

State Council Program Awards

Entry Form

THIS REPORTING FORM MUST BE COMPLETED BY EACH COUNCIL AND FORWARDED TO THE STATE COUNCIL.
 (A separate reporting form should be completed for each program category.)

CATEGORY (MARK ONE): Faith Family Community Life



COUNCIL INFORMATION:

1 Council Number: 13319 Total Council Members: 278
 Grand Knight: Stan Politowicz E-Mail: stan.politowicz@gmail.com

PROGRAM INFORMATION (complete all sections):

2 Program Title: Keeping Christ in Christmas Program Date: December 2020
 Participation: $\frac{5}{\text{Members}} + \frac{610}{\text{Non Members}} = \frac{615}{\text{Total Participants}}$ $\frac{615}{\text{Total Participants}} \times \frac{2}{\text{Hours}} = \frac{1,230}{\text{Total Volunteer Hours}}$
 Program Planning: $\frac{\$0}{\text{Costs}}$ & $\frac{75 \text{ hours}}{\text{Time}}$ Members Recruited: 5 Donations: N/A
Local Currency

3 Describe program in detail. Use additional paper if necessary. Supplementary material may be submitted along with the nomination. Accompanying materials can include letters, testimonials, news clippings, photographs, pamphlets, etc. Do not submit tapes, videocassettes, DVD's, display materials, films, etc., as they will not be considered in judging the nomination.

3a) In the space provided below, briefly describe the purpose and goals of this program. This section must be completed.

The goal of this program was, as it always is, Keeping Christ in Christmas. COVID disrupted so many aspects of Parish life from Sunday worship, to school attendance, to our own Knights of Columbus Council. But we refused to let it dim the hope that is so central to the Christmas season when we celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Our Council wanted to not only maintain our Keeping Christ in Christmas program, but to expand and improve it, despite the challenges of COVID. We knew if we got creative and embraced virtual technology, we could make this happen.

DO NOT SUBMIT THIS REPORT FORM TO SUPREME COUNCIL

**ENTRY MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE STATE COUNCIL
 TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE COMPETITION**

MAIL ORIGINAL TO: State Deputy or State Program Director

COPY TO: Council File

Available in electronic format at www.kofc.org



(continued on reverse)

3b) Whom does this program benefit?

This program primarily benefited our Parish youth including our school students and their families. We initiated this project a number of years ago and we've grown it since then. It brings together families each Christmas season with a single focus: To Keep Christ in Christmas. It allowed students to show off their artistic talent in a way that glorifies God. Parents got to see the work of their own children and others as well. Mass-goers of all ages saw the true meaning of Christmas through the eyes of the rising generation. It builds on our mission of Building the Domestic Church, While Strengthening Our Parish. This mission statement drives everything that we do.

3c) What problem or need did this program resolve?

As the pandemic kept people in lock down, schools were closed and social distancing rules were enacted, we did not want all of that to negatively impact a program we introduced a few years ago that was now gaining steam. Keeping Christ in Christmas was getting bigger and better each year but this time, with the pandemic, we knew we had to do something different while retaining the foundation of the program. We challenged ourselves to think creatively on how we could not only maintain this program, but to improve it as well, despite the added difficulties of the pandemic.

3d) Why did the council select this program?

It builds on our mission of Building the Domestic Church, While Strengthening Our Parish. This mission statement drives everything that we do as a Council. It cost nothing. It engaged the entire parish. It fortified our Council's relationship with the school administration and parents. That relationship is already yielding new members to our Council and we expect more growth in coming years.

3e) Describe the success of the program:

The program was very successful because it served a critical need within our faith community and especially with our families. It also built on the effort of previous years and even tripled youth participation to about 600 students. This growth came at a time when most other Parish activities were shrinking or shutdown completely. Another sign of its success is that the Keeping Christ in Christmas program has now been permanently incorporated into the curriculum of our Parish School, ensuring it will continue in 2021 and beyond. It also provided a first contact between our Council and many parents at the school, who were previously unaware of our group. This new awareness led to increased parental engagement and membership growth for our Council.

