

Montgomery Council #2323
Grand Knight John K. Leighton

Montgomery Council meets the first and third Tuesdays each month at the Council hall, 17001 Overhill Road, Derwood MD. The council, founded in 1921, serves three local parishes; St Martin's Gaithersburg; St Mary's Rockville; and St Francis, Derwood. Meetings start at 8:00 PM and usually last an hour. An Executive meeting of officers and program chairs begins at 7:10 on nights with a business meeting.

The installation of Council officers for the 2010-2011 fraternal year was held on Saturday morning, July 24th, 2010 after the 9 AM mass at St Mary's Church. A luncheon reception was held immediately following the installation at the Council hall, attended by 60 Knights, spouses, and family members. It was a particular pleasure to the Grand Knight that his parents and Ron Dunn, PGK of Montgomery Council attended the installation. Ron sadly passed away late last year, a loss of a friend and colleague to many in the Council and in Rockville.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR - Lewis Tillis, Deputy Grand Knight

Church and Vocations Activities – David Ball

In early September 2010, the Archdiocese of Washington unexpectedly transferred our Chaplain Father Gary Villanueva, to Holy Name Parish in Washington. Upon arrival, Fr Gary noted that the rectory and church were in need of repair. Fr. Gary asked if Council 2323 could purchase a ladder to assist in the repair work and shortly thereafter a ladder was delivered. For this small effort, Father Gary offered a mass in honor and thanks for the generosity of the Council at Holy Name. Other activities this past fraternal year included hosting coffee and donuts Thanksgiving day at each parish; our support for three seminarians with a donation of \$500 each; a coffee and donuts event again this spring thanking the parish priests for their service to the Church; and praying the rosary at St Mary's each Sunday.

Community Activities - Mike Thomas

The Council has been quite active in the community, thanks to Mike Thomas. In early October a Dinner and Dance for Rockville Seniors was held at the Council hall. Over 120 guests dined and danced the night away. This event is reportedly the oldest continuous charitable event of the Council, going back several decades. Thanks to organizer Calvin Ogden and cook Bob Mongelli, and the staff of Rockville Senior Center for all their help. Other activities of the Council included participation in "Pull Tabs for Charity" to help raise funds for Ronald McDonald House and the Nation Cancer Institute, as reported in a local newspaper, the Gazette. On Feb 13, the Council held its 13th annual spaghetti dinner to raise funds for the medical mission of St Francis to support community of St Paul's in Leon, Haiti, providing medications, vitamins, hospital expenses and other necessities. The Council also provides support to St Martin's food pantry, open twice a week all year, through member volunteers and through its rice purchases. To date this fraternal year, the council has purchased 3000 pounds of rice that is then repackaged and distributed through the food pantry to support the needs of the Gaithersburg community.

Council Activities – Shannon Doherty

The Council's annual dinner was well attended with 12 PGK as honorees and about 60 total in attendance. This year, the Council reached out to all widows with a special invitation to the dinner. This was another way to reach out, in addition to our monthly newsletter, the Courier.

The Council held its annual Memorial mass on November 2 and a Mass followed by a Communion Breakfast in early December. The Council reinstated its traditional New Year's Eve dinner and dance. This year's event featured Brother Ginley's excellent band, Expanding Waistlines, with musical selections for dancing by Guy Beaven's collection filling in at breaks. Our Lenten Fish Fries are returning this year to the Council hall on March 25 and April 15, an event enjoyed by many elderly parishioners as a way to get out and meet many old friends. The Council's softball team will again host an all-you-can-eat shrimp dinner in late April 2011 to raise funds for equipment and entry fees, an event also enjoyed by all.

Family Activities – Mike Bean

Montgomery Council's monthly family nights are always a big hit, providing a basketball net for outside activities and coloring tables for inside activities. The family night is always well attended with 70-100 adults and youth gathering to socialize and play. Every family night is organized around a theme to support a charity, such as Special Olympics, Juvenile Diabetes Research, the state wheelchair program and ultrasound initiatives, etc.

Prolife Activities - vacant

Montgomery Council has defended the life of the unborn, through financial support of the ultrasound program (over \$1000 contributed this fraternal year) and participation in the March for Life. Our annual Christmas party is also a fund raiser/collection of items for use at a local pregnancy center. Equally important is care of other vulnerable members of society through participation in the Tootsie Roll Campaign and support of local activities of Special Olympics by sponsoring a fall picnic, a Christmas party, and a first ever chili cook off to raise funds to support Special Olympics activities at the Council and by participation in state wide activities.

Youth Activities – Matt Mongelli/Pat Gilroy

On Sunday afternoon October 24, Montgomery Council hosted a pumpkin carving for youth of all ages, a first for the council. It was a great way for parents and kids to spend an enjoyable day, the weather cooperating by providing a beautiful fall day. The Sixth Annual Council free throw for youth age 10-14 was at held St Mary's on Saturday, January 22. Assisting Pat Gilroy were Mike Bean, Paul Lindburg and Grand Knight John Leighton. Twenty-seven youth aged 10-14 took part in this activity, and two participants went on to represent the Council and District 30 at state competitions.

Membership Director – Gary Palmer

The Council revitalized its membership committee under the able direction of Brother Gary Palmer. Many recruiting tools were updated and new plans put into place to more effectively recruit and retain members.

Conclusion

The Grand Knight thanks the Membership Director, Program Director, Committee Chairs, Council Officers, members and friends who support many programs, Courier Editor Brenda Hoffmaster, and especially my wife Lisa for her patience and support. The Grand Knight also thanks our District Deputy Jack Giacalone and District Warden and Tom Firestone, for their support throughout the fraternal year.