, so once we were
As now we are, so one day you shall be
And still they rise and plead and hurry by
Sobbing and breaking in that long sad cry.
PRAY FOR US.

Father of all, be merciful to all
Hold not this faithful servant long in thrall
Open to him Thy blessed dwelling place
Hide not too long the glory of Thy face
Mother of Pity, hearken to that cry
Cleaving the clouds and quivering to the sky.
PRAY FOR US



Knights of Columbus

**FOURTH
DEGREE**

Patriotic degree of the Order.



One Nation, Under God

Chalice Bearer.

Note : The Poet retires to his seat and the Chalice Bearer approaches the casket/table of honor, facing the deceased recites the following :

Worthy Sir Knight(s) _____, in the presence of your loved ones and your assembled Brothers gathered here on this solemn occasion to pay our last respects to your earthly remains, we honor you not as a pagan with bronze plaque or sculptured stone, but as a Christian, we honor you with this Chalice upon which your name is (will be) engraved. In due time, it will be sent to some needy mission outpost of Christianity, newly ordained priest, or other worthy vocation or recipient. It matters whether or not it shall serve in some igloo chapel of the frigid zone or thatch-roofed hut in a tropical jungle, or busy parish church, wherever it may be, it will be used in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and there you will be remembered. May it's daily use resound to your eternal glory.

At this point in the ceremony, the Chalice Bearer will retrieve the Chalice and hold it in his hands while extending the Assembly's condolences to the family. The Chalice Bearer will then display the Chalice to the members of the family. The Commander will ensure he remains at least one pace behind and to the right of the Chalice Bearer during this most solemn moment. At this time the Chief Lector and Poet will silently depart. During this showing of the chalice, the Navigator may read a short biography of the deceased Sir Knight(s).



Fr. Matthew J. O'Keefe Assembly 1162

Schedule of Upcoming Events

(May - September 2024)

Date	Day	Time	Place	Event
May 4	Saturday	11 AM	Council 367	Flag Retirement Ceremony
May 6	Monday	Dinner 6 PM Meeting 7 PM	Council 367	Monthly Membership Meeting
May 6	Monday	6:30 PM	Council 367	DAR Vietnam War Era Veterans Award Presentation
May 6	Monday	7 PM	Council 367	Assembly 1162 Officer Elections
May 15	Wednesday	NA	Catholic Schools, Norfolk	Patriotic Essay Contest Deadline
May 18	Saturday	3:30 PM	Basilica of the National Shrine, Washington, DC	Annual Military Service Mass
May 27	Monday	Wreaths = 10 AM Ceremony = Noon	Tidewater Veterans Memorial, VB	Memorial Day Ceremony and Wreath Laying Ceremony
May 31	Friday	7 AM	Rudee Inlet, VB	ASYMCA Hearts 4 Heroes Fishing Trip
June 2	Sunday	Noon	Sacred Heart Church	Eucharistic Procession
June 3	Monday	Dinner 6 PM Meeting 7 PM	Council 367	Monthly Membership Meeting
June TBD	TBD	TBD	Council 367	
June 30	Sunday	NA	NA	End of Fraternal Year
July 1	Monday	Dinner 6 PM Meeting 7 PM	Council 367	Monthly Membership Meeting Installation of Assembly Officers
July 4	Thursday	9 AM	Council 367	Flag Raising Ceremony
July 8	Sunday	3 PM	Church of the Resurrection, Portsmouth	Installation of Assembly Officers
August 5	Monday	Dinner 6 PM Meeting 7 PM	Council 367	Monthly Membership Meeting
Sept 4	Wednesday	6:30 PM	Basilica of the National Shrine, Washington, DC	Fr. Vincent Capodanno Memorial Mass
Sept 7	Saturday	10 AM	Catholic High School, VB	AOH Annual Car Show Food vendor for the show
Sept 9	Monday	Dinner 6 PM Meeting 7 PM	Council 367	Monthly Membership Meeting
Sept 29	Saturday	11:30 AM	Atlantic Avenue, VB	2024 Neptune Festival Parade
Sept TBD	TBD	TBD	Flame of Hope NAS Oceana, VB	POW/MIA Recognition Day Wreath Laying Ceremony
Sept TBD	TBD	TBD	Richmond, VA	Fourth Degree Exemplification Ceremony

Fr. Matthew J. O'Keefe Assembly 1162

Slate of Officers for Fraternal Year 2024 – 2025

Faithful Navigator: FN Dan Doyle

Admiral: PFN Brad VanHorn

Captain: Peter Laurin

Pilot: Stephen Petras

Comptroller: PFN Larry Forsythe

Purser: PFN Jim Pressler

Recorder: Dan Schmidt

Sentinel: Mike Schmidt

Sentinel: Michael Griffin

Trustee 1: PFN John Esquadra

Trustee 2: PFN Ed Nettleton

Trustee 3: PFN Mike Pselio



FR. MATTHEW J. O'KEEFE ASSEMBLY #1162

May 2024
Volume 7, No. 11

4th Degree Knights of Columbus
Norfolk, Virginia-Assembly 1162

2023/2024 Fraternal Year Assembly #1162 Officers

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Captain	VACANT	XXX.COM	xxx-xxx-xxxx
Admiral	Brad Van Horn	bradvanhorn@yahoo.com	910-915-9451
Pilot	Peter Laurin	laurin1@cox.net	757-479-9450
Comptroller	Larry Forsythe	michigan_masterchief@hotmail.com	757-383-2585
Scribe	Dan Schmidt	dantheman195009@gmail.com	757.348.5517
Purser	James Pressler	pressler.jim@yahoo.com	757.515.5116
Inner Sentinel	Peter Makar	pmmakar1@cox.net	757-235-5757
Outer Sentinel	Mike Schmidt	juggalo2476@gmail.com	757-470-2086
Trustee 1yr	James Fitzgibbons	je_fitz@yahoo.com	757-270.6109
Trustee 2yr	Gilbert Martinez	dodgerblue1957@gmail.com	757-613-4521
Trustee 3yr	Mike Pselio	pselio.mike49@gmail.com	757.410-4920
Color Corps Cmdr	James Pressler	jimpresskoc@yahoo.com	757-515-5116



Be sure to like **Father Matthew J. O'Keefe Assembly No. 1162 - 4th Degree, KOC** on Facebook and website, kofcassemblby1162.org to keep updated on Assembly events and news.