



# Knights of Columbus Bernard P. O'Brien Council #3956

Charity Unity Fraternity

## October 2024 Issue 66



MEET and GREET SATURDAY NOV, 9

K of C Council 3956 Business Meeting (St Pius Social Hall) Social Hour begins at 5:00 p.m.

In lieu of our normal business meeting on Wednesday.

## October Events Overview

### Tuesday, October 1

COATS FOR KIDS DRIVE (Month of October)

### Wednesday, October 2

6:00pm K of C Council 3956 Regular Business Meeting (St Pius Social Hall)

### Friday, October 4 *Feast of St Francis of Assisi*

### Saturday, October 5

12:00pm State Soccer Challenge Finals

### Friday, October 11

Columbus Weekend M.I. Drive

### Saturday, October 12

Columbus Weekend M.I. Drive

### Sunday, October 13

Columbus Weekend M.I. Drive

### Monday, October 14

Columbus Day Indigenous Peoples' Day

### Saturday, October 19

7:30am Men's Scripture Club (Cor Event)

### Sunday, October 20

8:00am. Council 3956 Charity Family Breakfast

### Tuesday, October 22

7:00pm. Msgr Van Antwerp Assembly 475 4th Degree Business Meeting

### Thursday, October 24

7:30pm. Detroit Archdiocesan Vocations League (DAVL) Meeting

### Friday, October 25

6:00pm We Are One Halloween Party (Doors open at 6pm)

### Saturday, October 26

7:30am. 2024 Prep Bowl

7:50am. Prep Bowl 2024

6:00pm. SPX PTO Trunk or Treat Event

### Thursday, October 31

COATS FOR KIDS DRIVE (Month of October) Halloween

### Friday, November 1

*All Saints' Day*

### Saturday, November 2

*All Souls' Day*

### Monday, November 4

8:00pm

*Webinar: Public Relations*

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**Thursday, November 7**

8:00pm

Webinar: Conducting Activity Drives

**Saturday, November 9**

8:00am

Michigan District 1 Fall Harvest and Packing Party

5:00pm

K of C Council 3956 Regular Business Meeting and Social Night (St Pius Social Hall)

**Monday, November 11**

Veterans Day

**Tuesday, November 12**

6:00pm

Ushers Meeting

**Saturday, November 16**

7:30am

Men's Scripture Club (Cor Event)

9:00am

COATS FOR KIDS Southwest Detroit Distribution

**Tuesday, November 19**

8:00pm

Webinar: Recruitment Strategies

**Tuesday, November 26**

7:00pm

Msgr Van Antwerp Assembly 475 4th Degree Business Meeting

**Thursday, November 28**

Thanksgiving Day

7:30pm

Detroit Archdiocesan Vocations League (DAVL) Meeting

**Ongoing: Recruitment Drive**

Throughout October, we are focusing on growing our council. Encourage fellow parishioners to join the Knights of Columbus and become part of our mission.

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## Grand Knight's October Message

### MI Drive

We just had one of our best MI Tootsie Roll Drives in years. Thank you to Larry Rossi who again has been the key player in getting permission to solicit at Sam's Club, Lowes and City of Southgate to work the intersection of Dix and Eureka. Ron Wagner and Mark Garcellano who as Bill Robert put it "have gone above and beyond what was expected". Ron took time off his job all day Friday to work at the intersection and raised nearly \$400 on his own. The Saturday total between Sam's Club and the Intersection raised over \$1000. With collections from the ushers after mass Sunday, our grand total exceeded \$1900. Well more than double the amount collected last year. Mark worked out of the social hall all weekend to collect money brought in.

The Eight Grade Class worked in shifts on Saturday with supervision by our great brother Knights. These kids were energetic and diligent in their task to politely solicit donations for the mentally and physically handicapped. They were awesome. Thanks to the help of the students, their parents, brother knights Bill Robert, Stephan Gall, Robert Park, Ron Wagner, Ray Bilyk, Mark Garcellano, James Garcellano, Joe Hernandez, Ushers and yours truly who worked through the weekend Saturday. Without the prep work by Larry, this would not have been possible. For the small group of volunteers, they did a tremendous job.

