

# Family of the Year Award 2006-2007

Borja  
Family

Knights of Columbus  
Camas Council #2999

**Knights of Columbus  
Washington State Council  
2006-2007 Family of The Year**



**Nate Joe Kina Jared Kendra John Nancy**

**Joe & Nancy Borja Family  
Camas Council No. 2999  
Camas, Washington**

# FAMILY of the YEAR



## Entry Form

Jurisdiction: WASHINGTON STATE Date: APRIL 1, 2007

### Instructions

**Local Councils:** To enter your "Family of the Year" into state/provincial competition, complete this form and forward it to the state deputy. Additional paper may be used if space allocated is not sufficient. Photographs, news clippings, letters of commendation or other special exhibits may be included. Note: individual jurisdictions set their own deadlines for state/provincial competitions, so watch for deadline dates or contact the state deputy.

**State Council:** Select one entry to honor as state/provincial "Family of the Year." Submit that entry form, with the state deputy's signature and all collateral material, to the Supreme Council Department of Fraternal Services by June 10 for consideration in the International "Family of the Year" competition.

### A. Personal Data

Member's Name: JOSE (JOE) S. BORJA 2992620  
Membership Number

Wife's Name: NANCY

Children/Ages:

KINA BORJA AGE 24

KENDRA BORJA AGE 21

JARED AGE 11

Children/Ages:

JOHN (NEPHEW) AGE 23

NATE (NEPHEW) AGE 15

Home Address: 5121 NE 292<sup>ND</sup> AVE., CAMAS, WA 98607

Home Telephone: 360-834-2126

Business Telephone: 360-694-8478

Parish: ST THOMAS AQUINAS

Pastor: FR DEREK LAPPE

Address: 324 NE OAK ST., CAMAS, WA 98607

Telephone: 360-834-2126

### B. Knights of Columbus Data

Family nominated by Council 2999 in CAMAS, WA.  
(Number) (Location)

For how many years has husband/father been a member of the Knights of Columbus?  
16 YEARS

Positions (offices/program directorships/chairmanships/committee assignments) held:  
DEPUTY GRAND KNIGHT

# FAMILY *of the* YEAR



Explain the entire family's involvement within the Knights of Columbus:

SEE ATTACHMENT

## *C. Family Involvement*

Explain the entire family's involvement within the Church:

SEE ATTACHMENT

Explain the entire family's involvement within the community:

SEE ATTACHMENT

Explain why this family was chosen as the "model" family in your jurisdiction. Why does this family deserve the distinction of being named "Knights of Columbus Family of the Year"?

SEE ATTACHMENT

## *For State Council Use Only:*

This family has been chosen state/provincial "Family of the Year."

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
(State Deputy)

NOTE: Submit winning entry to Supreme Council Department of Fraternal Services, 1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510-3326.  
All entries must reach the Supreme Council office by June 10 to qualify.

Explain the entire family's involvement within the Knights of Columbus:

**Certainly one of the most difficult times to endure, if your life is not going well, is the Holiday Season. As a family, the Borja's recognized this and have found a way to make it easier for people less fortunate than themselves.**

**Every Thanksgiving, this Catholic family rolls up their sleeves and prepares Thanksgiving dinners for over 400 shut-ins and homebound souls. Joe, Nancy, Jared, John, and Nate all help in what has become a Borja family Thanksgiving Day tradition.**

**By giving to others their most precious gifts, their time and their energy, this mother and father have taught their children how to live the words of Christ when he said, " Whatsoever you do for the least of my brethren you do unto me". The children have been taught to care for people in need, the less fortunate, the elderly , all those in need and especially others in their family.**

**It is little wonder then, that their children follow in their parents footsteps. For example, you may witness John who participates in the "Knights Wood Cuts": cutting and splitting wood for families who need, but cannot afford fuel to heat their homes in the winter.**

**Or perhaps you can observe the younger boys Nate and Jared who joined the Squires as charter members of Squires Circle #5122. Both are active, participating members.**

**Any family that can cook is always put to work by the Knights of Columbus and the Borja family is no exception. For years, this family has prepared the traditional Sunday breakfasts for St. Thomas Aquinas parish. Nancy is always right by her husband's side. Every event that this family participates in reinforces the lessons of caring for others and letting other people into their family.**