Attest:

Walter K. Wible, Jr.
State Deputy

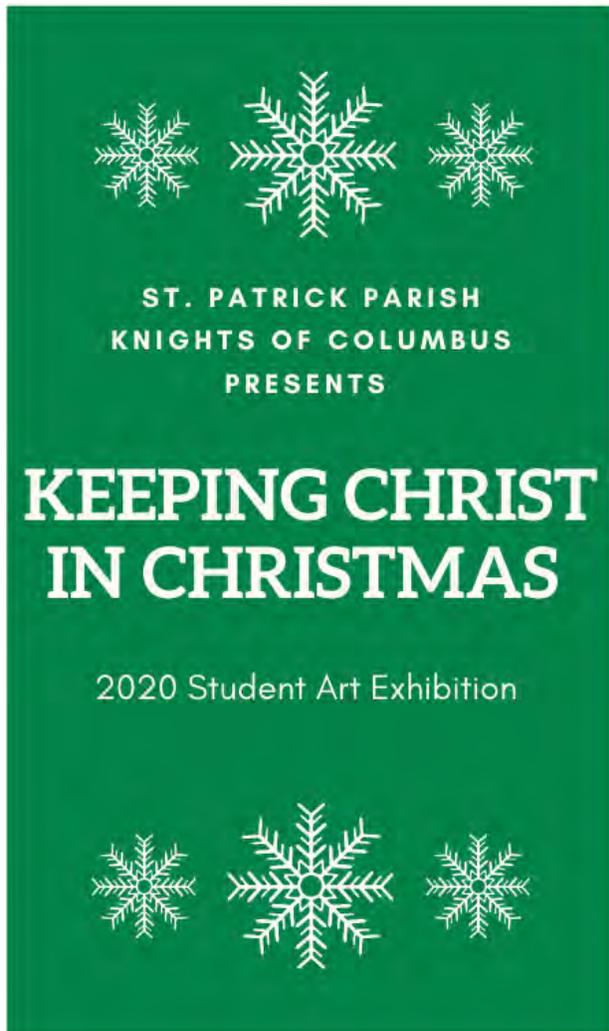
Signed:

A. P. Polito
Grand Knight

4/23/21

Date

KEEPING CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS DURING COVID



ST. PATRICK – WHITE LAKE

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

COUNCIL No. 13319

GRAND KNIGHT: STAN POLITOWICZ

PROJECT DIRECTOR: JOSEPH GIACALONE



Table of Contents

Program Summary.....Page 3

Program Benefits.....Page 14

Program Needs.....Page 15

Program Selection.....Page 17

Program Success.....Page 19

Correspondence.....Page 21

Project Summary:

Keeping Christ in Christmas despite COVID-19

Keeping Christ in Christmas is a priority every year, never more so than in 2020, when the world faced a lingering COVID-19 pandemic.

The virus disrupted so many aspects of Parish life from Sunday worship, to school attendance, to our own Knights of Columbus Council No. 13319. It also threatened to dim the hope that is so central to the Christmas season when we celebrate the birth of our Savior.

Our Council was firmly committed to Keeping Christ in Christmas with an effort that had proven successful in previous years but we knew this year would be unlike any previous one.

In retrospect, 2019 was simple by comparison.



In 2019, the artwork was exhibited in our parish hall after all masses.

That year, our Council sponsored a poster contest on the theme of Keeping Christ in Christmas.

We enlisted the support of St. Patrick School Principal Jeremy Clark and Religious Education Director Julie Cavanaugh to get kids interested.

They readily agreed and promoted the theme throughout the school and its religious education counterpart. About 200 students in grades 6 thru 8, created posters of every sort, with artwork that dazzled with heartfelt Christmas messages that were worthy of the season they celebrated.

Our Council displayed them in the Parish Hall on weekends during the Christmas season and even hosted free coffee and donuts for a weekend to encourage all Mass-goers to appreciate the work.

The artwork and the effort of our Council that made it possible, drew praise from every part of our Parish community.