### Coats for Kids

We are midway through our Coats for Kids campaign. We encourage all brother knights to get the word out in the parish to donate. Imagine what it is like for those less fortunate than ourselves to send their children out this winter without protection from the severe winter weather approaching. This year we again are getting help from the staff and students at our St. Pius X school to raise money to purchase outerwear and accessories for children in need. As we look forward to Thanksgiving and Christmas, making purchases for our loved ones, there are children out there, that get excited just to know they have a coat to wear this winter.

Last year, our council, with the help of our school and parish, raised over \$4000 for Coats for Kids. This year, the costs have gone up, so we need to exceed \$5000 to purchase the same amount. Special thanks to Fr. Don and Deacon Chuck for their enthusiastic support. Thanks also to Mark Garcellano, Ray Bilyk, Dave Kudla who organized the effort, Principal Sara Furtah and her staff and students who are getting the word out to gather donations. To Matt Wardell for donating a Christmas tree to hang more envelopes. To everyone else who has pitched in. Please join us join us for the distribution of the coats on **Saturday, November 16<sup>th</sup> at Basilica of St. Anne, 1000 St. Anne Street in Detroit. Please be there by 9:00 a.m.** The coats will warm the children. The children will warm your hearts.

### Trunk or Treat

It's not just the kids that enjoy Halloween. **On Saturday, October 26<sup>th</sup>** we keep the tradition going of helping grill hot dogs and distribute donuts, and other treats in the St Pius parking lot beginning at 6:00 p.m. We again agreed to cover the costs of the donuts and hand out the other goodies. This is a great opportunity to show the fathers how important we are to the school and their children. This is also an opportunity to show why they need to become brother knights. We don't just need people to help cook hotdogs and hand out treats, but to work the crowd. Many of our best and most active members were fathers of St. Pius students. I am one of them.

## **Meet and Greet, November 9th**

Our regularly scheduled November business meeting on the first Wednesday of the month is being replaced with a MEET and GREET Social...

It's time we just get together for a good time with our recently joined and those considering becoming brother knights. On Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, in the Social Hall, beginning after mass and continuing into the evening. All members are invited to join us for pizza, snacks and a variety of beverages as we watch football, play cards and get better acquainted. We will begin with a brief abbreviated report of events and spend the next several hours having a great time. During and since the parish festival, we have seen an uptick in men interested in wanting to join us, and for good reason. I am hoping that all our current members can participate in the fun. We are looking forward to a big turnout. I joined and became active as I learned what a great group of guys we have on this council. Mark your calendars now for Saturday November 9<sup>th</sup>! Please bring a friend!

## **Reminder and Reflection**

Next month we will resume our business meeting on Wednesday, December 4<sup>th</sup> in the Social Hall. Food and Beverages beginning at 6:00 p.m., meeting at 7:00 p.m.

For those of you that have not been active in a while, I earnestly encourage you to come back. One of the greatest attributes of this council is the support we have for each other. When you join this council, you joined a brotherhood of men that truly care for each other and their families. My faith has been strengthened by these men and their families. I have never been among a greater group of people.

Peace,

Anthony (Tony) Chirco, Grand Knight

K of C O'Brien Council #3956

Call or Text: 734-558-5446

Email: [ajc@tm.net](mailto:ajc@tm.net)

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## **Featured Business E.W. Grobbels**

If you have enjoyed a Reuben at one of the St. Pius Festival or a Corned Beef and Cabbage meal around St. Patrick's day, then you have E.W. Grobbels to thank for donating the corned beef we used to make them. For the past few years manager Dennis Lipps has generously supported our parish and our council. The tasty meals are the result of a handful of talented cooks and the kind support of a local business.

EW Grobbel is headquartered in Eastern Market. They specialize in whole muscle meat proteins and pickle products. If you've enjoyed any of the Reubens or Corned Beef and Cabbage meals, you can check out where to purchase more at:

<https://www.ewgrobbel.com/our-brands/>



Through their donations, we've been able to raise hundreds of dollars towards the school and parish. The O'Brien council would like to extend our gratitude to Dennis Lipps and the EW Grobbel company for their kindness and generosity.

If you can think of another LOCAL business that has supported the parish in the past contact me at the next general council meeting to discuss.

