



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
LOUISIANA STATE COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Deputies and Grand Knights

FROM: James F. Riente, Jr.
State Deputy

DATE: May 1, 2018

SUBJECT: Online Membership

Online Membership.

A new program for recruiting and engaging potential members is coming to Louisiana sooner than expected. It's called Online Membership (also called E-membership). We plan to launch Online Membership in Louisiana immediately after our State Convention. **Our launch date is May 7, 2018.**

The Online Membership program is currently live in 36 jurisdictions and is helping these jurisdictions to bring committed, Catholic men into the Order and into local councils. I am really excited by the early signs of progress that Supreme is seeing with this program.

I encourage Grand Knights and District Deputies to review the information in this memorandum and the information available at Supreme Council's website. More importantly, I encourage councils to take advantage of this new program.

Use this new approach to help grow your council and enable more Catholic men to receive the benefits offered by our Order, especially helping them become better Catholics. Online membership is a great way for men to get to know the Knights of Columbus and to prepare themselves to join a council when the time is right for them.

To get this program moving forward in Louisiana, think of five Catholic men that you can personally invite to join and refer them to Knights.net (the home page of Online Membership) once we go live.

Summary of Online Membership.

24 hours a day / 7 days a week, Catholic gentlemen will be able go online to Knights.net and instantaneously join the Knights of Columbus after paying dues of \$30 via credit card.

These members receive all the benefits of membership (such as buying insurance, attending council meetings, etc.) except they have no voting rights and cannot hold office or director positions.

Until they go through an Admission Degree (1st Degree), they are “non-degreed” members of the Knights of Columbus, and they belong to the Louisiana Division of non-degreed members. Each State will have its own division of non-degreed members.

The goal is to get these non-degreed members through an Admission Degree and into a council as a First Degree Knight. When a non-degreed member transfers into your council, it counts towards your membership quota.

Why Online Membership?

The Supreme Council has conducted numerous listening sessions and surveys with both members and non-members over the last few years. Among the many findings was a strong indication that the Supreme Council should develop a new, online way to recruit potential members and form those men for committed, lifelong membership in the Knights of Columbus.

This new fraternal program seeks to help the Order maintain sustainable long-term membership growth by providing the opportunity for membership throughout the modern man’s life cycle. This streamlined alternative helps acclimate men to the Order. Once a man has joined online, we will then work to incorporate him into a council and get him fully integrated with its activities.

What Online Membership Does.

This initiative is an important step for our Order, and presents a tremendous opportunity for membership growth and engagement. The initiative allows for:

A Faster Way to Join – One of the most common objections to joining the Knights of Columbus is “I don’t have time.” Through Online Membership, a join process that can take as many as two months now takes five minutes.

A Digital Experience – This initiative provides a new membership experience that is tailored to younger men and busier men who may not yet be ready for council-based membership. This low-pressure, low-commitment and digital experience meets men where they are, helps to form them as Catholic men, and enables us to bring more men into the fold.

An Amplified Message – The Online Membership initiative is backed by a substantial marketing campaign that will find and work to convert prospective members.

What Online Membership Does Not Do.

It does not change requirements for membership. Membership in the Knights of Columbus remains open to practical Catholic men.

It does not eliminate degrees. Men who join online are non-degreed members. Once they are ready to convert to a local council, they are required to take the first degree.

It does not eliminate councils. The goal of online membership is to form men for committed, lifelong and council-based membership in the Knights of Columbus. In fact, Online Membership creates a pool of recruits for local councils to engage with.

It does not eliminate dues. Online Members are required to pay \$30 annual dues.

It does not create a new class or type of member. Online Members are members of the Knights of Columbus. They are non-degreed members, and they do not belong to local councils, but they are not provisional or partial members.

How will we know that prospective online members are eligible for membership?

When a prospective member begins the Online Membership application process, the first step is for them to declare that they are: (1) a baptized Catholic male, (2) 18 years of age or older, and (3) a practical Catholic.

