



Reports from K of C units providing aid to members of the armed forces



Two generations of Knights serving their country — Rick Vendl (right) and his son, Thom — stand outside Kandahar Airfield during their deployment in Afghanistan. In addition to serving together in the military, Rick and Thom are both members of Father Emil Kapaun Council 12965 in Oak Grove, Ky.



Sean Stull of St. Francis of Assisi Council 10994 at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst in Wrightstown, N.J., drills holes for wall anchors while mounting a flat-screen TV at the base's chapel complex. Long underutilized, the facility needed to be made ready for a new influx of religious education students. In addition to painting and carpeting the chapel and its 22 classrooms, Knights also installed televisions, DVD players, whiteboards and corkboards in each room.

Honoring Vietnam Veterans

On April 29, Vietnamese Martyrs Council 14445 in Santa Ana, Calif., organized an event to honor former members of the armed forces of the Republic of Vietnam. In particular, the council honored 26 council members who fought on the side of South Vietnam during the Vietnam War, as well as all veterans of the conflict.

Confirmation Mass

Father Knufer Assembly in Abilene, Texas, provided an honor guard for a confirmation Mass celebrated May 2 for the Catholic community at Dyess Air Force Base. Auxiliary Bishop Neal J. Buckon of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA, who is a member of Heights Council 3087 in Cleveland, celebrated the Mass.

Air Corps Speaker

Bishop Becker Council 2427 in Elkton, Md., hosted retired Army Air Corps Sgt. Ray Russo to speak at the council's monthly meeting. Russo spoke about his experience on a B-29 bomber during World War II.

Italian Dinner for Vets

Members of St. Frances of Assisi Assembly in Port St. Lucie, Fla., and their wives visited the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center nursing home to serve an Italian dinner to residents and staff. Following the meal, soprano Lorrianna Colozzo entertained everyone in attendance with a medley of Broadway tunes, contemporary hits and opera arias.

Monthly Parish Drive

Each month, Our Lady of Peace Round Table at Fort George G. Meade in Maryland collects non-perishable food items and toiletries for the Odenton Food Pantry and for Sarah's House, a shelter for the needy. The round table, which was started by Fort Meade chaplain Father Boguslaw Augustyn, is sponsored by Archbishop Francis P. Keough Council 5263 in Odenton.

Veterans Plaza

Mother Teresa Assembly in Schertz, Texas, donated \$500 to help build a new Veterans Plaza on a city-owned site across from the council's hall. The donation was matched by assembly member Ed Higgs.



Members of St. Ann Council 14620 in Kaneohe, Hawaii, work with the USO to set out drinks, snacks and gift bags for soldiers at the Hickam Air Force Base in Honolulu. Knights worked with the USO to provide goodies for the troops prior to their deployment.

WW II KNIGHT HONORED

John B. Arthur, a member of Monroe (La.) Council 1337, was honored April 27 for his service in Europe during World War II. At a small ceremony overseen by U.S. Rep. Rodney Alexander, Arthur, 85, received a number of medals, including the Bronze Star, the Good Conduct Medal and the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal.





Remembering Heroes

Knights in Iowa restore and relocate a statue honoring the five Sullivan brothers.

by Patrick Scalisi

A statue honoring five brothers who died together in World War II has been relocated from a closed Catholic church thanks to the efforts of Knights of Columbus from the brothers' hometown of Waterloo, Iowa.

On Nov. 13, 1942, the Sullivan brothers became unintentional heroes when the ship they were serving aboard, the USS *Juneau*, was destroyed during the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal. George, Francis, Joseph, Madison and Albert Sullivan were all killed in action, but their memories lived on — both in the American consciousness and in the minds of Waterloo residents.

At first, the Sullivan brothers became a rallying point for the United States as World War II raged in the Pacific. The brothers' demise became national news, and images of the Sullivan brothers were used to encourage war bond and recruitment drives. In time, the brothers' story also inspired two Oscar-nominated films — 1944's *The Fighting Sullivans* and 1998's *Saving Private Ryan* — as well as the naming of two U.S. Navy vessels and a pier on Staten Island, N.Y.

Perhaps the most touching memorial to the Sullivan brothers, though, was a white marble statue of Mary that was placed in their honor at St. Mary's Church and School in Waterloo in the 1950s. For 56 years, the statue stood as a testament to hometown heroism from the heart of America.

All of that changed in 2006 when St. Mary's closed its doors. Sold to a private buyer, the parish grounds — and the statue — fell into serious disrepair. It was at this point that local residents began exploring the possibility of moving the statue to a more suitable location.