**Joe is a charter member of the John Paul II Assembly #2926 and is an active member of the color guard. John, Joe's nephew, joined the Assembly with him and together they marched at the parish Corpus Christi Procession through the streets of Camas, joined by over 300 parishioners- likely the largest Corpus Christi procession in the state.**

### ***C. Family Involvement***

Explain the entire family's involvement within the Church:

**Joe is the cook for the parish as well as for the Knights. He has cooked for the hugely successful "Surf & Turf" Epiphany Dinner Auction. For the past 6 years he has cooked for the annual "One Mind One Heart Retreat". Joe cooks for the annual Harvest Dinner-another event that is attended by hundreds in the community. Joe even tows his Traeger wood pellet-fed grill to the annual parish picnic and he barbeques for over 250 parishioners.**

*...When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John do you love me more than these?" "Yes Lord, you know that I love you". He said to him "Feed my lambs".* John 21:15-16

**In addition to feeding Christ's lambs, Joe participates in Perpetual Adoration weekly. At his previous parish, Joe would drive the church van to pick up shut-ins for church on Sunday.**

**Joe is pretty handy with a torch, too. He welded a 14 foot cross out of steel that became the parish's main Advent light centerpiece.**

**Joe's wife Nancy is a regular Eucharistic minister. She participates in Perpetual Adoration with Joe every week and she is a religious education teacher for the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grades.**

**Nancy is the head of the Parish Life Committee that is responsible for major parish events like the parish picnic.**

**Nancy was personally selected by the pastor to participate in the parish Ten-Year Planning Conference. Many of her suggestions became the foundation for the final plan.**

**Nancy is responsible for all aspects of the Apostolic Works Time & Talent Fair. She contacts all parish groups, makes bulletin announcements, lays out the hall, arranges for food (asks Joe), organizes "Best Booth" voting and conducts follow-up.**

**Nancy also attends a monthly Outreach Commission Meeting (one of the pastor's top three advisory groups) to keep the pastor advised on parish life events and issues.**

**Nancy is an active member of the Women's Guild, participating in rummage sales and cooking events. She is also a member of St. Elizabeth's Apostolate, where she prepares and delivers food to families and prepares food for funeral grief luncheons.**

**Finally, Nancy participates in the annual "Easter Egg Hunt" filling eggs and working with the kids and parents.**

**Both of the girls in the family are older and are out of the house, but Kendra is a junior at Seattle University and is pursuing an International Business degree. I wonder where she gets her ambition from?**

**The younger boys, Jared and Nate, help their parents by cooking, serving and clean-up for the vast array of meals their family provides.**

**Jared is a regular altar server at the 8:00AM Sunday Mass.**

**John, being older, assists Joe in the larger projects like welding the cross and participating in the color guard.**

*...You can do no great things. Only small things with great love.  
Mother Theresa*

Explain the entire family's involvement within the community:

Over the past 12 years, Joe has sponsored and mentored five nieces and nephews from his native island of Saipan at his home here in Vancouver and Camas, to provide them with a positive influence and to serve as a role model for Catholic development. Joe went so far as to adopt Jared, so that he could "raise him right and get him a good education". Nephew John (living with them the past 6 years) graduated from high school and earned a bachelor's degree and is now nearly finished with his master's degree in public relations. Nephew Nate is a sophomore in high school and is active in the church. Joe and Nancy are now sponsoring a nephew from Saipan who is a first year seminarian at Mount Angel, Oregon.

For the past 16 years, Joe and Nancy have helped a nearby parish with the set-up and the tear down of their annual Sausage Fest, that is visited by 20,000 people annually. The set-up takes over one month and the tear down several weeks.

Joe is a regular blood donor and has given over 10 gallons of blood since he started giving in 1972. How many seriously ill children, accident victims, and others are alive today because of Joe eagerly giving the gift of life; his blood.

Other community involvements for Joe include being the Boy Scout Liaison at his previous council. He also played Santa Claus for several years in the greater Vancouver area nursing homes. He has provided grief support to families in need, and he helps with cemetery mowing, trimming and clean-up.

Nancy helps Joe with grief support and is one of Joe's "elves" when he visits the nursing homes, but Nancy has other community involvements that are her own. She is the Past President of the St. Joseph's Catholic School Parent-Teachers Organization. Her annual plant sale brought the school over \$20,000 in six years.

Both Nancy and Joe cook meals at the "Share House" (a local men's shelter) and have for several years.

