



Cardinal John O'Connor of New York received the second Knights of Columbus Gaudium et Spes Award at ceremonies in New York City Nov. 19. Shown from left at the presentation ceremonies are

Supreme Chaplain Bishop Thomas V. Daily of Brooklyn, N.Y., Mrs. Ann Dechant, Cardinal O'Connor and Supreme Knight Virgil C. Dechant.

Order Honors Cardinal O'Connor

□ *Gaudium et Spes Award salutes his service*

In the mind of Cardinal John J. O'Connor, archbishop of New York, it was not he, but the millions of nameless, faceless unborn children who have lost their lives to abortion who were honored with the Knights of Columbus Gaudium et Spes (Joy and Hope) Award. Nonetheless, the award was presented to Cardinal O'Connor Nov. 19 at a banquet held in his honor at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City.

Thunderous applause filled the ballroom as Cardinal O'Connor announced that the honorarium accompanying the award would go to support the work of the Sisters of Life, the religious community he founded to pray and work for the cause of life.

Established by the Knights of Columbus in 1992 as part of its observance of the 500th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of the New World and the coming of the Catholic faith to the Americas, the Gaudium et Spes Award recognizes individuals for their spiritual and humanitarian achievements.

The Gaudium et Spes Award takes its inspiration, as well as its name, from the opening words of the Second Vatican Council's *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*:

"The joys and hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these too are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ."

The Gaudium et Spes Award is not conferred annually.

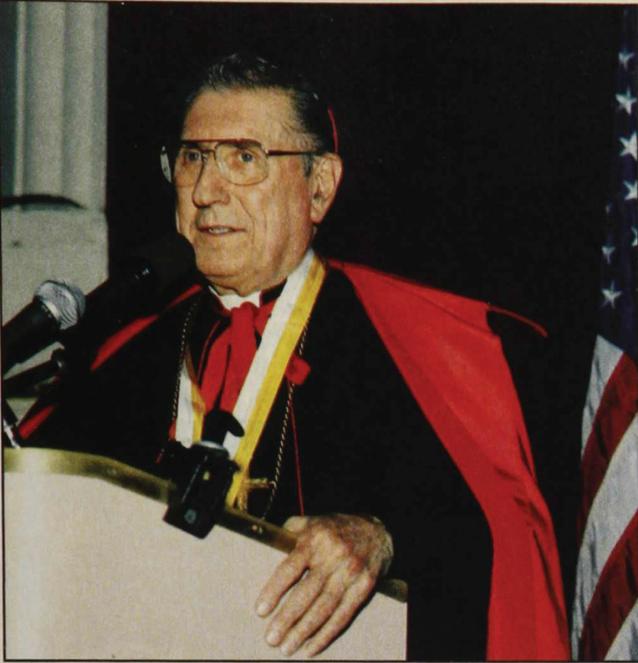
Instead, said Supreme Knight Virgil C. Dechant, it is "bestowed only in special circumstances upon persons of extraordinary merit."

"Clearly, those conditions are met in the case of His Eminence John Cardinal O'Connor of New York. The cardinal's distinguished career of committed service is itself a 'special circumstance' of the most remarkable kind, while as a priest, pastoral leader and public figure, his 'merit' is extraordinary in all respects," Dechant said.

The Gaudium et Spes Award consists of a specially struck gold medal featuring on one side the crucifix of Pope John Paul II's crosier against a background of global longitudinal and latitudinal lines and, on the other side, a scene of Father Michael J. McGivney, founder of the Knights of Columbus, comforting the widow and children of a deceased member. An honorarium of \$100,000 accompanies the medal. Mother Teresa of Calcutta received the first Gaudium et Spes Award at a presentation ceremony during the 110th annual Supreme Council meeting in New York City in 1992.

The ballroom of the Waldorf Astoria was filled by more than 700 people on hand to honor Cardinal O'Connor at the presentation dinner. Among them were five other cardinals, 11 archbishops, 11 bishops, the cardinal's family, friends and co-workers, and other distinguished Catholics. Representing the Knights of Columbus along with Supreme Knight and Mrs. Dechant were the Order's Supreme Officers, board of directors and state deputies with their wives.

