



Key Moments in St. Peter's History

A series of historical highlights from the first 200 years of St. Peter – Libertytown.

20 Years of Knights of Columbus in Libertytown

One hundred twenty-one years after its March 1882 founding by the Venerable Fr. Michael McGivney in New Haven, Connecticut, the Knights of Columbus came to St Peter the Apostle Parish on March 6th, 2003. This Catholic fraternal service order was founded on the principal of protecting the integrity of the family, especially when the father passes away while raising his family. While the Knights began as a fraternal insurance order, Fr. McGivney wanted the Catholic man to have spiritual and brotherly support from his fellow Catholic man, thus their principles of charity, unity, and fraternity. In 1882, the first members chose Columbus as their patron, recognizing him as a Catholic who is celebrated as the discoverer of America.

Richard L. Sherbert was the Maryland State Deputy twenty years ago and was present for the initiation of St. Peter the Apostle Council 13290. District Deputy, Gary Armbruster, was responsible for bringing the Knights to St. Peter's parish and it was done so with the approval of then pastor, Fr. John Dietzenbach. The charter member class of seventy-three men was the largest one in the State of Maryland up until that time. The Charter Class was composed of men that were already Knights who were transferring their membership, new member candidate Knights and several reactivation candidates. James L. Conko was the Charter Grand Knight with Nick DiSipio the Charter Deputy Grand Knight. Fr. John also became a member and served as the Charter Chaplain. As the years passed, the Council grew to 206 members which was the membership total at the start of 2023.



Fig. 1 June 2, 2013 Knights of Columbus members participate in St. Peter's annual Corpus Christi procession through Libertytown.

St. Peter the Apostle Council 13290 also excelled in its programs, winning many Maryland State Council and National Awards. It has done so in each of past twenty years of serving St Peter's Parish and the Frederick County community. In the past two decades, the Council has been able to weather member deaths and transfers while maintaining a steady membership in the low two hundreds. There are thirteen

Life Members, a status well earned by senior members. In the leadership category, the Council has had many gifted leaders serving as Faithful Navigators of the Fr. Michael J. McGivney Fourth Degree Assembly, as District Deputies, as Presidents of St Elizabeth Anne Seton Chapter of Grand Knights, a Fourth Degree District Marshal, and seventeen men serving as Council Grand Knights. The Council has also been very fortunate to have pastors that value the work done by the membership and the parishioner support for the many activities the Council holds on the parish campus. Alex Haybok was recognized as the outstanding Council Program Director for the 2021-22 fraternal year. The Council thrives on programs, with members constantly suggesting new ones and then bringing them to the forefront of the Council's work. There are several slogans that guide Council efforts: "We Are Charity First"; "Family Always Comes First"; "We Help Those Who Help Others"; "Perpetuating Our Faith Through the Knights of Columbus" to name a few. At the halfway point of the 2022-23 fraternal year the Council is poised for a new generation of leadership, one that will take the Council through the next ten years.

Two trying situations that the Council and its membership navigated in grand fashion were the 2004 church fire and the more recent Covid 19 restrictions. Facing these challenges, the Council adapted by altering the planned programs for the ensuing years. The Council grew stronger during those times and new leadership rose to the occasion, keeping the Council in the forefront of excellence.



Fig. 2 Nobody goes hungry at a parish event, such as a Lenten Fish Fry or at Christmas In the Country, when the Knights of Columbus are at work.

All Council members participate in Council functions as their time allows. Most members are men who spend most of their time with their family. They participate in Council charity events by collecting donations, praying in unity with their brother Knights, and standing unified for the causes of our Church as well as the Order. Fraternally, Knights are all brothers bound together in their efforts to practice our faith, attempting to better themselves as Catholic men, thus bettering both family and community. Others give much more of their time volunteering for our Parish and our community programs. Still others increase their participation by holding Council and State leadership positions. Men only need to be 18 years old to join, be a practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church and fill out a membership form to start the process to become a Knight.