



## THE FISH NET

The official Newsletter of

SAINT MARIA GORETTI CATHOLIC MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

JULY- AUGUST 2018

Webpage: [www.smgcola/catholicmensgroup](http://www.smgcola/catholicmensgroup) Face Book: [www.facebook.com/smgcmf](http://www.facebook.com/smgcmf)

Email: [catholicmens@smgcola.com](mailto:catholicmens@smgcola.com)

### ABOUT US

The Saint Maria Goretti Catholic Men's fellowship is a group where men explore the faith together help each to grow spiritually, learn from each other, explore what it means to be a catholic man in today's world, and enable men to mature spiritually and live a fuller expression of the catholic faith in the context of other like-minded men. The group meets bi-weekly and sponsors events throughout the year where men share and grow spiritually. The Saint Maria Goretti Catholic Men's Fellowship group is affiliated with the National Fellowship of Catholic Men.

### The Sound of Silence

In the late 1960s there was a song, The Sound of Silence by Simon and Garfunkel that was so soft and beautiful that whenever they sang it the audiences would sit in silence and listen to. Back then many of us would sit in silence in the shade of a tree on a hot summer's day and enjoy the beauty of God's creation. Now fifty years later, silence is virtually nonexistent in our world. We turn the television on to catch the news as soon as we awaken, we turn the radio on in the car as we drive to work, and we may even have a radio providing background noise while we work. We'll constantly check social media or alerts on our phones only to return home to more noise as we watch our favorite programs or even videos on YouTube and Instagram. These days we even enter the church before and sometimes during Mass where people are engaging in conversations that disrupt the silence of this most sacred place. In our world the import of silence as been replace with the constant bombardment of information and entertainment, blocking out the voice of God who longs for us to spend time with Him. Even when we pray many of us spend our prayer time talking with God and when we're done we move on to other things, not listening for his response. Yet scripture tells us that the voice of God was not found in the wind, or an earthquake, or the fire, but was found in a tiny whisper in silence. (1Kgs 9:11-13) As men of faith we recognize the importance of a strong prayer life, but, but we often don't take a few minutes to sit in God's presence freeing our minds of the day's activities to listen for God's response to our prayers. Let each of us make a concerted effort to spend some time every day, even if only for 5 minutes to listen to the sound of silence; the Lord awaits us there.

### Adoration- Jesus Time

The greatest gift that Jesus gave us is that of himself, body, blood, soul, and divinity in the Eucharist. One of the greatest gifts of the church is Eucharistic Adoration. *As faith in the real presence of Christ in his Eucharist deepened, the Church became conscious of the meaning of silent adoration of the Lord present in the Eucharistic species.* (CCC1379) If we can devote just one hour a week to be with Jesus present in the Eucharist in adoration our live will never be the same. One might ask, what do we do during adoration? Here's some tips to get you started: ask the saints for help, read scriptures, meditate, read spiritual books, ask for intercessions, offer a holy hour, write a prayer journal, pray the rosary, or just sit in silence focused on the Eucharist. And open your heart to receive the peace and love that Jesus wants to give you. If you haven't tried it or have been away for awhile, consider adding Jesus Time to your schedule, you won't regret it.

### A Lamp in the Darkness



*"Is a lamp brought in to be placed under a bushel basket or under a bed, and not to be placed on a lampstand?"* We're all familiar with this verse. For us the question is, am I under the bushel basket or bed, or am I on the lampstand? Many of us choose to keep our faith hidden under the bushel basket or bed hiding the light of faith. We avoid discussions on faith by rationalizing that it's personal. When those discussions come up, it's time to bring that light out to shine. It's time to remember Jesus' promise that the Holy Spirit will give us the words that we need to express our faith. It's time to think and ask if God placed us there for a reason. As men of faith we have a responsibility to be the lamp on the lampstand by the way that we live the faith. We have to openly live our lives as an example of faith for the generation of men following us to aspire to. We have to be willing to engage those young men in conversation to encourage them to say strong in the faith in order to face and overcome the challenges of today strengthening them whenever possible. As men of faith we must summon the courage of the apostles and martyrs who died for the faith so that we can illuminate our world and leave a legacy of men strong in the faith to carry on the Great Commission that Jesus gave us.

### Hate Can't Live Here

Seems as though everyday we're seeing images of school shootings, police brutalizing men and women, black people being arrested or detain by police as they go about their lives only because someone who wasn't comfortable with their presence in a certain area called the police, and even children handcuffed or facing the barrels of law enforcement's weapons because they "fit the description and we read hate filled post on social media that may anger us to levels that we didn't think existed. Today's reality is that we live in a polarized society where far too many have an 'us versus them' mentality with the belief that the "others" should be removed or eradicated. With the anonymity of the internet we even see hate and divisiveness spewed on Catholic forums. This deluge is enough to consume the psyche and hearts of even the most devout. If we're not careful and rooted in our faith, our hearts will hardened and hate and fear will take up permanent residence in our soul. But, we refuse to be engulfed in the darkness of this world. We choose to heed and live by the words of Jesus when he said, *"You have heard it said, you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But, I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. For if you love only those who love you, what recompense will you have?"* (Mt 8:44, 46) For us men of faith, we know that in this world as long as we choose to love, hate can't live here.