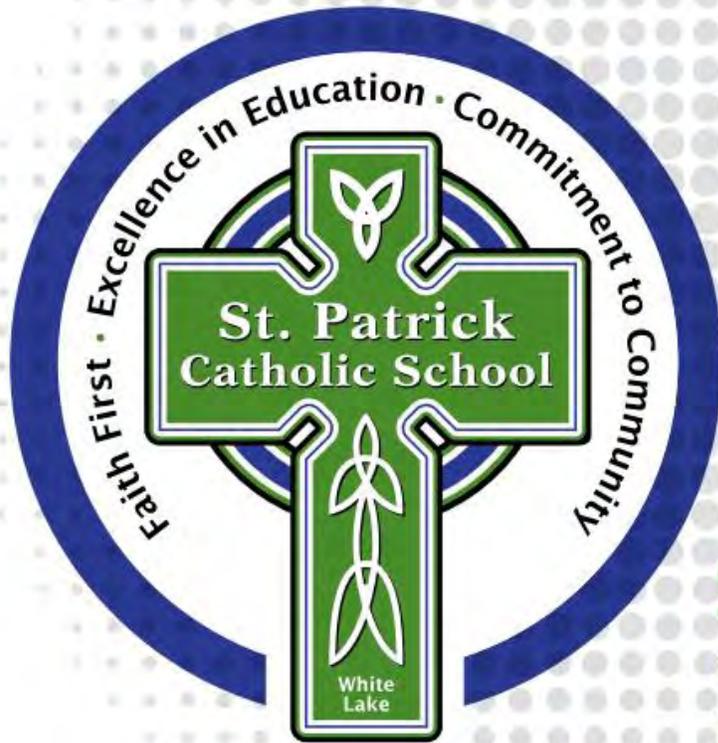
So how could we bring the Parish together again in 2020 with all of the safety protocols brought on by COVID? We knew it would require innovative thinking and we knew the cause deserved our best effort.

With that in mind, **we set three goals:**

1. Maximize participation from both the school and the religious education program.
2. Find a creative way to display the artwork while the Parish Hall was closed due to health restrictions.
3. Allow as many parishioners as possible to see the artwork so they could be inspired by its message of hope, without compromising social distancing.

We're proud to say we achieved all three goals!





ST. PATRICK
CATHOLIC
SCHOOL

First, with the support of Principal Jeremy Clark, the contest was incorporated into the curriculum at St. Patrick Catholic School, ensuring 100% participation. We also expanded it beyond middle school to include all students from kindergarten through 8th grade.

This was an important change that tripled participation and grew the exhibit parish youth engagement beyond anything we had done previously. We also expanded parish engagement and participation from religious education students through a series of advertisements and announcements.



We worked hard to enlist the entire parish community. In addition to our Council and School, we brought on board members of the Parish Administration to make the 2020 Keep Christ in Christmas program a fully virtual program.

When students completed their artwork, images of it were digitally scanned. Angela Cooper, of our Parish Administration, created an online folder where the work was uploaded and stored. See the following illustration.

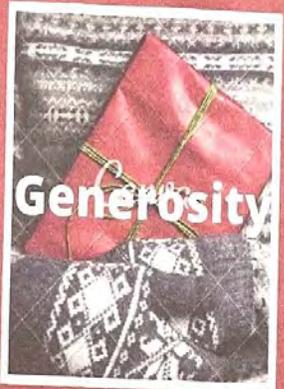
Once there, it became part of the rotating virtual art display.

STUDENTS WOULD SUBMIT THEIR POSTERS
THROUGH THIS SCHOOL WEBSITE LINK:



BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENT - DECEMBER 6, 2020:

SAVE-TH-DATE
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6 @ 7PM
IN THE CHURCH & LIVE STREAM



Generosity

JOIN US ON THE
FEAST OF
ST. NICHOLAS

All ages will enjoy this
advent evening

Keeping Christ in Christmas

We would like to invite all youth at St. Patrick Parish and St. Patrick Catholic School to participate in the Knights of Columbus "Keeping Christ in Christmas" poster exhibit for all boys and girls ages 5-14. By engaging in the talents of our young people, we hope they will come to a deeper understanding of the true meaning of Christmas, and that they will inspire others to remember the true meaning of Christmas as well.

Every child can create a poster on a standard 8x11 sheet of paper, the individual artist can choose their theme as it relates to "Keeping Christ in Christmas". The poster should depict the spiritual meaning of Christmas that is applicable to the artist and their family.

Please take a photo of your creation and upload it using the online form link on our parish website.

Posters will be displayed during Christmas Masses, on our websites and across our social media platforms in order to inspire all in our community! The artists name, age, and grade (if included) will be added to the poster for use in video collages and galleries. We hope this is a fun way for our children to be able to show their art to the world and inspire a child-like love of Christ this Christmas.