The children/nephews all pitch in with the many community activities "their parents get them into". Kendra and Jared got stuck being elves too. John and Nate help with the Sausage Fest and they help Joe with the lawn work.

Explain why this family was chosen as the “model” family in your jurisdiction. Why does this family deserve the distinction of being named “Knights of Columbus Family of the Year”?

**This family knows how to put others first. Humbly, through their works, they invite more and more of God’s people into their family. Literally thousands have been touched by the love of this family. Thousands of lives have been changed for the better because of this family. Selfless, tireless dedication to all of God’s children is what this family demonstrates and lives by every single day. Pope John Paul II told the Church to evangelize. The Borja family has been spreading the teachings of Christ for years, not only by words, but also by their deeds and their example. The Borja family is not just a model for our jurisdiction, they are a model for our world! God Bless Them!**

# ***APPENDIX***

**~PHOTOS~**

**~LETTERS OF SUPPORT~**



**John & Joe Cooking Up Breakfast "Knights of Columbus Style"**



**John, Nate, Nancy, Jared & Joe Cooking Thanksgiving Turkeys**

May 29, 2007

RE: Nomination for family of the Year, Jose and Nancy Borja from their friends Don and Edna Campbell

To Whom It May Concern

Joe and Nancy Borja, their daughters, Kina and Kendra, and their son, Jared are all involved in many different projects with the Knights of Columbus, in their current parish, St Thomas in Camas WA, St Joseph, their former parish and other Southwest Washington parishes as well as non-church affiliated volunteer services.

Joe, a widower, was raising his two girls alone when he met Nancy and they began a friendship that led to marriage in September in 1991. They have successfully blended into a wonderful family which was completed with the arrival of Jared, a true gift from God, in 1995. Our family friendship connection was honored with the choice of Don for Godfather to Jared.

Don and Joe met working together to set up the stage for the groundbreaking for the new Church at St. Joseph Parish. We have all since worked together on many projects. Nancy and Joe helped create a huge plant sale to help finance continuing religious education in St. Joseph's Elementary School and Parish. Don worked with them moving plants via the forklift from truck to display area.

Another project that Joe and Nancy helped to create was the annual dinner for the widowed in our parish, providing an excellent opportunity for the widows and widowers to participate in parish life. Perhaps the largest contribution to parish support came from Joe's contribution of time and talent with Don in annually (for several years) giving two months of evenings and weekend work to construct the village for the Sausage Festival that has provided up to \$120,000 in a weekend for the school and religious education programs. Joe continued to help even after moving out of our parish to St. Thomas in Camas. Nancy and the children participated through giving time in support of the many food booths at the Festival.

In closing, Joe and Nancy show their care for God and community with continued volunteerism with any need that arises from delivering poinsettias to the sick and recently widowed to cooking turkey dinners at Thanksgiving for shut in parishioners. They have been role models for their children who participate with their parents.

Sincerely

Don and Edna Campbell

**May 31, 2007**

**To Whom it May Concern,**

**I would like to recommend the Joe Borja family as the International Family Of The Year. Joe has been a vital part of the Knights of Columbus, parish, and city activities for the past 17 years. He is generous with his time and talents. He has contributed food to the yearly dinners sponsored in Vancouver for the homeless people who have no place to go for Thanksgiving and Christmas. He has been an active part of the Vancouver Sausage Fest, working with his entire family shucking corn in the three day festival held at St. Joseph Parish. The Festival has grown to become the largest church sponsored activity in the State of Washington. He also worked in the construction and tearing down of the Festival each year. He has been a vital part of both St. Joseph Parish in Vancouver and St. Thomas Parish in Camas, where he now resides. Both Joe and Nancy, his wife, were in charge of the yearly Plant Sale at St. Joseph School, which raised money for the school. Joe does not know the word "No" when it comes to helping others. He is a current member of St. Thomas Council, Camas.**

**Joe and Nancy have demonstrated by their example how a true Catholic family lives. Perhaps Joe's recent illness and on-going chemo has drawn them closer together than the average family. There has been much time for children, Kendra, Kina, and adopted son, Jared, to pray together with their parents. They have been an example for the entire community. Joe now awaits testing on his siblings to see if there is a match so that he can have the necessary bone marrow transplant. We all join the family in their effort to help husband, father, son, brother, friend and Brother Knight in his fight for life. The Borja Family is an example to us all.**

**Vivat Jesus,**

**Eugene Munson PGK,PFN,FDD**

May 31, 2007  
*Feast of the Visitation*

To Whom It May Concern:

**Letter of Recommendation for the Borja Family  
for the International Family of the Year Award**

I am very happy to write this letter recommending the Borja family for the International Family of the Year award. I am the pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church in Camas, Washington, where the Borjas are parishioners, and chaplain of the Fr. Blanchet Council #2999 where Joe is a Knight.

