

# Online Membership

**A Program for Recruiting  
and Engaging New Members**



**Knights of Columbus**

**Lead with Faith**

**Protect Your Family**

**Serve Others**

**Defend Your Values**

# ONLINE MEMBERSHIP

## *A Program for Recruiting and Engaging New Members*

Throughout the fraternal year 2017/18 the Supreme Council is conducting a membership pilot in a limited number of U.S. and Canadian jurisdictions. This Online Membership initiative is a web-based program through which eligible Catholic men are able to join the Knights of Columbus online. This initiative is not meant to replace traditional recruiting methods, nor is it meant to change councils or degrees. Instead, it is meant to supplement traditional recruiting by offering a new, digital experience for certain men who are not yet ready for council-based membership.

## 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

The Online Membership Initiative

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

**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.

**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.

**Does not** eliminate dues. Online Members are required to pay \$30 annual dues.

**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.



# MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Members who join online will receive the following:

*Welcome Package* – All new members will receive a Welcome Package (contents include membership card, *Columbia*, welcome letter, and copy of *Into the Breach*).

*Access to Online Membership Portal* – All new members will receive full access to the Online Membership portal and all of its faith, values, insurance, and charitable content, as well as Supreme Council and State Council news and events content.

*Membership Communications* – Members will receive weekly emails from the Supreme Council on a variety of topics, including faith formation, public policy developments, charitable opportunities, financial planning, Order-wide news, and membership events.

*Programs & Events* – Members will be eligible to participate in or attend local, regional, and national charitable and fraternal events.

*Columbia Magazine* – Members will receive the print edition of our monthly magazine, as well as any special fraternal publications produced throughout the year.

*Insurance* – Members, their spouses, and their dependent children are eligible to purchase our life insurance, long-term care insurance, disability income insurance, and retirement products.

*Accidental Death Coverage* – Eligible members and their spouses will be automatically enrolled in the Order's accidental death coverage at no cost.

*Annual Financial Review* – Members are entitled to an annual review by one of our field agents.

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

### 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. While they will receive a number of other benefits, the digital experience will form the core of their Knights of Columbus experience.

Content distributed to the member through the portal and direct communication will revolve around the four themes of: Lead with Faith, Protect Your Family, Serve Others and Defend Your Values.

Through these four themes, these men will not only grow as individuals, but will become acclimated with the good work and rich history of the Knights of Columbus, thereby strengthening their affinity with the Knights of Columbus brand, and setting the stage for lifelong, active membership. They will also receive regular news updates from the Supreme Council, as well as news and event information from their State Council.

### Do these members belong to councils?

Online Members do not belong to local councils. Instead, they belong to state divisions. Each jurisdiction will have one state division, which houses all of that jurisdiction's Online Members

### How do these members differ from members of local councils?

Though they have not yet taken the first degree, online members are members of the Knights of Columbus. As members, they are entitled to all of the great benefits listed in the "Membership Benefits" section above. These benefits include: a welcome package, access to the Online Membership portal, a membership card, *Columbia*, and the ability to participate in our insurance program. They are not a different "class" or "type" of member, but as they are not yet degreed members and not yet members of local councils, they are at the earliest stage of their Knights of Columbus journey.

# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS cont.

## **Can these members join local councils?**

Yes. State division members who have joined online can transition to local council membership, just as members from other local councils do today. When a State Division member finds a local council he likes, he may deepen his involvement in the Knights of Columbus by converting his membership from his State Division into that local council to take his degrees. Since these members will not have taken the first degree, that ceremonial will be part of their transition to a local council.

## **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.

## **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.

## **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.

**For additional questions please contact the Online Membership department at [join@kofc.org](mailto:join@kofc.org)**

[kofc.org/joinus](http://kofc.org/joinus)