

America at 250: Christ at the Center

From Knightline <knightline@kofc.org>

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On July 4, the United States celebrates the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Amid the fireworks and fanfare, this historic milestone offers Catholics an opportunity to renew their commitment to faith and country, serving both God and neighbor. Canadians likewise celebrated Canada Day on July 1, and Knights of Columbus in Canada continue a long tradition of Catholic patriotism and service to their communities and the Church, while helping to build a culture of life.



*Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Arlington leads a Corpus Christi procession in Stafford, Va., on June 7.
(Photo by Matthew Barrick)*

America at 250: Christ at the Center

Knights of Columbus throughout the United States have anticipated the country's 250th anniversary by supporting the U.S. bishops' campaign calling on parishes to offer 250 hours of Eucharistic adoration and perform 250 works of mercy. From participating in the 2026 National Eucharistic Pilgrimage to enthroning the Sacred Heart of Jesus at the Supreme Council headquarters and in their own homes, Knights are honoring the anniversary by placing Christ at the center.

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An 1818 painting by John Trumbull depicts the presentation of the draft Declaration of Independence to the Second Continental Congress on June 28, 1776. (Wikimedia Commons)

Faith and Freedom: 250 Years

Long before independence was declared in the United States, Catholic missionaries were shaping the future of the country by spreading the faith and laying the foundations of the Church in America. As the United States celebrates its 250th anniversary, this video highlights the Catholic Church's enduring contributions to the nation's history and the vital role of the Knights of Columbus in American civic life.

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Kevin Clark, treasurer of Father Damien de Veuster Council 6906 in Aiea, Oahu, prays after placing a flag at the grave of a fallen service member at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl) in Honolulu, Hawaii, on May 23. (Photo by Marco Garcia)

A Time for Witness

In his 2026 pastoral letter, *In Charity & Truth: Toward a Renewed Political Culture*, Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William Lori challenges Catholics to respond to the political crisis by cultivating virtue and bearing witness to Jesus Christ.

“Anniversaries are not merely occasions for nostalgia or celebration,” he writes.

“Authentic remembrance always orients us toward renewal; it calls us to consider not only who we have been, and who we are becoming — but, by God’s grace, who we are called to be.”

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Then-Supreme Knight Luke E. Hart presents President John F. Kennedy, a fellow Knight of Columbus, with a framed copy of the Pledge of Allegiance during a meeting at the White House on Oct. 11, 1961. (Knights of Columbus Multimedia Archives)

United 'Under God'

In 1951, the Knights of Columbus began a campaign to add the words “under God” to the U.S. Pledge of Allegiance. Grounded in historical precedent and a grassroots movement, the effort reached Congress and culminated when President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed a bill amending the Pledge on Flag Day, June 14, 1954.

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A Fourth Degree honor guard leads pro-life demonstrators past Parliament Hill during the 29th National March for Life in Ottawa, Ontario, on May 13. (Photo by Patrick Doyle)

A Worldwide Witness to Life

This past spring, Knights of Columbus joined tens of thousands of demonstrators at pro-life marches and rallies held in major cities around the world. In cities throughout Canada, thousands of demonstrators turned out to protest abortion and the increasing legalization of euthanasia. In the Philippines and Mexico City, pro-life advocates gathered to protest the expansion of legalized abortion.

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