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## **Reflection**

Another big thank you to the Knights who arranged and supported the Tootsie Roll Drive to benefit the Mentally Impaired. This year we got to include the Eighth Graders from St Pius X. These young people got to see lessons in generosity first hand. Seeing the look in your fellow man's eyes as they search their pockets and wallets is a priceless gift.

Earlier this month Deacon Chuck told us about the four new deacons being ordained. He told us about the joys of attending an ordination mass. He described how powerful the choir sounds. It reminded me of the role Deacons have played in my life. Think of the ways Deacons have helped you grow in your religious life. The Priesthood, Diaconate, and Consecrated Life are all vocations we need to celebrate and pray for.

Our Priests and Deacons serve God because it is their vocation. They don't need our appreciation because they have a higher calling. Wouldn't it be nice to show our gratitude for the tireless work they put in at least during vocation awareness week. It wouldn't take much to attend an extra daily mass, make sure to attend confession, or even say a quick thank you.

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## **National Vocation Awareness Week November 3-9**

Promote vocations to ordained ministry and consecrated life through prayer, invitation, and education.

Ways to Participate in National Vocations Awareness Week

- Spend time in prayer for vocations.
- Write a note to your parish priest to thank him for his vocation.
- Learn how groups like the St. John Paul II Shepherd's Guild, Serra International and **the Knights of Columbus** foster and support vocations.
- Print and post the seminarian and diaconate daily prayer lists prominently in your home as reminders to pray every day for men in formation.-Hint, you can find the diaconate prayer list on Deacon Chuck's update on our four latest Deacons.

Did you know that in our country, compared to 50 years ago, there are 20,000 fewer priests and 130,000 fewer religious sisters? During Vocation Awareness Week, please pray that young people today will hear and respond to God's call. And do your part to encourage them to consider the priesthood and religious life.

“National Vocation Awareness Week will be celebrated in our country November 3-9, 2024. Please ask Our Lord for more dedicated, holy priests, deacons, and consecrated men and women. May they be inspired by Jesus Christ, supported by our faith community, and respond generously to God’s gift of vocation.”

For more information and resources, visit: <https://fwdioc.org/national-vocation-awareness-week>

**Robert Park, Recorder, Editor in Chief**

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## **Knight of the Month**



This month we name our Brother Knight Stephen Gall as Knight of the Month. Steph has been an officer serving as Inside Guard for this term. He is the Community Director, which means he works closely with St. Pius X school. As part of his duties this September, Steph organized the soccer challenge with the students of the school.

Steph has been married to his wife Jennifer for 12 years. Together they have a four year old son Stephen Jr. who attends St. Pius. Steph said that the thing he loves most about the Knights and our council is the brotherhood and camaraderie. We are proud to recognize the work Steph has done in September as our Knight of the Month.

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## **Family of the Month**

October’s Family of the Month is the Hand Family. Bill and Patti Hand have been active volunteers at St. Pius for a long time. They have been members of the Church for 53 years. Their son and daughter attended St. Pius X school and graduated from Aquinas. Their four granddaughters attended Gabriel Richard High School. Both Bill and Patti are members of the Rosary Altar Confraternity. Patti works on the Art & Environment committee arranging the bulletin board in the hallway near the social hall. Bill has been a past Grand Knight of St. Pius when it was still in the prior location on Dix and he is a current Knight in good standing. Bill also served as President of the Men’s Club and President of the Athletic club at Aquinas.

They have been giving of their time and talents to our Church for a long time and continue to give with cheerful hearts. Patti told me that she finds the volunteer work for the Church to be very rewarding.

The Hand family has exemplified the spirit of helping in a variety of ways for as long as they have been members. We take a lot of joy in putting the spotlight on a family that deserves recognition for the work they do. If you see Bill or Patti, please thank them and congratulate them on being the O'Brien Council's Family of the Month!

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## The Spirit of Halloween

The month of October hosts many religious feasts, Yom Kippur (Jewish), Diwali (Hindu), and Eid Milad-un-Nabi (Muslim), but none has gripped the imagination in the United States more than Halloween. It's celebration has grown into a multi-billion-dollar industry with its variety of décor rivaling that of Christmas. So what's the truth of all this hubbub?

