



Knights of Columbus

Fourth Degree

Saint Isaac Jogues Province

First New Jersey District

Master's Report at Biennial Meeting

March 14, 2026

LaNeve's Restaurant

276 Belmont Avenue

Haledon, NJ 07508

Rev. Father, Faithful Navigators, and my Brother Sir Knights, I wish to welcome you to the First NJ District 4th Degree Biennial meeting. During my tenure as Master of the First New Jersey District for the past 3 plus years, I worked toward enhancing five significant areas, Church, Membership, Patriotism, Administration, and Service to those in need.

The past 3 plus years have shown continuous improvement in the district in these areas. For the Church, we have enhanced our relationship with many parishes and the dioceses that we serve in. Our increased participation in the Church and Civic programs has resulted with many more call outs than in years past.

For membership, we have maintained the twice a year Exemplification of the Fourth Degree. This membership commitment has been reorganized towards a goal of recruitment year-round. One new focus of our Exemplifications of the Patriotic degree is to increase membership specifically among the Clergy, our most treasured brother.

This has been achieved by offering and conducting this degree during the week, ‘remotely’ at the convenience of our Clergy at their Parish to accommodate the Priest’s Sunday Mass schedule and to ultimately ensure our Clergy attain their Sir Knight status. Over the past 3 plus years we have conducted 47 ‘Special Exemplifications’ for our Clergy resulting in 47 Reverend Father Sir Knights.

To the goal of membership, we have attended every CUF degree in our District at the leadership of Executive Aide to the Master Edward Wilkin. He tracks, every CUF degree that is posted on the State’s Website, assigns Aides or Marshals to attend, they speak on the 4th degree, record contact information, direct the ‘new’ brothers to their Assemblies, then ultimately follows up with their Faithful Navigator. This has been and will continue to be a very good tool in recruiting and ensuring these brothers do not get lost in the system and we move them into the highest degree in the Knights of Columbus.

Additionally, we have changed the honorees for the Military Ball to our U S Veterans, and our First Responders to the list of honorees. This being the Patriotic Degree has enhanced the participation for all our brothers.

While we have achieved our goal of new Sir Knights each year for the past 3 plus years, we hope to improve our membership prospecting. Additionally, to be more inclusive and utilize the membership to its fullest we formed and Supreme adopted a new Assembly in Paterson, the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist Assembly, and new Assembly in Hewitt, the St. Maximilian Kolbe Assembly which was submitted and adopted by the Supreme Council.

The addition of the Star Assembly Award is an added incentive towards the growth of the Fourth Degree. Thank you to all the Navigators who have made recruiting a priority in your Assemblies.

The Exemplification of Patriotism has been exemplified twice a year under the direction of Team Captain SK Jay Bohn. The team’s performance has always been at the highest level and has been certified. The Team adopted and transitioned into the ‘New’ Exemplification of Patriotism Degree with the dedication and professionalism they always have on display. District Marshal Kenneth Schmitt, with assistance from Executive Marshal David Cordero and Assistant Marshals James Meng, and Dan Germaine, Hector Jimenez, Vincent Lombardi, Mario Lepage, and David Newlin and Color Guard Commander Joseph Bonafide with Assistant Commander Lawrence Bogar have directed the Honor Guard and Color Guard at the Exemplifications, Installations, State and Provincial events and have brought honor to the Order and the District.

Our Team, worked to secure another Venue for our November Exemplification and I am honored to announce the Exemplification of Patriotism Degree, with the honorees being our U.S. Military Veterans and First Responders, will be exemplified at St. Gerard RC Church, Paterson.

We also additionally, with our brothers in mind, changed the Day of the Exemplification from Sunday to Saturday to allow all to Celebrate Mass at their home Parishes on Sunday.

The District Color Line has maintained stellar performance with Joseph Bonafide as its Commander and Lawrence Bogar his Assistant, at the Exemplifications, State Conventions, the Installation of the State Officers, Pride in our Priests Dinners, and many other functions throughout the District, State and Province.

The First District Color Guard was given the honor of presenting the Flags of our Order and Country at the 125th Anniversary of the Fourth Degree at St. Patrick's Cathedral in NYC.

The First New Jersey District will share the responsibility of the Honor Guard and Color Guard at the annual NJ State Council Convention in Wildwood, NJ this year. Thanks in advance to all who will participate at this annual event. Your excellence in formations and drills are the pride of the District.

