



THE KNIGHTLY NEWS

Roanoke Council #562 Newsletter

December, 2025

Upcoming Events

12/1 (Monday) December Council Business Meeting. Dinner served at 6:30; Meeting at 7:30.

12/8 (Monday) Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Holy Day of Obligation).

12/15 (Monday) December Social/ Planning Meeting.

12/22 (Monday) December 4th Degree Meeting. Dinner served at 6:30; meeting at 7:15.

12/25 (Thursday) Nativity of the Lord (Christmas - Holy Day of Obligation).

1/1/2026 (Thursday) New Year's Day, Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (Holy Day of Obligation).

1/5/2026 (Monday) January Council Business Meeting. Dinner served at 6:30; Meeting at 7:30.



Grand Knight's Report



Worthy Brothers,

Thank you again for another productive month. We had three worthy Candidates who were initiated into our order by taking the Exemplification of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity. This is what Supreme has replaced the old First, Second, and Third Degree with. I am looking forward to voting them into our Council at the December Business meeting (Monday December 1st).

Our Council exemplified charity by donating diapers and baby supplies collected at the quarterly meeting to St. Francis House and Thanksgiving Baskets to families at St. Elias. We also collected food for Feeding Southwest Virginia in concert with the AOH. The food drive continues so please check your pantry and bring a donation to the December meeting.

Brothers I must apologize in that we couldn't organize a Christmas Party or Breakfast with Santa this year.

(Continued P2)

November Business Meeting Highlights

- The Chaplain recalled the meaning of All Saints and All Souls and to remember all the faithful departed during the month of November.
- The Grand Knight thanked brothers for help during the weekend of 10/17-18 for KOVAR and the state quarterly meeting.
- The council welcomed BK Warren Damron and Richard Freeman.
- KOVAR reported donations of \$5500 for the 2025 campaign. Also upcoming is a KOVAR home “Enduring Love”.
- Upcoming events:
 - Several hall rentals in December.
 - Essay Contest.
 - Thanksgiving/Christmas baskets.
 - KCIC.
 - Veterans’ Day parade 11/8.
 - Election Day 11/4.
- Up to \$300 was approved (budgeted) for Thanksgiving baskets for St. Elias.
- \$250 was approved for awards for the essay contest.
- The District Deputy urged Brother Knights to donate to food pantries during these challenging times.
- BK Rich Whitney was named Knight of the Month for October.
- The Lecturer showed a video from the “Into the Breach” series, which reinforced communication and mutual support among Catholic men. The Creator did not intend for us to walk thru this life alone. The Knights of Columbus provides this opportunity as the “strong right hand of the Church”.

GK Report (Continued from P1)

If any Brother Knight has experience in organizing council wide social events and would like to chair a committee please contact me. The Council needs your help.

Finally Brothers, January 15 is the Virginia Pro Life Day bus trip with a bus leaving St. Andrews. As Knights, we support pro life initiatives and as of now they only have 7 people signed up for the bus. Brothers, we need to **fill this bus**. Check your calendar and show your support in person. The sign up link is:

[Basilica of Saint Andrew: Virginia Pro Life Day Bus Trip - January 15, 2026](#)

Again I thank you for your continued support and look forward to seeing you at the December meeting.

Vivat Jesus,

Dave Chopski, Grand Knight

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Keep Christ in Christmas

Our annual Keep Christ in Christmas campaign is underway and will continue thru the weekend of 12/6-7. Cards will also be available in the St. Elias Gift Shop. Help is always appreciated, so please plan to help out for a few minutes after the Mass that you normally attend. Contact:

Basilica of St. Andrew: Chuck Hatcher
hatcherchuck7@gmail.com or 540-314-3360.

Our Lady of Nazareth: Rich Whitney
Richw1492@yahoo.com or 443-465-7742.

St. Elias: Deebie Wadell secretary@steliaschurch.org or 540-562-0012.



Thanksgiving and Christmas Baskets

As in previous years, the Roanoke Council is helping to provide holiday meals to low-income families in the Roanoke Valley. Four Thanksgiving meals were provided to needy families at St. Elias. We have also agreed to team with St. Francis house in providing Christmas meals to low-income families.

This is an excellent opportunity to exemplify the first principle of our order - Charity! Please plan to help with your time or monetary donation if you can.

In Memoriam

Lula Mejia, family member of BK David Bowers and Donald Brown

Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and let Your perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.