The Borjas have been, and remain, a very special family in the life of this parish. I won't list all of their good works and generous service to St. Thomas and our local community, except to say that they are an extremely apostolic family, and a great example of a family which is centered upon the Christian community. Each day families have to make choices about how they are going to spend their time, resources and energy, and there are a lot of good things in this world which call for our attention. The Borjas have truly made the choice to dedicate themselves and their time and energy to serving Jesus Christ, and putting the practice of their Christian faith at the center of their family life.

The Borjas have struck a difficult balance between a life of prayer and a life of service, a balance between loving God and responding to His love by serving Him. Their activity in this parish is not just "involvement" but, I believe, flows from their deep faith in Jesus Christ and their desire to make some response to all that He has done for them in their lives.

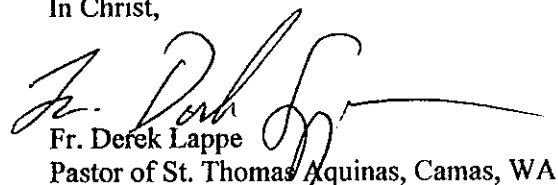
From this flows their example to other Christian families. The joy, peace, and optimism which so evidently is a part of their family life is a sign to others that centering your life on Jesus Christ is "worth it", and that the Lord is never outdone in generosity.

Since Joe's diagnosis with a very serious and life threatening illness I have been amazed by his hope and trust in God. Rather than worrying, they have joyfully entrusted themselves to Divine Providence and have, again, been a great witness to others of how the faith strengthens us in the midst of trial.

Again, you have the lists of all of their particular activities and generous service, but the reason I recommend this family with such conviction is because they are witnesses not to the "busy-ness" of serving Christ, but rather to the joy which comes from a life of self-giving lived in response to God's goodness.

If I can be of any further assistance, please contact me at (360)921-4025.

In Christ,

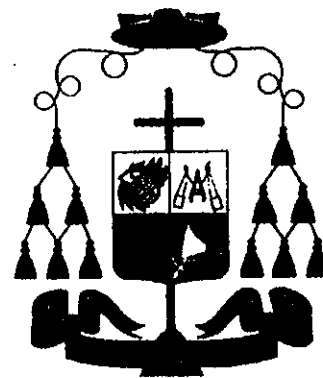
  
Fr. Derek Lappe  
Pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas, Camas, WA

**St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church**



DIOCESE OF CHALAN KANOA  
Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas  
Saipan, MP 96950

Tuesday, May 29, 2007



LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

To Whom It May Concern:

I, Tomas A. Camacho, Bishop of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), do hereby attest that I have personally known Mr. and Mrs. Jose S. Borja and their families on Saipan.

The Borja family has been actively involved in the Catholic Church. The family has been brought up actively involved in the parish and the diocese doing volunteer works and leading the community during fiesta celebrations. The annual celebration on the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes has been a tradition that the Borja family has taken the lead in terms of organizing novenas, processions, festal activities, and the upkeep and maintenance of the shrine where pilgrims come to pray.

Recently, the Borja family has donated a property to the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa for the proposed plan of establishing Santa Cruz Mission Parish in Capitol Hills, Saipan, CNMI. This gesture of generosity and support to the Church is a reflection of the many things they have done and are still doing for the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa.

I have personally known Joe and Nancy Borja and their children as deeply religious people. Their love for God and deep passion for the Church is manifested in their active involvement in their parish community and the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa.

Therefore, I strongly recommend Mr. & Mrs. Jose S. Borja to be the recipient for the National Supreme Family of the Year.

Given this 29<sup>th</sup> day of May, in the year of the Lord, 2007, at the Diocesan Curia, Saipan, Diocese of Chalan Kanoa.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+Tomas A. Camacho  
Bishop  
Diocese of Chalan Kanoa (CNMI)