Administratively, our achievements have moved the District beyond all expectations and well into the 21st Century. Our Webmaster, Brian Christiaens, built a new web site that provides current and up to date information and fillable forms for all members of the district. This is an ongoing project and I wish to thank Brian for his efforts. We also created a '4th Degree Membership Application' and a QR code to expedite and facilitate Candidate signup and to replace the Form 4.

Additionally, the Candidate/Guest/Working Corpsman Dinner Reservation Form is now done digitally on our First New Jersey District website and has removed the mailing or emailing of paperwork. This has streamlined the Dinner Reservation process to one digitally submitted page and improved the accuracy of all the mandated paperwork. Another addition, we have added was a digital aspect to the submission of Ads for our Exemplification Ad Journal. This has removed the paper submission process which led to clerical errors, dropped, and missed Ads, and additional tedious paperwork.

The District call out requests are now also done through the new website which has streamlined the tracking and distributing of our Call Outs. Most of our Assemblies also use email to communicate with their members and many maintain active Newsletters, a requirement for Star Assembly.

In the service area, many of our efforts are directed toward our programs for veterans. Under the direction of Sir Knight Angelo Scalo, and Raymond Lil, the District is still actively involved in the Tank Pull, a program started by Msgr. Stein Assembly and now a State Council program. Proceeds from this event are used for direct aid to Veterans and other Veteran affairs.

The District Veterans' programs have supplied sweatpants, shirts, socks, jackets, caps, other clothing, and personal items to all the five hospitals and Veteran homes in the State. Where permitted, escort services have been provided for Chapel service along with social programs to improve the Veterans morale.

We are maintaining a Sir Knight as a liaison at the Veteran hospitals and homes in the 1ST New Jersey District in accord with the VTVS program. Former Master Paul Pinkman is at the forefront in organizing these efforts and we wish to express our gratitude to him.

Our Color Corps has made exceptional service to the District responding to over 500 call outs for the past year. The number of call outs continues to increase each year. To be able to handle all call outs we need to increase our Color Corps membership with emphasis on younger Corpsmen, as we are constantly trying to recruit new men.

The Corpsmen are continually being instructed in proper Uniform and drill procedures and have shown an excellent attitude in compliance with all procedures.

Thanks go to SK Michael Leyden, who is now part of State Deputy Jim Sweeney's Administration, for his assistance as Secretary for the District, Executive Secretary Edward Kopec, has done an exemplary job replacing Michael Leyden and has continued to further the district. Our Executive Secretary to the Master, Mark Hanson has not missed a step. He has instituted his own forms to expedite submission and recounting. His presence and administrative skill, and personality has further enhanced the District.

District Marshal Kenneth Schmitt for his leadership of the Honor Guard and Color Guard personnel. I would also like to thank Executive Assistant Marshal David Cordero, and Kenneth Mahouchick for their leadership with the Ad Journal, PSD Bruce DeMolli, for taking the lead in Membership, and Jay Bohn for serving as Captain of the Degree Team.

Although all our Brothers have contributed to the workings of the district, without which nothing would have been accomplished, I am not going to mention other names as to avoid the danger of missing some.

My sincere gratitude and appreciation are extended to the members of the district staff. Sincere thanks to all the Sir Knights, my brothers for their support, patience and cooperation you have given me and the District on this awesome journey.

My thanks to our District Friar Father Bill Smith and Associate District Friar Father Raymond Rodrigue for their service, friendship, and Spiritual guidance during the past 3 plus years.

Your service, dedication and faithful shepherding are well appreciated especially with all the demands that are placed on our Parish Priests. I encourage all the Assemblies to support and respect your parish priests. Their help is important for the Order and your service to them is even more important.

My gratitude is extended to all of you for letting me lead this District as your Master for the past four years. And I hope and pray we to continue to serve all our brothers, further our Order, our Veterans, Church, and God's neediest.

The First New Jersey District has remained "Second to None" in the State and Knights of Columbus due to your efforts and support. Our Assemblies continue to successfully function for their members, those we Serve and hopefully grow and remain strong. Remember the four principles of our order: Charity, Unity, Fraternity and Patriotism. Keep up the good work and prosper.

Continue to be blessed and be a blessing to all those you encounter in your journey of faith.

A sincere "THANK YOU" from the bottom of my heart.

**Vivat Jesus,
James DeLuccia, Master
First New Jersey District**