December Birthdays

Birthday wishes to the following Brother Knights with birthdays in December:

Raymond Biggio	December 3
John Sheridan	December 5
Kevin Oddo	December 6
Charles Hatcher	December 8
David Cummings	December 11
Jason Frick	December 11
Philip Jornlin	December 11
Richard Waddell	December 11
Francis Casola	December 12
Alexander Nelson II	December 16
Gary Boyd	December 16
Joseph Colosimo Jr	December 17
Theodore Wierzbic	December 21
Jan Hodnett	December 22
Bill Salmon Jr.	Decemebr 25
Michael Slenski	December 27
Denzel Williams Sr	December 27
Mark Moss	December 28
Nicholas Waddell	December 28
Jeffrey Zangari	December 28
Juan Garcia	December 31
Matthew O'Herron	December 31

Saint of the Month

Francis Xavier

Francis was born into a noble family at the Castle of Xavier in the northern Spain in 1506. His father was administrator to the King of Navarre. In 1512, the Kingdom of Navarre was conquered, and three years later, Francis' father died. At the age of nineteen, Francis moved to Paris to study philosophy and the arts. As was common at that time, he went by the name Francis Xavier, identifying himself with his place of origin, the Castle of Xavier.

While at the University of Paris, Francis and his roommate, Peter Favre encountered Ignatius of Loyola, who was studying theology in preparation for the priesthood. Ignatius encouraged Francis and Peter to join him in a new religious society he desired to form. Ultimately both men embraced the call to the priestly ministry; Francis was ordained in 1537. In 1534, Ignatius and six companions consecrated themselves to God made private vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience to the Pope. They drew up a formal rule of life, formally establishing the Society of Jesus, later referred to as the Jesuits.

During his early years as a priest, he ministered to the poor and sick in Venice and Rome. In 1541, Francis was named papal nuncio to the East and sent to Goa, on the western coast of India. For the next ten years, Francis' missionary activity of traveling, preaching, converting, catechizing, building churches, baptizing, and miracle working were so extensive that he has since been referred to as another Saint Paul. Stories abound about Father Francis healing the sick, calming a storm at sea, raising the dead, and preaching in tongues.

Francis' missionary activities took him to Malaysia, Indonesia, and Japan. In 1552, Father Francis received an invitation to travel

to China to bring the Gospel to that land for the first time. During the journey, he fell ill and died on the island of Shangchuan, just off the coast of mainland China, at the age of forty-six.

Within ten years of intense missionary work, it is estimated that Saint Francis Xavier traveled about 38,000 miles, being the first to bring the Gospel to many parts of Asia, baptizing about 30,000 souls. He never returned to Europe; once he left his family at the age of nineteen, he never saw them again. His life was a true sacrifice.

Francis Xavier was beatified by Pope Paul V in 1619, and canonized by Gregory XV in 1622 at the same ceremony as Ignatius of Loyola. He is the patron of Catholic missions and his feast day is on December 3.



Prayer Requests

Please keep Brother Knights, their family members, and friends of the Order in your prayers:

- BK Paul Miller and his wife Amy.
- John Pallard, uncle of BK James Valenzuela.
- Donald Reda, friend of BK Brian Carroll
- Jean Stump, widow of PSD Wayne Stump

Roanoke Council 562 Officers 2025-26

Grand Knight	Dave Chopski	540-915-2819
Deputy Grand Knight	Donald Brown	540-520-3060
Chancellor	Juan Garcia	757-719-8753
Warden	Stephen Ratliff	540-774-4796
Financial Secretary	Brian Ripple	540-797-5823
Chaplain	Fr. George Zina	407-758-8855
Treasurer	Chuck Hatcher	540-314-3360
Recorder	Jan Hodnett	540-819-5456
Advocate	Nate Griffith	804-837-8874
Outside Guard	Jean Saade	540-355-0585
Inside Guard	Rod Hidusky	540-985-3195
Trustee, 3 Year	James Valenzuela	301-806-3920
Trustee, 2 Year	Clyde Moak	540-418-5148
Trustee, 1 Year	Bill Howard	540-798-3734

Program Chairmen 2025-26

Program Director	Donald Brown	540-520-3060
Faith Director	Joe Kosty	540-685-2630
Family Director	Tim Heffron	540-904-2746
Community Director	Rich Whitney	443-465-7742
Life Director	Mark Johnson	540-467-2495
Membership Director	Jack Clarke	540-204-4984

Olympic Park Holdings Corporation Board 2025-26

President	Roger Vest	540-520-8520
Vice President:	Brian Carroll	540-266-8598
Treasurer:	Jan Hodnett	540-819-5456
Board Member:	Clyde Moak	540-418-5148
Board Member	Bill Howard	540-989-9399
Board Member:	Dan McBride	540-389-5903
Board Member:	Paul Miller	540-339-8657
Board Member	George Cuadrado	540-989-1758

In case of illness, need, or death, please notify one of the following:

Grand Knight

Dave Chopski 540-915-2819

Financial Secretary

Brian Ripple 540-797-5823

Fraternal Benefits

Jack Clarke 540-204-4984

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Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Roanoke Council 562 or the Knights of Columbus.