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**KNIGHTS OF ST COLUMBA**  
**THAMES VALLEY - PROVINCE 23**  
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# THE VALLEY

NEWS AND VIEW FROM THE COUNCILS ~ DIDCOT . OXFORD  
WINDSOR . READING . HIGH WYCOMBE . STAINES . ASCOT .

## Brothers and Ladies

In April I spent a very informative weekend in Glasgow at the Board of Directors/ Provincial Grand Knights meeting when the bulk of the agenda centered around workshops and discussions on Membership and Recruitment. It is a given that the KSC, like every other voluntary church organization, is having to look hard at itself and dig deep to find it's place in the over-all workings of our Church. It was agreed we should look at renewing and refreshing our Image, which I believe has become one of being seen as 'old fashioned' and 'out-dated'. I truly believe that it is only a perception by the general public because we are still and always will be at the forefront of upholding our Faith and Catholic teaching and in supporting the Hierarchy and Clergy. That cannot change. It is just that we have to find a way of appealing to a modern society in a more modern way. Publicity, Spirituality, clearly defining the Order's role and overcoming general apathy were also of concern

to the members. To that end an Action Plan is being formulated by the Board and will be published at Supreme Council time.

We have to take in to account that congregations are (generally) dwindling and so we should not beat ourselves up too badly but still ask the question-why is that happening and could we do more to prevent it? I recently met a parent who was beating himself up because his son, a regular Mass-goer and committed Catholic, had gone off to travel and had joined a church (or sect) which preaches anti-catholic and selective Bible ....



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texts. How could that happen? I believe it is because young people today have lots of questions which demand answers and they go out seeking those answers and sometimes they fall in with people who are only too willing to give them the answers they want to hear, right or wrong. Faith is all about not always having ready answers but **believing** in the Teaching and the Word. That young man is on a journey and in all probability will eventually come full circle back to where he belongs. There are many like him and we should welcome them back with open arms.

On a much lighter note Margaret and myself are really looking forward to seeing many of you at the Provincial Dinner on 20<sup>th</sup> July in the lovely setting of the Aurora Garden Hotel. We welcome any suggestions for other Social events or venues so please, if you have a good idea, share it with us!

God Bless,

Yours Fraternally,  
**Bro. David Sole**  
 Provincial Grand Knight

## COMMUNICATION

Organising anything requires one to communicate ideas, plans and arrangements for whatever is being arranged.

Missing a Brother at a meeting, especially when he has not sent an apology or has not been in contact with anyone, requires one-on-one communication, through whatever media one is most comfortable with — and today we are really spoilt for choice.... One could look out for the missing Brother at church the following Sunday, one could phone, one could drop a note, one could Email or even visit at home.

Very often one intends to do this, but often one never gets round to picking the phone, or sending an email, because one brother presumes another brother had done that.

The Brother who has not shown up, for whatever reason - can often remain un-contacted and can easily wonder if he had been missed at all, or if anyone cares about his absence. He may wonder what may happen if he had been sick, one often wonders about the Fraternity part of the motto — Is there a brother in your Council, that you miss ?

Give him a ring — make contact .

Bro. Tony Berkeley

**Columba magazine is now online**  
**Click link :**



<http://www.ksc.org.uk/Columba-may2007.pdf>

Provincial Training



# ACTION

**I cannot quite remember who said ....If you stand still, you will fall behind.** When our top officers of the Order are reviewing the current situation on recruitment and membership, I take heart because such emergency action, although ongoing in various forms, is long overdue.

As I sit here pondering, how successful they can be, and view some of the more obvious graphical examples, handouts, posters etc that have started circulation recently, something is stirring. My mind often wanders away, and I find myself asking, 'have they got it right' ? Is it too little too late ? Please do not misunderstand, I believe MEMBERSHIP and RECRUITMENT are absolutely important.... but....

From experience over the last twenty or more years I think that **ACTION** or the lack of it, is possibly more at the root of our current predicament.

A Council, whose **ACTION** program is weak, or in many cases non-existent, is a Council doomed to die. If a group of good Catholic lay-men just meet and talk once a month, with no initiative, action, plans or events resulting out of the meeting, that Council is on a slippery slope to extinction.

The first victim of such inactivity is **MEMBERSHIP**. Current members may get disinterested, stop coming to meetings, and will eventually be lapsed.