At the table of honor with Cardinal O'Connor and the Dechants were Cardinal William Baum, major penitentiary of the Apostolic Penitentiary; Cardinal Alfonso Lopez Trujillo, president of the Pontifical Council for the Family;



Cardinal John O'Connor accepted the Knights of Columbus Gaudium et Spes Award on behalf of the millions of unborn children killed by abortion. He said he will contribute the \$100,000 honorarium that accompanies the award to the Sisters of Life, a religious order he founded to pray and work for the cause of life.

Cardinal Bernard Law, archbishop of Boston; Cardinal Pio Laghi, prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education; Cardinal William H. Keeler, archbishop of Baltimore and president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops; Archbishop Agostino Cacciavillan, apostolic pro-nuncio to the United States; Archbishop Renato R. Martino, permanent observer of the Holy See to the United Nations; Archbishop Daniel A. Cronin of Hartford, Conn.; and Bishop Thomas V. Daily of Brooklyn, N.Y., supreme chaplain of the Knights of Columbus.

Supreme Knight Dechant served as master of ceremonies, and Bishop Daily delivered the invocation. Cardinal Keeler offered a toast to the pope, and testimonials to Cardinal O'Connor were tendered by Cardinals Baum, Lopez Trujillo and Laghi and by Archbishops Cacciavillan and Martino.

Prior to the reading of the citation by Bishop Daily and the presentation of the medal by Supreme Knight Dechant, a specially prepared video on the life of Cardinal O'Connor was shown to standing applause.

The text of the citation follows:

John Joseph O'Connor was born in Philadelphia and was ordained a priest of that great archdiocese on Dec. 15, 1945. Following several years of pastoral service, in 1952 he joined the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps as a chaplain. He was to continue in that ministry for the next 27 years, during which time he served in such overseas posts as South Korea and Vietnam. In 1975 he became U.S. Navy chief of chaplains, and in 1979 he retired from the Navy with the rank of rear admiral.

Many men would have considered that a career, but His Eminence, it seems, was just getting started. His Holiness Pope John Paul II named him titular bishop of Curzola and appointed him auxiliary of what was then called the Military Vicariate, now the Archdiocese for the Military Services, U.S.A., serving the pastoral needs of American military personnel and their dependents throughout the world.

In May 1983, the Holy Father appointed him bishop of Scranton, Pa. Then, little more than eight months later, in January 1984,

Pope John Paul named him archbishop of New York, succeeding the late Terence Cardinal Cooke. In 1985, the pope raised him to the sacred College of Cardinals, with the titular Church of Saints John and Paul.

His Eminence holds or has held innumerable posts in the structure of the Roman Curia as well as the episcopal conference of the United States. He is a member, among others, of the Second Section of the Secretariat of States, the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, and the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. Just last month, by special appointment of Pope John Paul, he served as one of three cardinal-presidents of the World Synod of Bishops in Rome. As for the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the United States Catholic Conference, he is perhaps best known for his chairmanship of the Bishops' Committee for Pro-Life Activities, where the Knights of Columbus had the privilege of working closely with him, and for having served as a member of the committee that drafted the bishops' famous pastoral letter on war and peace.

But offices held and tasks performed do not suggest the full measure of the man. Of Cardinal O'Connor it can truly be said that he has earned the respect and gratitude of millions by his unflinching and eloquent championship of the cause of unborn human life in the face of the evil of abortion; that he has been a pastoral leader uncompromisingly loyal to Catholic doctrine and totally dedicated to the spiritual welfare of his people; that he is a shepherd of souls whose compassion for the poor and the sick, for persons with AIDS and those suffering misery and heartache of many kinds, time and again has been shown not only through the programs and institutions of the archdiocese he heads but also through quiet, unsung deeds of personal service; that he is a man of courage, sensitivity and great heart.

The Knights of Columbus, then, is honored to honor this great American, this distinguished Churchman, this devoted Catholic priest. With esteem and affection we present the second Knights of Columbus Gaudium et Spes Award to His Eminence John Cardinal O'Connor of New York.

