



## *Knights of Columbus / Chevaliers de Colomb*

*Nova Scotia State Council*

*Building the Domestic Church*

*Making a Difference for Life*

*“Convinced of God’s Love & Power”*

January 15, 2018

### **Memorandum**

To: Brotherhood of the Order in Nova Scotia  
Fr: Carl F. Reid-State Deputy  
Re: **St. Francis Xavier Canadian Relic Pilgrimage and the *Knights of Columbus* Support**

**On January 7<sup>th</sup> in Halifax at Saint Mary’s Cathedral Basilica and on January 8<sup>th</sup> in Antigonish at the Chapel of Saint Francis Xavier University, the extraordinary and remarkable relic of *Saint Francis Xavier* was on display.** In those two single days, more than 3000 members of the public encountered the glass enshrined case of his **“incorrupt right forearm relic”**. St. Francis Xavier is claimed to have baptized more than 100 000 people with this arm. He is considered by many to be the greatest evangelizer since St. Paul. His missionary work took him to Portugal, Mozambique, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan, and Shanghuan Island (China) throughout the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. The relic typically remains in a reliquary in Rome at the Church of the Gesu. The remainder of his body is enshrined at the Basilica of Bom Jesus in Goa, India.

**The Canadian pilgrimage of this relic** came about through the inspiration and work of ***Terrence Prendergast, S.J., Archbishop of Ottawa***. He inquired into the relic coming to Ottawa for a visit to his cathedral as well as the Catholic Christian Outreach’s (St. Francis Xavier is one of CCO’s patron saints) National Rise Up conference to be followed by a cross-Canada pilgrimage. St. Mary’s Basilica in Halifax and St. Francis Xavier Chapel in Antigonish were two of the fourteen sites selected in Canada for the pilgrimage by Archbishop Prendergast, the Jesuits, and Catholic Christian Outreach(CCO). The pilgrimage would start on January 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018 in Ottawa, travel across Canada to other cities and return to Ottawa by February 4<sup>th</sup> 2018. From there it will return to Rome.

**In addition to public viewing, it is hoped that those encountering the relic will be able to personally and solemnly experience veneration.** There are three principal graces for those who come to venerate:

1. Conversion of heart
2. Fuller abandonment to God’s will
3. Healings

There is precedent for the veneration of relics in both the Old and New Testaments of the Holy Bible. Veneration can result in an encounter with God's healing power. Relics, in a tangible way, provide an opportunity for a special connection with that saint because their body matters to God and someday will be reunited with their soul.

**The [Knights of Columbus](#) were requested by Archbishop Prendergast to support this pilgrimage through sponsorship, security and presence.** A primary concern is the protection of the delicate nature of the 500 year old relic. To that end the Knights were asked to be a leading presence with:

- Security at all church entrances.
- Managing pilgrims in safe queues and guiding them to be seated when Mass begins.
- Standing guard near the relic.
- Assisting any pilgrim with mobility issues.
- Assisting with the collection of donations.

A letter had been sent by Canadian [Knights of Columbus](#) Supreme Director Arthur Peters to me on December 12<sup>th</sup> requesting that our Jurisdiction honour Archbishop Prendergast's request if possible. I contacted State Program Director Sean Kelly to make contact with a coordinator in Halifax and one in Antigonish. *District Deputy Ervin Doak of District 6 in Halifax and Grand Knight Kenny Stewart of Council 1105 in Antigonish took on the responsibility for coordinating the support of the local council Knights.*

**On Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup> in Halifax, the Nova Scotia State Council was represented by State Treasurer Arthur Rice and State Warden Harold MacDonald in venerating the Relic and attending the Mass. District Deputies Gerry Newell, Ervin Doak, Bruce Colborne, Jack Soucy, Vince McDonald and George Robertson as well as State Program Director Sean Kelly also participated throughout the day. The celebrant for the mass was his Grace Most Reverend Anthony Mancini. Over 2000 pilgrims encountered the Relic stationed in St. Mary's Basilica. District Deputy Ervin Doak coordinated the volunteering Knights. Brother Ervin accounted for participating Grand Knights and brother Knights from many Councils including the following: 1097, 3133, 5449, 6633, 7077, 8387, 8666, 8831, 9093, 10486, 12917, 16817.**

**Sir Knights of the Honour Guard represented the Fourth Degree Assemblies including: 0799, 2223, 2519. The Vice-Supreme Master SK George McCormack and Master of the Fourth Degree SK Asa McGray also participated in the Honour Guard throughout the day.**

**On Monday, January 8<sup>th</sup> I travelled to St. FX in Antigonish to represent the Nova Scotia State Council in venerating the Relic and attending the Mass. District Deputy Jim McCarthy joined me as well. The celebrant for the mass was his Grace Most Reverend Bishop Brian Dunn. Over 1200 pilgrims encountered the Relic stationed in the Chapel. GK Kenny Stewart of Antigonish Council 1105 coordinated the volunteering Knights at St. FX. Although I wasn't supplied with a list of attending Council members, I**

recognized brother Knights from Councils **1105, 8608 & 1667**. There was a sizeable **Honour Guard** representing participating Fourth Degree Assemblies along with **Master of the Fourth Degree, SK Asa McGray**.

(Apologies are extended to any brother Knights and Sir Knights from participating Councils and Assemblies not mentioned for January 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>.)

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Please see the expression of appreciation on January 11<sup>th</sup> from **Mr. Lorne Stang, Campus Leader - Dalhousie/St. Mary's University for the Catholic Christian Outreach(CCO) organization:**

"Dear Knights

A massive, massive thank you for your involvement in the St. Francis Xavier Relic event at the Cathedral on Sunday! Catholic Christian Outreach (CCO) greatly appreciated how you served every minute of the day with dedication and excellence. The relic team that is travelling with the relic is obviously going through a very taxing time with very long days and much sickness on the team. The Knights carried so much of the burden to make this event run so smoothly and allow people to have an encounter with Jesus through St. Francis.

Keep up the great work! You have inspired us to greater dedication in the service of The Lord! Bless you guys and your families. Your witness is making a difference!

Lorne"

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***My dear brother Knights, on behalf of the Nova Scotia State Council please accept my most sincere appreciation for the manner in which everyone came together so quickly to help make the veneration of the Relic of Saint Francis Xavier available to so many pilgrims. I especially want to thank brothers Ervin Doak and Kenny Stewart for taking the time to coordinate the events in Halifax and Antigonish. To all brother Knights who participated, your generosity of time, talent and resources genuinely demonstrates our practice of those principles of Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism in the spirit of our dear beloved founder, Father Michael J. McGivney.***

***Vivat Jesus!  
Brother Carl***

***Carl F. Reid  
State Deputy and CEO for the Knights of Columbus in Nova Scotia***