The lack of any achievements at Council level, will also affect Membership in more than loss of current members. When a group does not **DO** anything, the Parish does not know about you, has nothing to admire the Order for, will defeat any enthusiasm for recruitment, and even if anyone shows an interest to join, his first question will be **.WHAT DO YOU DO ?**

One cannot rest on yesterday's glories. The Order's (not-that-recent) claim to fame, are... The Pope John Paul's Visit and marshalling that we helped with, the Wells for Water campaign .... I can almost hear my brain working in overdrive, trying to remember at least one more **NATIONAL** occasion. I think the point is made just in one paragraph. Head Office, I am sure are always endeavouring to come up with another Gem in the crown - so to speak. I am more concerned at Council and Provincial level.

There is no chance that one will be inundated with action Projects here either. Some exceptions do exist, and thankfully they carry the banner for us in their Councils. From the Columba, one gets some encouragement that some Councils are scoring some achievements, but my impression is that many Councils struggle in this area. It is not rocket science to work at that if an organisation is losing members through old age plus a trickle of lapsations that are often related to old age, recruitment needs to be able to exceed these two membership deflators. We are not doing this.

I find it very difficult to believe that unless we find a solution for lack for **ACTION** in our Councils, we will not be able to turn round the membership problem. Action is often demonstrated, not just in events and fundraising, but in support and commitment to other main activities and drives in the land.

In the Southern Provinces, two main public events which one would hope to get the majority of members to join in are the Aylesford pilgrimage, and the Lyford Edmund Campion relic journey.

**TEST 1....** I ask each Council how many members from your



*In the KSC one can never claim  
There is nothing to do. If you haven't  
been asked—find out why !*

group attended both of these events ? How many attended ONE of the two events ? How many did not attend any of the two events ? How many did not even know that the events were taking place ?



Worker in the vineyard.

**COMMITMENT** is at the root of low activity in Councils. Sometimes this is understandable, because many of the membership are getting on in years, and may lack the strength to be dynamic. That often takes away well over 75% of a Council Brothers. In a small Council that may be 6 out of 8 of the Brothers. The other two may need to be committed enough, have enough leadership, time, skill etc to organise and run whatever it may be, very often running on their own is very deflating, they will not do it for long. On that basis, I think the chances of success are poor at best. There lies the problem !!

Sometimes, those Brothers, that can genuinely be excused on health reasons, if committed enough, can still play their part. One **ACTION** activity that does not require too much effort is the support of our clergy, by voicing your beliefs against the secularisation that is going on in this country. Writing to your MP does not require great physical effort. If done in great numbers, it will create an impact, it will help the KSC stand out as an ACTION GROUP.

**TEST 2 ....** There has been numerous occasions recently where Catholics can speak up, publicly, with friends, in the media, or by writing to your MP or MEP. How many brothers ever thought of doing this ? How many objected to the idea in the first place ? How many Councils even discussed the subject ? How many wished to do it, but did not know where to begin ? How many brothers, had the means to draw up their own list of MP and MEP to so encourage this to be done ? How many thought about it, resolved to do it, but never actually got round to doing it ? And finally, old and young brothers together, How many in your council **actually** wrote to your MP or MEP ?

I believe that the point has been made... my only wish is that maybe this will help focus on getting some of the councils to focus more on actually doing something in their parishes, maybe at times, roping in others who are not members, to help, If you do that often enough, some lay people may just join us formally.

My old Parish Priest where I used to live, was fond of saying that God gave each of us skills, some were good speakers, some good with their hands, some were scholars, some were good medical people, some were good leaders/organisers, some were good supporters, etc, and so in our way we all got something to offer. Which of your skills are you offering back to God, by being a worker in the vineyard ?

I end this by quoting another wise man....(still don't know who said it)  
One is often judged by what he did and not by what he says.....

**Action** is often stronger than words in our drive for more members.



*In the KSC one can never claim....  
Councils do not present opportunities...  
All one has to do is to take some !*

Bro. Tony Berkeley  
Training and Dev  
Prov.23 Thames Valley

## LYFORD GRANGE -- Sunday June 24th

This year it was not the best pilgrimage I have ever been to. The weather was abysmal, it rained buckets on the hour's drive to Lyford. In spite of this, around 150 people turned up and this made the whole event very worthwhile.

There were visitors there from as far away as Peterborough, Southampton and London, as well as a good attendance from Councils in province, who came along with their wives and family. The proceedings started around 3.30 at Church of St. Mary followed by a procession with the Relic to the Tithe Barn where St. Edmund said mass some four hundred and twenty five years ago. Along the route the rosary was recited and in spite of the drizzling rain, and open umbrellas, we walked the mile or so to the barn, where **Bishop Peter Doyle** Bishop of Northampton celebrated Mass.