As we look around the many decorated yards, one can't help but think its celebration is rooted in evil or the Satanic due to the gruesome, bloody, and ghoulish array of demons, serial killers and witches. But in truth, its origins are Catholic. The name "Halloween" is actually a derivative from "all hallows (holy ones) eve," the vigil of All Saints Day (Nov. 1).

A vigil is a period of keeping awake, watching, and praying during the time usually spent asleep. Halloween is the time we prepare for All Saints Day, a feast of the Communion of the Saints already in Heaven. If this is true, and it is, where does all that creepy stuff come from?

Well, this day is also the Celtic feast of Samhain. It similarly observes a time of connecting with past ancestors. As the Church evangelized Central Europe many pagan traditions merged with Catholic feasts through inculturation.

According to Celtic mythology, the veil between the Otherworld (similar to Heaven) and our earthly world thins, making it easier for spirits and the souls of the dead to return. This returning is the origin of the darker

side of Halloween. During Samhain, people use to roam the streets "guising," that is wearing masks or costumes of the dead.

People at home made offerings of food set out on porches in order appease the roaming spirits. Those guising would take the treats. Houses without food would have pranks pulled on them such as rattling windows or groaning at doors. This is where trick or treat originated.

So as we prepare for this year's Halloween or All Hallows Eve, perhaps we can find more room for saints during our pick of guising and the décor we have in our yards or vehicles during trunk or treat as we remember our Catholic roots in all this autumn hubbub.

As with most Catholic celebrations turned pagan or vice versa, it's a matter of perspective. Happy Halloween to all the kids who are out gathering a bag full of stomach aches and sugar highs.

Vivat Jesus,  
Deacon Chuck



## **In Our Prayers**

Please pray for healing for our brother knights, family, and friends:

- Jennifer Bilyk
- Robert LaForest
- Joe and Roger Hernandez
- Deacon Bob
- Manuel's Family
- Mel Jacobs
- Larry Rossi
- Bob Schooner
- Alyssia Schooner and Daniel Schooner, Bob Schooner's Grandchildren
- Carol Kainz, Cousin to Angela Chirco, diagnosed with Stage 4 Cancer
- Antonietta (Dolly) Chirco, who is recovering from a stroke, Mother of GK Tony Chirco
- Liz and Larry Ridenour
- Valerie Husar

We continue to pray for brother knights, parishioners, family, and friends in need of God's mercy for whatever challenges they face, particularly those in poor health and in crisis.





Soccer Challenge







District Finals of the Soccer Challenge

Click to sign up to our Council GroupMe text chat:

[https://groupme.com/join\\_group/89941588/PMiLZWii](https://groupme.com/join_group/89941588/PMiLZWii)

QR CODE:



Click to order attire from our Council 3956 online store:

<https://knights3956pius.itemorder.com/shop/home/>

QR CODE:





BERNARD P O BRIEN CO 3956  
SOUTHGATE, MI



### Ordination Anniversaries

October

| Name                    | Clergy Title | Ordination Date |
|-------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Deacon Scott M LaForest | Deacon       | 10-06-2007      |

BERNARD P O BRIEN CO 3956  
SOUTHGATE, MI



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### Member Wedding Anniversaries

October

| Name              | Date       | Wife's Name       |
|-------------------|------------|-------------------|
| Ray J Bilyk       | 10-12-1996 | Jennifer Bilyk    |
| Brian T Cronan    | 10-17-1998 | Debbie Cronan     |
| Matthew M Dziewit | 10-17-1992 | Kimberly Dziewit  |
| Dennis J Hamilton | 10-22-1977 | Debra Hamilton    |
| Mr Ryan D Daw     | 10-23-2010 | Julie Daw         |
| Cary J Polaski    | 10-24-1992 | Karen Ann Polaski |

**Total: 6**



## Member Birthdays

### October

| Name                | Birthday |  |  |
|---------------------|----------|--|--|
| Mr Fred J Tortonesi | 10-09    |  |  |
| Brian T Batko       | 10-22    |  |  |
| Anthony J Chirco    | 10-25    |  |  |
| Paul J Pauline      | 10-25    |  |  |



## Wife Birthdays

### October

| Member's Name    | Wife's Name     | Birthday |
|------------------|-----------------|----------|
| Anthony J Chirco | Angela Chirco   | 10-02    |
| Steven M Minella | Melissa Minella | 10-02    |