In his address accepting the award, Cardinal O'Connor spoke movingly about the evil of abortion and praised the Knights of Columbus, saying in part:

"There have been horrible assaults on human beings throughout the course of history, one of the most devastating, of course, the Holocaust in which 6 million Jews and many millions of Christians were put to death after terrible tortures. There have been such massacres as the Cambodian tragedy. There have been endless attacks on human beings because they are black, they are Jewish, because they are this, because they are that.

"But now, I think for the first time, we are witnessing an attack on human life itself. People are put to death simply because they are alive. They are guilty of no offense. It has nothing to do with their color, their sex, their background or their religion. It has simply to do with the fact that they are alive; 1.6 million babies put to death annually in the United States, 40 million throughout the world. Truly, truly this is a horror.

"This is why I am so grateful to receive this award. The meaning of this award to me is that it comes with a huge sum of money which will go directly to the Sisters of Life to try to help turn back this onslaught on human life."

The evening concluded with a benediction delivered by Cardinal Law. In remarks prior to the closing prayer, Cardinal Law sang for his brother cardinal one of their favorite hymns: "Simon Peter, son of John, feed my lambs... feed my sheep."

This tribute of friendship served as a fitting close to what Supreme Knight Dechant described in his opening remarks as a family gathering celebrating "the life of one who is present to us as 'Father' — a priestly, teaching, shepherding father."



Knights from Lafayette Council 514 in Dover, N.J., were pleasantly surprised when they were joined on retreat at San Alfonso Retreat House in Long Branch, by Cardinal John O'Connor of New York and Cardinal Bernard Law of Boston. The cardinals were also making a retreat at the facility. Shown from left are Chancellor Michael Yukna, Cardinal Law, Redemptorist Father Russell Abata of San Alfonso, Cardinal O'Connor and Grand Knight Stephen F. Drabik.

Signing Up Members

Recruiters from **First Florida Council 611** in St. Augustine manned a table at the Cathedral of St. Augustine's annual festival and collected 11 Form #100s from potential members. • **Valley of Angels Council 9710** in San Diego held a membership drive at its parish that brought in five new members. The Knights inserted informational fliers in the parish bulletin. On the weekend of the drive, the Knights showed a video on the Order while coffee and doughnuts were served. The council also held an open meeting for wives and guests.

Blood Drives Held

Agape Circle 4003 in Federal Way, Wash., sponsored a blood drive that collected about 48 units for the local blood bank. • A blood drive organized by **Archangel Council 7429** in Pine Hill, N.J., collected 53 units of blood for the American Red Cross. The council provided a free spaghetti dinner to donors. • **Our Lady of Mount Carmel Council 9279** in Roxas City, Visayas, held two drives to collect blood for the Red Cross.

'In Solidarity With Our Priests'

Father Michael H. Burzynski of St. Aloysius Gonzaga Parish in Cheektowaga was the honoree at a Fourth Degree exemplification sponsored by **New York District 6**. Father Burzynski is the district's faithful friar. Of the 110 degree candidates, seven were clergy members.

Keeping Hearts Healthy

Our Lady of the Pillar Council 4350 in Manila, Luzon, sponsored a low-cost health clinic aimed at the early detection of heart, kidney and liver diseases, diabetes and gout. Participants were tested and received the results a week later.

Council Has Busy Summer

Knights from **St. Martin de Porres Council 8238** in Yorba Linda, Calif., didn't rest last summer. The council sponsored an "Angel (K)Night" trip to a baseball game between the Angels and the Texas Rangers at Anaheim Stadium. Twelve children and two chaperones from a home for abused children were the Knights' guests. The Knights also sent 11 tickets to Marywood Catholic Seminary. Members collected \$500 for council activities by manning a food booth at the city's fireworks festival.

Reading to Infants

Fray Francisco Garces Council 3855 in Glendale, Ariz., participates in a program to promote literacy among very young children. Books are given to new mothers while they are still in the hospital so they will start reading to their newborn children.

Marian Devotion

Father Carlu Council 3363 in Baguio City, Luzon, participated in Marian devotion services held in the city's cathedral.

Pool Donation

Lewiston (Maine) Council 106 donated \$1,000 to the YWCA for pool renovations.

Stations of the Cross

Valley Council 5528 in Hemet, Calif., built a set of Stations of the Cross in a local cemetery.