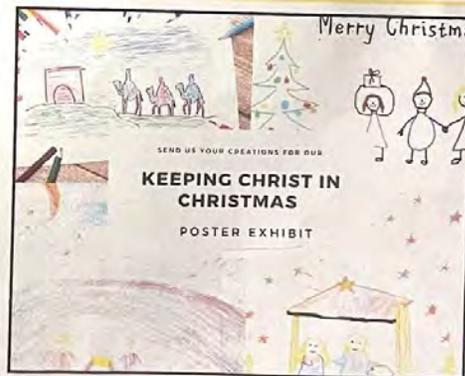
"Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven." ~Matthew 18:3

Sunday, December 6th
7:00 pm
You are Invited...

Mary Wilkerson and Michael Chamberland from BOLD Ministries will lead us through an advent reflection evening on the topic of "Generosity."

This is for our parish family and your friends of ALL ages! Come join us in the church or participate via the Live Stream.

Make this part of your holiday preparations so your heart is ready for Jesus this Christmas.



Finally, to allow the Parish to appreciate the artwork without violating social distancing requirements, we displayed the posters in the Church's six video display boards before and after all Masses throughout the Christmas season.

As families entered and left the Church, they saw the artwork displayed on a rotating basis, complete with the name and grade of the artist. The young artists were able to see their work displayed in big screen fashion and point with pride to what they had done.

We pray that COVID is gone by next Christmas, but this display method proved so successful that we plan to keep it long after the pandemic subsides.

We're proud of this effort because it galvanized our faith community and rekindled the hope of Christmas during a very trying year. We respectfully ask you to seriously consider this creative new approach for the 2020 Family Award.

TWO OF THE SIX VIDEO DISPLAYS
INSIDE THE CHURCH:



ANOTHER VIEW FROM INSIDE THE CHURCH:



Program Benefits

1. Kept the true hope and promise of the Christmas Season despite the gloom of COVID.
2. Engaged students who were learning from home because of COVID restrictions.
3. Engaged parents who got to take pride in their children's artwork displayed at all Masses.
4. Allowed the Keep Christ in Christmas program to continue by converting it to a virtual format.
5. Expanded the program reach by making it available on [YouTube](#), Parish and Council websites, and social media.

Program Needs

1. Turned hearts and minds to the Lord at a difficult time for many parishioners.
2. Provided a form of fellowship among all grades in our School.
3. Provided a creative outlet for students to celebrate their faith during the Christmas season.
4. Kept faith with our past by continuing a beloved Christmas tradition in a virtual format.
5. Established a new format that will continue in the future, offering both physical and virtual displays.

INDIVIDUALIZED POSTERS DISPLAYED
WITHIN THE VIDEO:



Program Selection

COVID measures restricted our Council's activities as well as those throughout the Parish. We wanted to celebrate the Christmas season as we had in the past, all the while, being mindful of the necessary safety protocols.

We knew this program had the chance to engage people of all ages and to turn their thoughts to the beauty and joy of Christmas at a time when so many were feeling down because of the pandemic.

Members of our Council and our Parish were hungry for the chance to express their faith in such a difficult time.

By shifting to a virtual format, we were able to provide a platform for Building the Domestic Church by engaging everyone.



Program Success

The program was successful because it served a critical need within our faith community.

It also built on the effort of previous years and even tripled youth participation to about 600 students.

This growth came at a time when most other Parish activities were shrinking or shutdown completely.

Another sign of its success is that the Keeping Christ in Christmas program has now been permanently incorporated into the curriculum of our Parish School, ensuring it will continue in 2021.

Due to COVID, revenue to our Council and our Parish were down, yet this program increased engagement and participation three-fold, at zero cost.

Launching the program virtually, also forced us to adopt new technologies including things like more social media, websites, video streaming and even financial measures like Venmo and PayPal.

We will continue to use these in the future to make our Council operate more efficiently and inclusively.

CLICK BELOW TO VIEW OUR 4 MINUTE
CONTINUOUS RUN VIDEO:



Or click here to go directly to YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mh7NmGofuS4>

Email message string on where it all began and how it evolved. This first email went to our Council leadership, School Principal, Parents Club President, School Advisory Board President and Parish Administration.

Hello everyone,

I hope all of you are doing well and staying safe!

I am writing to ask for your help. Recall last year when our Knights of Columbus Council hosted the "Keep Christ in Christmas" Poster program for the youth of our school and our parish, under the leadership of our Youth Director, Joe Giacalone. It was a HUGE success as we all witnessed with posters displayed throughout Paddy Hall and elsewhere on campus.