## Years of Service

October

| Name                   | First Degree Date/<br>Re-entry Date | Years of<br>Service |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Dennis J Hamilton      | 10-01-1973                          | 51                  |
| Brian J Heasley        | 10-01-1973                          | 51                  |
| Dan A Somenauer        | 10-01-1975                          | 49                  |
| Mr Joseph A Wienclaw   | 10-24-2004                          | 20                  |
| Frank A Allevato       | 10-06-2005                          | 19                  |
| Gary T Maveal          | 10-19-2008                          | 16                  |
| Robert R Park          | 10-16-2016                          | 8                   |
| Mr Chuck P Degroat Esq | 10-04-2020                          | 4                   |
| Craig McKinney         | 10-09-2020                          | 4                   |

## Call to Serve

Saturday, October 5, Archbishop Vigneron ordained Chris Jaskowiec, Charlie Robeck, Mark Sienkowski, and Arvin Stephenson to the Permanent Diaconate to serve the Archdiocese of Detroit. They, with the continuous support of their families, have spent four years of discernment in responding to God's call to serve. As part of their formation process, they prepared themselves intellectually through rigorous education and academic endeavors at Sacred Heart Major Seminary. They engaged in summer ministries which strengthened their human formation in a way that they have become, "a bridge and not an obstacle for others in their meeting with Jesus Christ the Redeemer of man." Lastly, they have been immersed in spiritual formation, a process in which the primary goal is the establishment and nourishment of attitudes, habits, and practices that will set the foundation for a lifetime of on-going spiritual discipline.

Please keep them, along with their families, in your prayers as they begin a wonderful journey of ordained ministry serving God's people.

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*(Prayers of the Faithful October 5&6, 2024)*

For Deacons Chris Jaskowiec, Charlie Robeck, Mark Sienkowski, and Arvin Stephenson, who were ordained to the Permanent Diaconate of the Archdiocese of Detroit by Archbishop Vigneron this weekend. May they be filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit as they begin their ordained ministry of serving God's people.

# Meet the four men who will be ordained permanent deacons for Detroit on Oct. 5



MICHAEL STECHSCHULTE

Sep 27, 2024 Local



Left to right, Christopher Jaskowiec, 62, of Dearborn Heights; Charles Robeck, 51, of Farmington Hills; Mark Sienkowski, 64, of Sterling Heights; and Arvin Stephenson, 60, of New Baltimore will be ordained permanent deacons during a Mass at 10 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 5, at the Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament with Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron celebrating. (Courtesy photos)

## Archbishop to ordain Chris Jaskowiec, Charlie Robeck, Mark Sienkowski and Arvin Stephenson to serve the Church as deacons

DETROIT — Four men who have spent years discerning the Lord’s vocation for their lives will be ordained to the permanent diaconate Oct. 5 at the Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament.



Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron will lay his hands upon the heads of Christopher Jaskowiec, 62, of Dearborn Heights; Charles Robeck, 51, of Farmington Hills; Mark Sienkowski, 64, of Sterling Heights; and Arvin Stephenson, 60, of New Baltimore, ordaining them to serve at the altar and in ministries of service to God's people. Their parish assignments will be announced during the ordination Mass.

The ordinations will take place during a 10 a.m. Mass, which will be livestreamed on the Archdiocese of Detroit's Facebook page.

Each of the four men has studied, discerned and prayed through their formation at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, and will enter the diaconate after long careers. The four men responded to a questionnaire about themselves ahead of the ordination Mass.

Here's a little more about them:

## **Christopher J. Jaskowiec**



Christopher John Jaskowiec, 62, of Dearborn Heights, is a parishioner of the Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Detroit, where he also works full time as a business manager and wedding

coordinator.

Jaskowiec was born in Detroit and attended Bishop Borgess High School in Detroit, graduating in 1980. He earned undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Michigan and the University of Detroit-Mercy, respectively, in 1984 and 1989.

Jaskowiec first heard the Lord's calling to the permanent diaconate after visiting the Holy Land in 2015, where a moving experience of the sites of Jesus' Passion spoke deeply in his heart.