Once they check those boxes, and agree to abide by the laws and rules of the Knights of Columbus, they click “Proceed to Join” and proceed to the next page. They cannot continue if any of the boxes have not been checked.

Additionally, before they hit the “proceed to join” button, they are presented with the following message: "Failure to answer truthfully to any of these declarations, or failure to remain a practical Catholic in union with the Holy See, renders void your membership in the Knights of Columbus."

Prospects are also required to submit parish information during the application process.

What will these members do?

Once they have completed their registration, men who join the Order online will be given access to a web-based Online Membership portal and will begin receiving regular electronic communication from the Supreme Council.

They will receive information that will help them grow as individuals and become acclimated with the good work and rich history of the Knights of Columbus, thereby setting the stage for lifelong, active membership in our Order.

If someone joins online, is he joining a local Knights of Columbus council?

No, he is not. When one joins online, he will not belong to a local council at first. Instead, he becomes a member of the Knights of Columbus state division in his state of residence.

How do Online Members differ from members of local councils?

Although they have not yet taken the first degree, Online Members are members of the Knights of Columbus. As members, they are entitled to access to the Online Membership portal, a membership card, Columbia magazine, and the ability to participate in our insurance program.

Are Online Members permitted to attend council meetings?

Yes. Men who join the Order online are permitted to attend local council business meetings, but may not vote unless they become members of that council.

The Guidelines for Conducting a Council Meeting will be eventually be amended. In the interim, councils can waive the part of the Guidelines that reads “in the first section.”

What rights and privileges do Online members receive?

Online members are entitled to the rights and privileges of membership, which include:

- right to attend local, state, and Supreme Council events;
- eligibility to attend local council meetings as nonvoting participants;
- right to receive fraternal benefits;
- eligibility to purchase Knights of Columbus financial products and services; and
- receipt of Columbia magazine and other Supreme Council publications.

How will councils know about these potential new members?

During the application process, applicants will need to provide the name of the parish they attend. There is a field to indicate if they would like to join a local council, and the opportunity to indicate their preferred council number if they have one. Both of these tools will generate reports and emails to facilitate the transition towards local council membership.

In addition, District Deputies, Grand Knights and Financial Secretaries will have access to online members’ information (*i.e.*, prospects) at Officers Online.

Can these members join local councils?

Yes. Online Members can transfer to a local council just as members from other local councils transfer today. Transferring involves completing a membership form (Form #100) and going through the council admissions process. This includes meeting with council leaders and taking the First Degree ceremonial. If a member transfers to a local council, the dues are pro-rated to that council.

How would a council admit a member who joined online into their council?

A transition would be initiated by the local council's Financial Secretary. The receiving council would complete a Form 100 for "Transfer" after the First Degree and submit to the Supreme Council. After transitioning to a local council, the member would retain his online access to the Knights of Columbus membership experience, but cease paying his membership dues online, and instead begin to pay his local council's membership dues. The receiving council would receive the member's dues adjustment for the fraternal year.

In addition, there is an easier, alternative method for the council to complete the transfer using Officers Online. Once the council has gone through the admissions process, and the member has taken his First Degree, the council can transfer the member by using a new feature in Officers Online without the council needing to submit the Form 100 to Supreme.

More Information

Knights.net The home page for Online Membership. It's where Catholic men sign up.
<https://www.knights.net/cpages/home>

Information:

<http://www.kofc.org/en/members/online-membership/index.html#/>

Brochure:

<http://www.kofc.org/un/en/resources/membership/online-membership-handout.pdf>

Slide presentation:

<http://www.kofc.org/un/en/resources/membership/online-membership-pilot-introduction.pdf>

Frequently Asked Questions:

<http://www.kofc.org/un/newjoin/en/press-faq.html>

More Frequently Asked Questions:

<https://www.knights.net/cpages/faq>

Soon we will have information posted on State Council's website: LouisianaKC.org.