It took more than four years, but an effort to move the statue finally got underway, with Knights of Columbus Waterloo



[From top] Workers look on as the trapezoidal base of a statue honoring the Sullivan brothers is lowered into its new location at the council hall owned by Waterloo (Iowa) Council 700. Knights worked with the Catholic Order of Foresters and the Ancient Order of Hibernians to relocate the statue from a closed Catholic parish. • Members of Council 700 stand in front of a cement mixer emblazoned with profiles of the five Sullivan brothers and one of the naval vessels named after them. • Workers pour concrete into a form that will eventually make the "patio" for the statue's new location. In addition to creating the patio, workers also faced the area and the wall behind it with decorative stone. An AMVETS rifle guard participated in the statue's rededication ceremony.

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Council 700, the Catholic Order of Foresters and the Ancient Order of Hibernians collaborating at the project's helm. Knights and the other volunteers obtained use of a small crane to move the statue and its trapezoidal base from the derelict grounds of the former church. With this done, work began to clean the statue and to clear a space for it next to the council's hall.

Although the Sullivan brothers were not K of C members, they did come from a family of Irish-American Catholics, and three Knights from Council 700 were killed in action during World War II: Michael Benak, Carl Demuth and

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F.W. Johnson. As a result, current members of the council were extremely cognizant of the importance of preserving the memorial statue — not just for the brothers themselves, but for all the U.S. soldiers and veterans who served in the war.

With the restoration work done, the gleaming statue was brought by truck to its new home and placed atop a concrete block and "patio." Workers finished the project by facing the block and the surrounding wall with decorative stone, and an AMVETS rifle guard participated in the ceremony to officially rededicate the statue for a new generation of Americans.

For more information on the Sullivan brothers, visit their [FAQ page](#) at The Naval Historical Center. ♦

PATRICK SCALISI is the associate editor of *Columbia* magazine.

Good Friday in Iraq

Editor's Note: As we prepare for the great feast of Pentecost (June 12), which will conclude the Easter season, Military Knights in Action is proud to offer this reflection by Bishop F. Richard Spencer, auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of the Military Services, USA. Bishop Spencer is a member of Bishop John J. Kaising Council 14223 at U.S. Army Garrison Yongsan, South Korea.

NINE MINUTES into the Good Friday liturgy we heard (again), "INCOMING, INCOMING, INCOMING," as the electronic voice on multiple loud speakers kept repeating the warning. The automatic announcement continues as long as the radar systems detect rockets in the air, so we assumed the "duck and cover" position (myself under the altar): face down, ears plugged with fingers, and mouths open to release the pressure from any blasts.

Finally, after a silent pause that lasted four to six minutes, the next announcement came telling us to move quickly to the nearest bunkers. We stood — I quickly invoked the Third Form of Reconciliation with General Absolution — then dismissed the crowd of about 70 people to move deliberately and orderly to the concrete bunkers outside. (We learned later that more rockets had been discovered on timers.) Meanwhile, I went to the room where the Blessed Sacrament is stored and took the ciborium with me to the bunker.

At the bunker, we continued the readings and prayed the Lord's Prayer. I distributed the Blessed Sacrament to both bunkers. After about 25 minutes, the "all clear" was announced, and we moved back into the chapel complex for the veneration of the cross and dismissal.



Soldiers at Contingency Operating Base Basra in Iraq wait outside a bunker to receive Communion from Bishop F. Richard Spencer (second from right), auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA, after their Good Friday service was interrupted by rocket fire. Also pictured (right) is Deacon Paul Rodriguez, chaplain assistant for the 36th Infantry Division of Texas.

The multiple incoming rockets once again hit our sleeping areas and killed two American soldiers — a sad day as we commemorated the "good" of Good Friday. One of the rockets even landed about 70 yards away from where we were at worship in the chapel complex.

The Catholic community in Iraq remains strong and dedicated as they serve "God and country." In addition, the Knights of Columbus is very visible and active in the faith life of the Catholic worship and Catholic programs of the chapels throughout Iraq and are to be commended for their care and participation in the praying and serving at Masses and their support to the priests who minister in their midst — through the hardships, dangers and, yes, even through the Resurrection Hope that is promised to all of us in this Easter Season.

Postcard Service Lets Users Send Greetings to Soldiers for Free

READER BUDDY C. alerted us to Operation Postcards (operationpostcards.com), a free service that lets users turn digital photos into free postcards to send to Marines, sailors, soldiers and airmen. Sponsored by Operation Homefront and Shoot It! Postcard Messaging, Operation Postcards is "an easy way for you to send them a real personalized postcard," according to the service's website.

