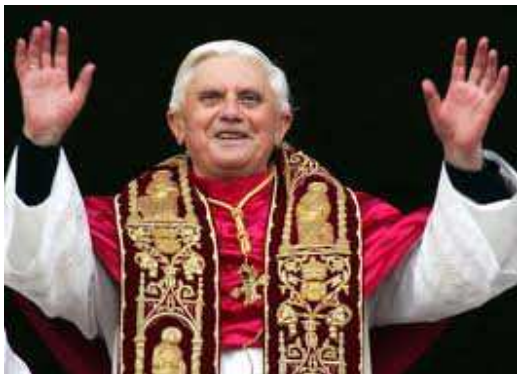


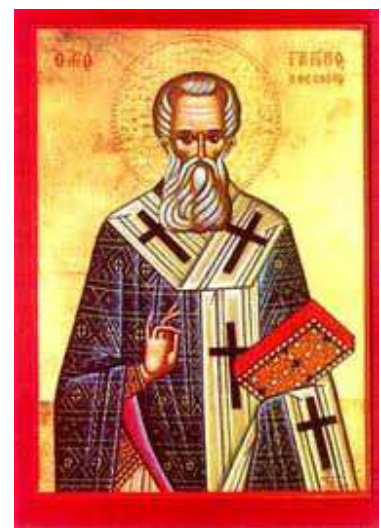
Dear brother Knights,

As men in today's modern world we have great responsibility. Each of us must strive to be a "righteous man" like St. Joseph. We must guide and protect our families and our loved ones from the dangers of our society. Many of you are husbands and fathers of families. That means that you hold a place of authority within your family. You might say that you are sitting on the "throne" reigning over the castle which is your home. You must do so with strength, wisdom and love. You must be firm but loving with your children and cooperate with your wife who reigns alongside you as queen. You must be the head of the home without being headstrong. You must control the family without being controlling. You must oversee the domain without being domineering. You must oppose evil without being oppressive.



Pope Benedict XVI has been reigning as pope for eight years. From his position on the "Chair of Peter" he has governed the Universal Church with strength, wisdom and love. He has been a good "Holy Father" for the family of the church. But now that his strength is diminishing he is giving us a good example of humility. He is not holding onto power and control in an inordinate way.

Pope Gregory the Great (c. 540 –604) was the first to describe his role as pope as "the **Servant of the Servants of God** (Latin: *servus servorum Dei*). Our beloved Pope Benedict has truly been a humble servant of God's people. He has served for eight years as pope, for 36 years as a bishop and cardinal, and for 62 years as a priest. In his first words as pope on his election day, Pope Benedict spoke in a humble way: "Dear Brothers and Sisters: After the great Pope John Paul II, the Lord Cardinals have elected me, a simple and humble worker in the vineyard of the Lord. I am consoled by the fact that the Lord knows how to act, even with inadequate instruments and above all I entrust myself to your prayers."





God will reward Pope Benedict XVI for his tireless service and for being humble enough to step down from the throne which is chair of power. Jesus himself spoke of this idea of a “chair” of legitimate spiritual power: *“The scribes and the Pharisees have taken their seat on the chair of Moses. Therefore, do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you, but do not follow their example. For they preach but they do not practice.”* (Matthew 23:2-3) In the Old Testament the spiritual leaders sat on the chair of Moses; in the time of the Church the legitimate spiritual leaders sit on the chair of Peter. In the apse of St. Peter’s Basilica there is a huge symbolic chair that has a stone embedded within it which is said to be the stone upon which St. Peter sat as the first pope.

In the words he used to announce his retirement, Pope Benedict referred twice to the ancient, biblical image of the “chair.” He did this to emphasize that the power of the keys belongs to whoever is seated on the “seat of Peter,” which is what is meant by the phrase “The **Holy See**” ([Latin](#): *Sancta Sedes*, [Italian](#): *Santa Sede*). With his words the pope was also clearly fulfilling the requirements of church law that a pope can validly resign from office as long as it is done freely and announced clearly (Canon #332). Here are the pope’s actual words: “...well aware of the seriousness of this act, with full freedom I declare that I renounce the ministry of Bishop of Rome, Successor of Saint Peter, entrusted to me by the Cardinals on 19 April 2005, in such a way, that as from 28 February 2013, at 20:00 hours, **the See of Rome, the See of Saint Peter**, will be vacant and a Conclave to elect the new Supreme Pontiff will have to be convoked by those whose competence it is.” Pope Benedict is unseating himself from the “Chair of Peter” during the Year of Faith. He is teaching us that in order to be men of faith we must be humble and always remember that God is in charge!



Sincerely,
Rev. Mark Wagner
Chaplain and Pastor
St. Joseph’s Catholic Church