"My hand touched the spot where our Lord and Savior was born. I knelt at the spot where the cross rested. Doing these things brought a rich dimension to my faith," Jaskowiec said. "Shortly after that trip, I heard the Lord calling me to serve His Church. I began studies at the seminary in 2019 and continue to hear the Lord beckon. I am humbled that the Lord is calling me to serve."

Jaskowiec served his parish internship at St. Kateri Tekakwitha Parish in Dearborn, under the supervision of Fr. Terry Kerner.

During his formation and in his employment at the cathedral, Jaskowiec said he's been privileged to work in various aspects of parish life, and hopes to bring a sacramental element to his ministry once he's ordained.

"I wish to serve the Lord in any capacity that He wishes to lead me," Jaskowiec said. "In the years of my formation, I have been enriched in working with young adults who are receiving the sacrament of matrimony. Also, I have had the gift of visiting the sick and bringing the Eucharist to hospital patients. When I serve the Lord, I receive so much in return. I look with great anticipation to serve as a deacon."

In his spare time, Jaskowiec enjoys cooking, gardening, home improvements, traveling, volunteering and entertaining.

**Charles (Charlie) M. Robeck**





Charles (Charlie) Martin Robeck, 51, of Farmington Hills, is a member of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish in Farmington. He is married to Elaine (Fontenot) and is the father of four children: Connor, 22, Aaron, 20, Caleb, 17, and Lily, 17.

Robeck was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and attended St. Michael-Albertville High School in Minnesota, graduating in 1991. He earned bachelor's and master's degrees in mechanical engineering from the University of Houston and the University of Texas, respectively. He currently works as an automotive engineer for the Ford Motor Company.

Robeck said the diaconate had been on his mind for years, but it wasn't until he began praying in the chapel of Sacred Heart Major Seminary in the fall of 2018 that he heard the Lord's voice calling him to pursue it.

"I was praying in the chapel at the seminary, and what came to me was 'trust,'" Robeck said. "I didn't know exactly how things would go, I just had to entrust it to God. As I approach ordination, I'm in somewhat the same place. I can't know exactly what my ministry as a deacon will look like, so I just have to trust that God will lead me where He wants me to be and show me how He wants me to serve His people."

Robeck served his parish internship at St. Fabian Parish in Farmington Hills under the supervision of Msgr. Timothy Hogan and Deacon Perry Clark. During that time, he served in liturgical roles as well as in food pantries, hospital ministry and evangelization. Prior to that, he served in pro-life ministries and in senior services, as well in faith-sharing groups.

“One of my favorite descriptions of diaconal ministry comes from Deacon William Ditewig, who describes the deacon as a connection between ‘the Gospel proclaimed and the Gospel lived,’” Robeck said. “The deacon proclaims the Gospel in words during Mass and he proclaims it in actions via his service in the world.”

In his spare time, Robeck enjoys camping, backpacking, paddlesports such as kayaking and canoeing, riding motorcycles and barbecuing.

## **Mark Sienkowski**



Mark Sienkowski, 64, of Sterling Heights, is a parishioner of St. Lawrence Parish in Utica. He is married to Carol (Schultz) and is the father of three adult children — Bryan (Lindzy), 37, Laura (Zach), 35, and Justin, 30 — and the grandfather of four.



Sienkowski was born in Dearborn and attended Henry Ford II High School in Sterling Heights, graduating in 1978. He earned a bachelor's in computer science from the University of Michigan, and a master's in pastoral studies from Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit. He is recently retired from Mercedes Benz Financial, where he worked as a computer systems analyst.

Sienkowski's path to the diaconate began with a desire to evangelize that was nurtured through an encounter with St. Paul Street Evangelization.

"I happened upon one of their brochures while attending a Catholic Apologetics Conference. Reading their brochure led me to training materials on their website where I began to recognize that we can't argue people into the faith, we need to accompany them," Sienkowski said. "And then at some of their regional trainings I met so many people who were on fire with the Holy Spirit. That led me to pray to and cultivate a relationship with the Holy Spirit who helped me to step outside of my comfort zone and share my faith more boldly.

"At that same time, Unleash the Gospel was published, and it crystalized my desire to be 'all in,'" Sienkowski added. "While St. Paul Street focuses on engaging people out in the world, the Spirit led me to recognize that we need to evangelize from within as well. It was that desire to help form intentional disciples in the Church that led me to pursue the diaconate."