Deacon Honored

Upon the occasion of his ordination as a permanent deacon, **St. Timothy Council 10034** in Lady Lake, Fla., presented charter member R. Ken Del Papa with a sacramentary.

Council Helps Widow

Knights from **Ascension Council 4324** in Johnstown, Ohio, replaced the leaky roof on the house of the wife of a deceased member.

Helping the Hungry

St. Charles Garnier Council 10489 in Sherbrooke, Que., donated \$500 to a group that feeds needy people.

Supreme Knight Virgil C. Dechant congratulates Cardinal John O'Connor of New York on his receiving the Knights of Columbus Gaudium et Spes Award for outstanding service to the Church and the world.

assist in development of a new document marking the 20th anniversary of a much-praised joint pastoral letter by bishops of the same region; to Save Our Aged Religious (SOAR), for its program in support of retired religious; to the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, for a planned workshop and period of prayer and reflection for bishops on the theme "A Spirituality for the Third Millennium"; to the Midwestern Association of Theological Schools, for a regional meeting of seminary officials; to the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious; and to the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, N.M.

On Nov. 19 the Order had the great pleasure of bestowing a high Knights of Columbus honor upon a distinguished churchman. Our Gaudium et Spes Award was presented to Cardinal John O'Connor of New York at a gala dinner at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel.

Typically, His Eminence promptly announced that the honorarium accompanying this award would go to support the work of the Sisters of Life, the religious community he founded to pray and work for the cause of life.

As I remarked at the time, the Knights of Columbus Gaudium et Spes Award is not conferred annually but is "bestowed only in special circumstances upon persons of extraordinary merit"; and clearly those conditions were met in the case of Cardinal O'Connor, whose "distinguished career of committed service is itself a 'special circumstance' of the most remarkable kind, while as a priest, pastoral leader and public figure, his 'merit' is extraordinary in all respects."

The phrase "sea of humanity" took on a whole new meaning for me on Sunday, Jan. 15, in Rizal Park in Manila. The occasion was the closing Mass for the World Youth Day celebration offered by Pope John Paul II, with a congregation of more than 4 million persons. Without doubt, being part of what surely was the best-attended Mass in the history of the world was the highlight of a very eventful 10-day visit to World Youth Day and to the National Convention of our Knights in the Philippines.

Ann and I, accompanied by Bishop Daily, and by Lina and Paul McGlinchey, participated in a variety of youth-oriented activities, particularly the encounter with our Columbian

Squires where I was privileged to give the main address on "The Youth in the Knights of Columbus Family." We made several courtesy calls, most particularly to His Excellency Archbishop Gian Vincenzo Moreni, apostolic nuncio, and to His Excellency Archbishop Carmelo Dominador Morelos of Zamboanga, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

On Jan. 11 we were hosted for lunch by His Eminence Jaime Cardinal Sin, archbishop of Manila, at his residence. He spoke very highly of our Knights and was most cordial in the midst of many responsibilities associated with the papal visit.



Because of the throng, it became apparent that we would be physically unable to reach our seats for the World Youth Day Mass. This turned into a happy circumstance, because we found a place to the side of the altar, gratefully in the shade. Soon we heard the sound of helicopters and learned that

because of the press of people, the pope could not reach the Mass site by popemobile and would arrive by helicopter. The landing site was a short distance from our position, and we hastened over, unhindered, to a place near the makeshift vesting place. When the Holy Father landed, preceded by his entourage, we had a very close-up view. In fact, His Eminence Angelo Cardinal Sodano, papal secretary of state, spotted me and came over to extend his greeting.

On Jan. 18 we were graciously received by President Fidel Ramos at Malacanang Palace. He was commendatory of the social justice and livelihood projects of the Knights, and informed us of steps being taken to improve the country's economy.

The Masses, business sessions and other events connected with the National Convention also were highlights of our trip, and we were honored to greet personally many of our Knights and families from Luzon, Mindanao and Visayas.

In my introductory remarks I referred to the role the Order will play in connection with the Mass our Holy Father Pope John Paul II will celebrate on Friday, Oct. 6. Although the expression may sometimes be overworked, this will be a history-making occasion for the Knights of Columbus.