

**Communiqué at the end of the 77th International and 51st Biennial Convention
of the Knights of St. John International, at the
Valley Plaza Resort, Midland, Michigan
July 19 to July 24, 2010**

1. We, members of the Knights of St. John International drawn from the United States, West Africa, United Kingdom and the Caribbean Islands held our International and Biennial Convention at the Valley Plaza Resort, Midland, MI from July 19 to 24, 2010. After prayerful reflection on the state of the Church, our Noble Order and the civil Society, *under the theme, "For when two or three are gathered in my name there I am in the midst of them", Matt. 18.20, we now present our communique to the Church and to the State.*

EVENTS IN THE CHURCH, CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE ORDER

2. Since our last convention, which took place in July, 2008 in Philadelphia, the Church has had two major events:

The year of St. Paul, June 28, 2008 to June 29, 2009 and the Year for Priests, June 2009 to June 2010. In the Jubilee Year of St. Paul, the Church under the theme "it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me", Gal 2,20, commemorated the 2000th birthday of the great apostle to the nations. In the Prayer to St. Paul composed by the Church for that year, we had prayed with the universal Church that God our father should "Help us to become apostles serving the Church with a pure heart, witnesses to her truth and beauty amidst the darkness of our days".

In the Special Year for Priests (June 2009 to June 2010), the Church marked the 150th anniversary of the death of St. John Mary Vianney, the Cure d'Ars (Parish Priest) and patron saint of priests. St. John Vianney was renowned for an exemplary priestly life and ministry of personal holiness which he used to bring so many people to conversion. According to the Holy Father, the year was intended "to encourage priests in striving for spiritual perfection on which, above all, the effectiveness of their ministry depends." May the prayers of St. John Vianney and his example of holiness and pastoral zeal lead our Church, our priests and all Christians to a profound renewal of life.

3. Also since the last convention, society at large has been faced with numerous and often devastating challenges, such as the global financial meltdown which has affected some buoyant commanderies of our Order as much as it has jilted the entire world order from which many communities and associations are still gradually recovering, the natural disasters in countries such as Haiti, the Republic of Congo, the Philippines and the ongoing oil spillage in the Gulf of Mexico. All these disasters have greatly influenced society's apprehension on our common well being and security.

4. Between the periods under review, eight hundred members of our Noble Order have gone to answer the call of our Maker. We have celebrated a Memorial Mass for them and prayed God to bring them into His abode of Peace and Light where they will have eternal rest. Amen. While we count our loss in the demise of these our fallen members, we are nevertheless grateful to Almighty God for the remarkable increase in our membership. From 2007 to 2009, the Knights of St. John International has recorded a 12% increase in membership growth. The Order has also expanded into the United

Kingdom, Panama, Germany and Canada, while serious inroads are being made into the Republic of Benin and the Cameroons.

5. RESOLUTIONS

> As a Catholic Fraternal Organization whose objective is to promote a more generous and filial respect for the spiritual authority of the Church, we continue to pledge our unalloyed loyalty to the Supreme Pontiff, Pope Benedict XVI and the hierarchy of the Catholic Church.

> We pledge our total support of the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI and our Holy Mother Church in the face of the recent unbridled attacks by many in the media and some Catholics as well as many in the public, on the grounds of sex abuse, especially of minors, by a few clergy. While not condoning the acts of the clergy involved, we however condemn the attacks of the aforementioned groups as they do not help in the reconciliation and healing which both the victims and offenders deserve. The Knights of St. John International asks members to pray for the Pope for God to give him the fortitude to weather these attacks. Supplications should also be made to God for continued growth of the Catholic Church in the light of the recent challenges it is facing from hostile segments of society.

> In the face of the moral liberalism that characterizes our society today, such as same sex marriage, birth control measures involving condoms and prescription drugs, abortion, mercy killing etc., we recommit ourselves to the venerable teachings of the Roman Catholic Church on the sanctity of human life and the sacredness of the institution of marriage.

> As a fraternity whose object is to "encourage and develop the spirit of love of country and of its institutions and to extend to the whole world the spirit of good will," we have once again gathered in the spirit of our common brotherhood and sisterhood. Knowing that Christ is in our midst, we extend our sympathy to the victims of the disasters in Haiti, the Congo, the Philippines and the oil spillage in the Gulf of Mexico. We further resolve to improve our commitment of works of charity and support and reverence of the Catholic Church.

CONCLUSION

Our members are active and committed members in their various parishes, dioceses and ecclesiastical provinces, people tangibly committed to the venerable tenets of our Holy Roman Catholic Church. Gathered together in the spirit of our common brotherhood and sisterhood in the knighthood of St. John International, we have pledged to be more fervent in our Christian obligations. May God through the intercession of our Mother Mary and our patron saint, John the Baptist, continue to bless our fraternity and our collective efforts at evangelization.

General Timothy Hoerst

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Supreme President, KSJI
July 23, 2010