

Celebrating Our Catholic Heritage

Overview

The Celebrating Our Catholic Heritage program encourages councils and their parishes to celebrate the culture and traditions of their communities. Catholics have played a significant role in the history of North America, contributing to its spiritual, cultural and social fabrics. Councils can celebrate and share the richness of Catholic heritage by hosting festivals and other events that include the food, music, art, and faith-based devotions of the countries or cultures represented in their areas. This program aims to educate, inspire, and unite the community while celebrating the deep-rooted faith and cultural heritage of Catholics.

Featured Program Requirements

For two program credits toward the Columbian Award – Host an event celebrating your parish community's heritage. Report activity using the [Fraternal Programs Report Form](#) (#10784).

Action Steps

1. Working with your pastor, develop a plan for a festival or event promoting your heritage that incorporates the council and larger parish community. You can share the [Celebrating Our Catholic Heritage Brochure](#) (#11799) with your pastor and council to give them an idea of what the program might entail.
 - Consider including the following:
 - A liturgical event, such as the Mass, and a procession with icons or statues depicting saints significant to your local cultures.
 - A table featuring devotions to saints relevant to the parish community.
 - Cultural performances, including music and dancing, or art.
 - Educational workshops or displays.
 - Traditional items and food offered by local vendors or parishioners.
 - Activities for families and children such as piñatas, board games, athletic events, etc.
2. Agree on a venue, date and time for the event.
 - Consider running this program on the dates that are relevant to cultural communities in your parish (Italian, Irish, Hispanic, etc.). For example, here are some feast days that are relevant to Hispanic communities:
 - Our Lady of Altagracia (Dominican Republic, Jan. 21), St. José Luis Sánchez del Río (Mexico, Feb. 20), St. Oscar Romero (El Salvador, Mar. 24), Mexican Martyrs (Mexico, May 21), Bl. Stanley Rother (Guatemala, Jul. 28), Our Lady of la Caridad del Cobre (Cuba, Sep. 8), Our Lady de la Divina Providencia (Puerto Rico, Nov. 19), Bl. Carlos Rodríguez (Puerto Rico, Nov. 22), St. Juan Diego (Mexico, Dec. 9), and Our Lady of Guadalupe (Mexico, Dec. 12).
 - You may also consider offering the program during various national, state or local heritage months. For example, National Hispanic Heritage Month in the United States (Sep. 15 – Oct. 15).



3. Invite outside vendors to participate. Some vendors may be willing to donate items or services for the festival as part of a raffle or other fundraising efforts. Other parish and community groups can also be invited.
4. If needed, request any permits required to host a large event in your community.
5. Build public interest for the program! Promote the Celebrating Our Catholic Heritage program in your parish and larger community through a variety of efforts:
 - Prominently display promotional posters at the high-traffic areas of the parish.
 - Make bulletin and pulpit announcements.
 - Post on your council and parish website / social media pages.
 - Share the event in all digital council communications.
6. Invite Catholic men attending the event to join the Order:
 - On the day of the event, wear Knights of Columbus-branded apparel and have the council membership director set up a table with brochures, a list of upcoming council programs and events, and membership documents (including [Prospect Cards #921A](#)).
 - Encourage men to join at the event using the kofc.org/join website on their phone.
 - Consider adding an online exemplification to the end of the event.
 - A Knight should open or close the event and share information about the Order.
7. Enlist a fellow Knight or community member to photograph the event.
8. To gain credit for your program, complete the associated reporting forms.
 - Immediately after your event is finished, complete the [Fraternal Programs Report Form](#) (#10784)
 - At the end of the fraternal year, complete the [Columbian Award Application](#) (#SP-7)

Resources

1. #11799 - [Celebrating Our Catholic Heritage Brochure](#)
2. #11800 - [Vertical Poster – Celebrating Our Catholic Heritage](#)
3. #11801 - [Horizontal Poster – Celebrating Our Catholic Heritage](#)
4. #11816 - [Flyer - Celebrating Our Catholic Heritage](#)