## Called

Scripture tells us that the Lord said to Isaiah, *"I have called you by name and you are mine."* (Is 43:1) But what did the Lord call him to do? The answer is simple yet complicated; *"Lead out the people who are blind though they have eyes; who are deaf though they have ears."* (Is 43:8) Isaiah did as he was called to do preaching and teaching the word of God and prophesying to the children of Israel. Now many might say that this was centuries ago and that the prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus. But when we consider the rising tide of hate, racism, anti-Semitism, islamophobia, nationalism, populism, anti-immigration, incivility, and tribalism that is spreading around the world including the U.S., others may say where is our Isaiah today? As men of faith we don't have the luxury of asking where is Isaiah; we have to become modern Isaiahs. Thus we must realize that we are the Lord's sons and He has called us by name to lead our families and communities. We are called to set the example for all to see by living our faith. This means that we must always treat others with the mercy and love that Jesus gives to us. We must strengthen our prayer life and strive to grow closer to God and pray for others to come to God. We must be willing to pray for and with others, and actively participate in the sacrifice of the mass at least every Sunday and on Holy Days of obligation. And we must be willing to speak about our faith; telling others about the things that God has done for us and how our faith has carried us. Yes we have been called by name and now more than ever we must answer the call.

### **STRAIGHT FROM THE VINYARD**

In the gospels, Jesus refers to himself as the vines and those who follow him as the branches. Just as the branches bear fruit on the vine so too do we bear fruit for the Kingdom of God through our words and deeds. Starting with the September-October newsletter this feature will provide a platform for those of us who want to share their faith experiences to give hope and encouragement to others. Those desiring to participate can submit a summary to us via email at [catholicmens@smgnola.com](mailto:catholicmens@smgnola.com). Submissions should be within 150- 175 words. All summaries that are included in the newsletter will be cited as anonymous unless the use of names or initials are requested by the sender. Deadlines for submission are: 15 August, 15 October, 15 December, 15 March, and 15 May, for inclusion in the September-October, November-December, January-February, March-April, and June-July newsletters. Each submission must include a statement authorizing publication in the newsletter. We will publish as many submissions as practical. Submissions may be edited for spelling, grammar, and voice as needed.

## PRAYER CORNER

### Prayer to the Sacred Heart

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

I give you thanks and praise for all your many gifts and blessings, especially the love you shower upon me.

Be with me each moment of this day.

Help me to be mindful of your never ending love and inspire me to show my love for you by responding generously to the needs of others.

May I become your eyes, your ears, your hands, your voice in a world which hungers for love and forgiveness.

In all that I say, in all that I do this day, may I do it for you.

Be with me, Lord, and bless me.

Amen



## WAKE UP EVERYBODY

Way back around 1975 Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes had a number 1 song on the R&B charts named Wake Up Everybody. The refrain had a powerful message- The world won't get no better if we just let be- we got to change it yeah, just you and me. Some may say that's just a nice verse in a song, but, it is a call to action, especially for us Christian men. Think about it! Our world is overwhelmed with mass killings, war, human trafficking, human slavery, drug addiction, hate, fractured societies, and natural disasters generating human suffering. Our human nature leads to often ignore those things that don't have a direct impact on our lives. While we're aware of societal dilemmas, many of us may feel helpless, telling ourselves, "I'm one person what can I do?" But, St. Paul tells us that *"our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness."* (Eph 6; 11) So, as men of faith we are called to engage the enemy of this world on a spiritual level to bring about change. First, we must prepare our souls for the battle with frequent reception of the sacraments, particularly the Eucharist and Reconciliation; the Eucharist to nourish our soul and unite us with Jesus and Reconciliation to cleanse us of sin and reconcile us with God and His Church. Second we must fast, pray, and love one another. When we offer our fast to God for others, He acknowledges our sacrifice and will answer our prayers, though not necessarily in our time or way but in His time and His way. We must pray unceasingly, trusting in God. While this may seem impossible; it's not. We can simply pray a short, "Lord have mercy on us and on the whole world" or "Jesus, save us" or "Father, soften our hardened hearts" throughout the course of our day. We can pray together as a family. We can get together with our brothers and pray a rosary asking for our Blessed Mothers intercession to bring about peace. Exorcists tell us that praying the rosary hurts the devil more than anything; so imagine what the sound of a group of men praying rosary does. We must love our fellow man whether he hates us or not. We don't have to love his actions, words, beliefs, or lifestyle; but we must love him. We must love him because he too is a child of God created in God's image, and we as followers of Christ must live His command to love one another. Brothers, our world is in dire need of praying men, Spiritual Warriors willing to engage in this battle for souls. Wake up every body; we got to change this world.

## CATHOLIC MEN WEBSITES

<http://thosecatholicmen.com>

<http://www.battlereadystrong.com/>

<https://www.romancatholicman.com>

## COMING EVENTS

July 7, 2017 - Men's Rosary for Peace; 6:00pm - Chapel

July 8, 2017-Family Movie Matinee; 3:30pm - Center

July 13, 2017- Meeting; 7:00pm - Center library

July 22, 2017 - Family Movie Matinee; 3:30pm - Center

July 26, 2017- Meeting; 7:00pm - Center library

August 4, 2017-Men's Rosary for Peace; 6:00pm- Chapel

August 5, 2017Men's Summit-8:30am-Center

August 9, 2017- Meeting; 7:00pm - Center library

August 12., 2017- Family Movie Night; 6:30pm - Center

August 23, 2017- Meeting; 7:00pm - Center library