Here is where we need your help. Please read the email below from Joe Giacalone on this year's plans. Know that we are not letting the pandemic slow us down especially in light of the value this program brings to and for our children. We need your ideas and your technological wherewithal to make this work. As an old fart, you guys absolutely have me beat on the technology front. Thus, my plea for help....

We need to lay out a plan for what to do once the posters are done. From a high level, pictures of the posters need to be taken by camera or cell phone and saved in .JPG or similar format.

Then they need to be submitted via email, upload or whatever, to a landing site.

We have a Dropbox account, MyDrive on Google or we just accept the submission via email and file them on a local hard drive. That's step one. The next step is the display of the posters and this is REALLY where we need your help! In lieu of displaying posters in Paddy Hall, how can we get these displayed across social media, school bulletins, church bulletins, parent emails, school and parish websites, and more (Spinal Column? Oakland Press? Lakes Vicariate? etc.). We will certainly display these on our Facebook page and we will share them with the Knights of Columbus State Council, along with an article, for display on their website.

Please let us know your thoughts on all of this so we can lay out a plan to move forward with this very exciting and faith filled project.

Thank you, take care and please stay safe!!

God bless you all!!

*Stan Politowicz
Grand Knight
St. Patrick Council #13319*

From our Parish Communications Director:

Hi everybody,

This is such a wonderful project and I'm excited that the kids will still be doing this! We could use as much normalcy as possible. Considering that there will likely be many submissions, the best way to display them may be in video format. I can create a form where they can upload their submissions and once I receive them all I can compile them into a video for use on all platforms. People are more likely to watch a video than to click through lots of pictures. We could have a gallery of them on our website as well. Please let me know what you need from me to get this going.

*Thank you,
Angela Cooper
Communications Coordinator
St. Patrick Catholic Church*

From one of our School Advisory Board Members:

This is a great idea.

When placed on parish and school FB pages, we could request everyone to repost so the message gets out to even more people.

The school has ability to email blast it out. Not sure if parish can. I think diocese may. I don't have experience with submitting to the online newspapers, but sounds like a great idea too!

How long will the video be? From my experience, people on social media watch very short videos the most. May want to keep that in mind as you decide how to organize it.

Playing the pics to a Christmas song would be nice too. Not sure if we sing that song at mass, if it could be played there? Have to ask Father Tom.

Having the teachers or the art teacher assign this as a formal assignment would get the most posters!

Those are my initial thoughts!

Let me know what I can help with!

-Sue

From the School Advisory Board to the President of the Board (Mrs. Tewes is the Art Teacher)

Kelly,

Can we ask Mrs. Tewes to make this an art assignment?

-Sue

From Jeremy Clark, our School Principal:

I forwarded this on to the art teacher.

Jeremy Clark

Principal

St. Patrick Catholic School, White Lake

From our Communications Director:

Good morning everyone,

I have created the form where children can submit their posters and created a page on the Parish website where they can access the form. I will plan to make the first Facebook promotion after Thanksgiving and will be adding this to the parish newsletter.

Lynn, if you would like to send an email to parents or add it to your newsletter, that would be wonderful.

Veronica, I will let you know when I make the Facebook post so you can share it. Or you can share the form link however you think is best for the school page.

Once we start getting the posters submitted, I will overlay the child's name, age and grade to each poster and then create a video slide show. Getting background music shouldn't be a problem, but we will be limited by copyright, I will find Christmas music that is legal to use. To Sue's point that the video shouldn't be too long, I agree and if it does get too lengthy we can double up on images during the slide show or have them move a little more quickly. We will also have a gallery on the Parish website so all the children can see their poster.

I am including the links to the site page and the form below. Please let me know if you have any ideas for improving them

and if there is anything else I can do to help facilitate this project. Thank you all for your help!

<https://giving.parishsoft.com/App/Form/e65bd6b8-6e6d-4a97-ab70-d00218664bb0>

<https://www.stpatrickwhitelake.org/keeping-christ-in-christmas>

*Sincerely,
Angela Cooper*

From me to our Council Youth Director Joe Giacalone
(also Project Director for this project)

Hi Joe,

This is incredible that the school is taking this on as a formal art project. WOW! Nice work! Maybe we can use this project as our submission for the KofC Community Award. What do you think? I think it will fly!

Thanks again for driving this! You may have just created a new annual tradition at the school!

Talk to you soon,

Stan



St. Patrick
Knights of Columbus
Council #13319
White Lake, Michigan