Afterwards tea and cakes were served in the nearby open building which provided good shelter and the opportunity for the Bishop to meet the people. The new KSC advertising poster setup attracted some interest with some good comments as well.



The Catenians will be celebrating their 150th Anniversary, and there has been some indications that

they plan to join in our Celebrations at Lyford. It will therefore be very important if everyone pencils in 22nd June 2008 so that the KSC can put on a real good show. I cannot end this without congratulating Bro John Lynn for his hard work in organising the even yet again.



Please pencil the following dates in :

Bro Jim invites as many Knights as possible participate in events and meetings - Please try and attend wherever possible.



CLERGY DINNER Postponed due holidays  
LADIES DINNER 20th July  
PROVINCIAL MEETING MONDAY 3rd September



FOR  
FURTHER DETAILS  
CONTACT  
Bro. Jim Webster  
01344 484 378

# COMMUNICATIONS

## PROVINCIAL TEAM 2007 ~ 2008

The Province 23 team and their contact details are important so that each Council, and every Brother has details of who to call on, when one needs help or wish to discuss anything to do with the KSC.

<b>Grand Knight :</b>	Bro. David Sole	Email: david_sole@hotmail.com
	Tel : 01494 527 820	
<b>DGK &amp; Membership</b>	Bro Tony Berkeley	Email : twany11@hotmail.com
	Tel : 01344 883 363	
<b>Spirituality &amp; Welfare</b>	Bro. Tony O'Neill	Email : c/o gerardcashman@tiscali.co.uk
	Tel : 01189 873 784	
<b>Treasurer</b>	Bro. John Osborne	Email : blackbird@osbornejohn.fsnet.co.uk
	Tel : 01494 440 654	
<b>Action</b>	Bro. John Lynn	Email : jlynn@QinetiQ.com
	Tel : 01628 636 668	
<b>Secretary</b>	Bro. Peter Skinner	Email: peterskinner@chaseview.fsbusiness.co.uk
	Tel : 01628 634 333	
<b>Social &amp; CRB Officer</b>	Bro. Jim Webster	
	Tel : 01344 484 378	
<b>Warden</b>	Bro. Gerard Cashman	Email : gerardcashman@tiscali.co.uk
	Tel : 01189 867 581	
<b>Rev Tony Cunningham</b>	Provincial Chaplin	



## COOKERY TIPS FOR THE MODERN LADY.

### *Delia's way*

- » Place an apple with the potatoes to stop them budding
- » Stuff a miniature marshmallow in the bottom of a sugar cone to prevent ice-cream drips
- » Wrap celery in aluminium foil when putting in the fridge and it will keep for weeks.
- » If you accidentally over-salt a dish while its still cooking, drop a potato slice.
- » ...Freeze left-over wine (can't see this in my household !!) into ice cubes for future use in casseroles.

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The Editor welcomes contributions for the next issue which should reach him by 15th May 2007.  
Opinions expressed in articles and letters are those of the authors only.

**AYLESFORD 10th June** - Yet another successful event since the last issue. The Southern Provinces 10, 11, 12, 23, 29, 30, 34, 35 all sent Brothers to the annual Aylesford pilgrimage. It was a lovely day, warm and strong sunshine, that brought out the umbrellas and headwear.

The journey there was around one and half hours, mostly motorway driving. The people were greeted by the organising province (Prov.30) and Mass was set for 12 Noon in the open arena. Bishop **Bernard Longley** conducted a great service, with the usual hymns.



A Full knighthood ceremony for sixteen new brothers was carried out at 2.30 and this was followed by the Rosary procession round the gardens with the statue of Our Lady.

A Benediction service brought the pilgrimage to its conclusion at around 4:45pm.



#### **AUGUST Deceased Brothers**

Co.194 Bro AL Kinner Bro J McCarthy Bro. FG Benwell Bro. J Howard  
 Co.301 Bro TJ Burke  
 Co.593 Bro. A Cullen  
 Co.226 Rev. A Fry Bro. J Druce  
 Co. 590 Bro. P Stanley Bro.J Kelleher Bro. L Miller  
 BRO M May

#### **SEPTEMBER Deceased Brothers**

Co.194 Bro CH Courtnage Bro PE Hedges  
 Co.301 Bro. WJ Dunne  
 Co.226 Bro. JJ McCloughlan Bro. CP Roberts Bro. TJ Green  
 Bro. J Jordan Bro. T McGuire  
 Co.590 Bro. M Bolger  
 Co.568 Bro. C Collingwood

MRGR Canon

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord  
 And may perpetual light shine upon them  
 And may they rest in Peace - Amen

