

Sweet Visits From St. Nicholas

Knights bring candy, coats and holiday joy to Ukrainian children

By Solomiia Karpiv

A wave of festive celebrations swept through K of C councils in Ukraine Dec. 6-10 as Knights dressed like St. Nicholas and his angels brought joy to children in parishes, orphanages and shelters where internally displaced families live.

St. Nicholas of Myra — known as the “Wonder-Worker” — is the most beloved heavenly hero of Ukrainian children. He traditionally visits them on his feast day, bringing candy and gifts.

Knights in Ukraine have made a point of keeping that tradition alive, giving children a taste of joyful normality amid the ongoing war with Russia. As they did last year, many councils organized St. Nicholas Day celebrations featuring children’s performances, poems, songs, a visit from St. Nick — and, of course, plenty of sweets. This year, the state council, with support from the Order’s Ukraine Solidarity Fund, produced special candy boxes for Knights to give out.

“Candy is a thing that instantly brings consolation and pleasure, both to children and to the adult who stands next to the child and sees how happy he is,” explained State Treasurer Andriy Melnyk, who coordinated the program. “It is such a small gesture, but it reveals the great love that all benefactors carry when doing good.”

At some St. Nicholas events, children also received warm winter coats through the Knights of Columbus Coats for Kids program. The [first Coats for Kids distribution in Ukraine](#) was held Nov. 19 in Lviv, and more boxes of new coats have been making their way from Knights of Columbus in Poland into Ukraine this winter.



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“St. Nicholas was incredibly generous to the children of our parish and refugees from Eastern Ukraine,” said Yuri Yarmolovskyi, grand knight of Prince Askold Council 15802 in Kyiv. “The Knights of Columbus offered children nearly 200 candy boxes and winter coats. One can imagine the joy, smiles and satisfaction of these children!”

Until this year, the Roman Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church honored St. Nicholas on different dates: Dec. 6 and Dec. 19, respectively. But with the [Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church switching from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar](#) in September, Knights in Ukraine observed St. Nicholas’ feast on the same date for the first time.

Whenever it falls, celebrating St. Nicholas Day is more important than ever, said Vitaliy Pismennyi, grand knight of St. Peter Apostle Council 17487 in Ternopil.

“Unfortunately, in recent years, children have seen little of the holidays, little of the positive. Such events give them a sense of a fairy tale and let them feel like children,” he said.

Nor were the children the only ones enjoying themselves: “The fact that I could imitate St. Nicholas for a short time is a great grace,” said white-bearded Father Alan, who was asked by Council 17487 to play St. Nicholas for the children of St. Peter Apostle Parish. “When you see that children are happy and smile because they receive even a small gift — that is a source of great joy also for me.”

Kateryna Krolevska, a mother present at the St. Nicholas celebration held by Ivan Mazepa Council 16649 at the Parish of the Holy Trinity in Poltava, was grateful for the Knights’ efforts to bring cheer and build solidarity.

“It is important to us that we are not forgotten and that our children are cared for not only by parents and relatives, but also by the Knights of Columbus,” she said. “This means that we are not alone.”





Prayer for the Canonization of Blessed Michael McGivney Founder of the Knights of Columbus God, our Father, protector of the poor and defender of the widow and orphan, you called your priest, Blessed Michael McGivney, to be an apostle of Christian family life and to lead the young to the generous service of their neighbor. Through the example of his life and virtue, may we follow your Son, Jesus Christ, more closely, fulfilling his commandment of charity and building up his Body which is the Church. Let the inspiration of your servant prompt us to greater confidence in your love so that we may continue his work of caring for the needy and the outcast. We humbly ask that you glorify Blessed Michael McGivney on earth according to the design of your holy will. Through his intercession, grant the favor I now present (here make your request). Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Dinner Hosts

Bob Strazzo January 9

TBD Feb 13

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1849

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All Council Officers (except Br. Charlie Esola) can be reached by email. Use the first letter of their first name, the entire last name, followed by: @kofc-1849.org

Sample: mkoenig@kofc-1849.org

Christmas Party



Christmas Party





Knights of Columbus Council 1849

Events Calendar 2023—2024

Planning meetings at Saint Patrick's Hall, first Wednesday at 6:00 PM of every month, starting July 2023 until June 2024.

Monthly Business meetings at Saint Katharine Drexel (St. Teresa of Calcutta Room) on 2nd Tuesday at 7:00 PM, starting July 2023 until June 2024. Dinner at 6:00 PM.

Family Fishing Day, Silver Lake, July 1st, 2023

Installation Mass and Picnic, SKD 10 AM August 20, 2023 (3rd Sunday)

Summer Dinner (Tri-tip), at SKD after 5PM Mass September 30, 2023 (5th Saturday)

Clergy Appreciation Dinner, Mark and Nancy Koenig Residence 5:00 PM September 17, 2023

Tootsie Roll Drive, weekend of October 13, 14, 15, 2023

Mass for Departed Knights, SKD 10 AM November 12, 2023 (2nd Sunday)

Christmas Party, SKD 6 PM, December 15, 2023 (3rd Friday)

Winter Dinner (Fish), SKD 6:30 PM February 3, 2024 (1st Saturday)

Family Potluck, SKD 6:00 PM March 26, 2024 (4th Tuesday)

Spring Dinner (Ribs), SKD 6:30 PM April 20, 2024 (3rd Saturday)

Family Potluck, SKD 6:00 PM May 18, 2024 (3rd Saturday)

Hospitality Donuts every 2nd Sunday at SKD

Hospitality Wine and Cheese every 1st weekend Vigil Mass at SKD

Rosary before 10 AM Mass, SKD every 5th Sunday of months with 5 Sunday

KVGC Rosary Tuesday before the first Wednesday of each month at 5:30 at SKD – St. Maximillian Kolbe Room

January Calendar of Events

Wednesday, January 3: Planning Meeting at Saint Patrick's Hall at 6:00 PM.

Saturday, January 6: Knights Wine and Cheese Hospitality after 5:00 PM Mass.

Tuesday, January 9: Business Meeting at Saint Katharine Drexel. Dinner at 6 PM. Meeting at 7 PM.

Sunday, January 14: Knights Donut Sunday at Saint Katharine Drexel after the 10:00 AM Mass.

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Published Monthly. All news items may be emailed to news@kofc-1849.org. Photos need to be jpeg, set at no less than 150 dpi, and no larger than 800kb; send photo files to mews@kofc-1849.org. @Amador County Council 1849 Knights of Columbus, January 2024, P.O. Box 1436, Sutter Creek, Ca 95685

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