Sienkowski, a member of St. Paul Street Evangelization as well as the Knights of Columbus, completed his parish internship at St. Therese of Lisieux Parish in Shelby Township under the supervision of Msgr. John Kasza and Deacon Greg Willoughby. His field experience included ministry at homeless shelters, prisons, nursing homes and hospitals.

"Ministry starts with caring enough to show up and be present," Sienkowski said. "Ministry is often not difficult, but it is about saying yes to helping those in need. It is about having a humble attitude and being willing to serve the 'least of these.' It starts with keeping our eyes on the cross. Jesus died for us. Are we willing to die to ourselves (our time, our ambitions), to imitate Christ and serve his people?"

In his spare time, Sienkowski loves to read, ride his bicycle, visit churches and shrines, play golf, watch the Detroit Lions and spend time with his family.

**Arvin L. Stephenson**



Arvin Lee Stephenson, 60, of New Baltimore, is a member of St. Paul of Tarsus Parish in Clinton Township. He is married to Pamela (Rasmussen) and is the father of two adult children: Benjamin, 29, and Sabrina, 25.

Stephenson was born in Detroit and attended Henry Ford II High School in Sterling Heights, graduating in 1981. He earned undergraduate degrees from Macomb Community College and Lawrence Technological University, and a master's in pastoral ministry from Sacred Heart Major Seminary. He currently works as a project architect for TMP Architecture, Inc.

A convert to Catholicism, Stephenson's journey to the diaconate began with his journey to the Catholic Church in 2013. After attending Mass and volunteering at his wife's parish for years, Stephenson said he began "discovering a beauty and depth in the Church's teachings, its sacraments and the people that not only complimented my religious understanding but added richness and depth to my spirituality that had been lacking."

One day, while at work, he heard a "voice from deep inside telling me it was time to make the change."

After entering RCIA, he entered the Church during the Easter vigil in 2014. By the end of that year, a close family member was diagnosed with a long-term illness, a moment that Stephenson reflected upon.

“The Holy Spirit knew I needed the strength of the Church, the graces of the sacraments and a deeper, more intimate relationship with Jesus in order to have the strength I needed to get myself and family through this and the challenging times that lay ahead: all I had to do is say yes to His invitation,” Stephenson said.

Continuing to be involved in parish life, Stephenson said he enjoyed deepening his prayer life, becoming active in various parish ministries and the Knights of Columbus, but “there seemed to be something missing,” he said. That something, he would later discern, was the Lord calling him to discern the diaconate.

“The conversion and discernment that started within me in 2013 by my yes has matured through prayer, studying the Scriptures, serving God’s people, listening to the Holy Spirit and trusting the Lord,” Stephenson said. “I am thankful for all He has given to me and the healing he has provided my family.”

Stephenson served his parish internship at Our Lady on the River Parish in Marine City under the supervision of Fr. John Dumas and Deacon Michael Oldani, where he served in funeral home ministry, in assisted living facilities, at the Capuchin Soup Kitchen and St. Bonaventure Monastery, and in prison ministry.

Stephenson said he looks forward to diaconal ministry, in which he hopes to imitate the self-sacrificial love of Jesus.

“All ministries should have as its foundation the Trinity,” Stephenson said. “Love, sacrifice and service is the heart of ministry, drawing people closer to the love that is God in yourself, family and neighbor.”

In his spare time, Stephenson enjoys home improvement projects, drawing, studying church architecture, ballroom dancing with his wife, and spending time with family.





**KNIGHTS OF  
COLUMBUS**

# **KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS MEET AND GREET**

**9** | November 2024  
5Pm - 8 Pm  
St. Pius Social Hall

Brief meeting followed by pizza, beer,  
cards, and college football



# SAVE THE DATE



*O'Brien K of Columbus Council*

## CHRISTMAS PARTY

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2024 |  
AT 6PM

*Hungarian Rhapsody*

14314 NORTHLINE ROAD  
SOUTHGATE, MI 48195

FULL DINNER BEGINS AT 6:00PM

\$30.00 PER PERSON

WE ENCOURAGE PAYMENTS MADE IN ADVANCE  
AT OUR UPCOMING MEETINGS.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO RSVP:  
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