

Rich Gorman

O! What a Knight!

As a teenaged Rotary International exchange student in Denmark, I sometimes sat on the hillside of a medieval castle daydreaming about what life had been like in the days when knights in shining armor galloped past on their noble steeds. But it wasn't until four decades later that I actually met a living, breathing knight. In fact, he held the official title of Grand Knight.

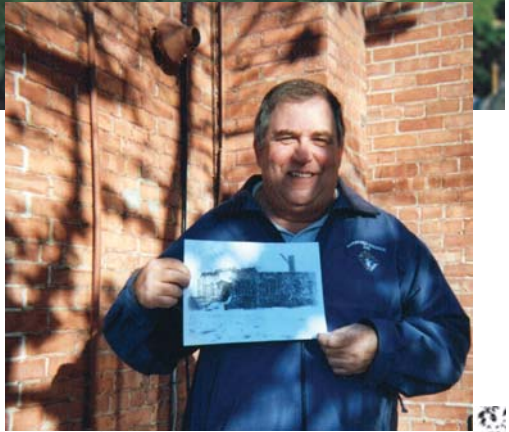
Okay so he wasn't exactly wearing a suit of armor when we first met in a local Internet café in 2008, but Rich Gorman exuded the qualities one would typically associate with a knight. In addition to being gallant (I knew chivalry was not dead when he offered to refill my coffee cup), Rich would over the next five years demonstrate he possessed a brave and honorable spirit as he performed good deeds on behalf of the Saratoga Knights of Columbus.

Although our first meeting centered on Rich's boyhood memories of a now gone landmark called the Hides-Franklin Spring and Bottling Plant (which photos show resembled a stone castle), we subsequently met to discuss other subjects linked to the local history book titled *Ballston Spa: Legacies Unlimited* that I was then in the process of researching and writing.

Typically joining us at our decidedly not round table inside of The Coffee Planet at the corner of Milton and Malta Avenues were the Rev. Christopher Mickel, Police Officer Bob Bush and Louie David, who was affectionately nicknamed the Honorary Mayor of Ballston Spa. (Robin Hood and His Merry Men had nothing on our entourage!)

There was, however, a rare occasion in 2009 when I sat down for a one-on-one with Rich. The reason for the *tete-a-tete* was that Rich had just been named Grand Knight of the 400 members strong area council of an organization that numbers 1.6-million worldwide. As Grand Knight of the Saratoga Knights of Columbus, Rich had sworn to uphold the K of C's four founding principles of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism.

This the lifelong village resident would do by word and deed, aided by a fortress-like faith foundation and a powerful sense of humor that can be downright disarming. Indeed, the newly inducted Grand Knight's blue eyes danced as he spoke passionately of the many ways the organization enriches the lives of its members and those they serve.



Past Grand Knight Rich Gorman holding a photograph of the Hides-Franklin Spring & Bottling Plant which once stood on Malta Avenue near Hyde Boulevard in Ballston Spa, NY. The enlargement at bottom shows the magnificent landmark as it looked shortly before its demolition half a century ago. At top are Ann Hauprich and Kolding Hus as they looked when she was a Rotary International exchange student in Denmark in 1971. The ancient castle has since undergone extensive restorations.



It was a story Joseph Rocha, my editor at the then newly established *Ballston Spa Life* newspaper, wanted to showcase on the front cover of a coming edition. To this end, I began to conduct interviews with others who knew the Grand Knight far better than I.

One of the first was Past Grand Knight Mark Phillips who shared that Rich had been a longtime member of the Saratoga council and was well respected as a nephew of one of our former Past Grand Knights, the late Richard E. Reynolds. In addition, I learned that Gorman's maternal grandfather, William Reynolds, and his late father, Paul, were also K of C members who served with distinction.

“Rich is a great communicator and a faithful member and usher at St Mary’s Church in Ballston Spa. We all appreciate his humor and his manner to speak concisely and accurately,” added Mr. Phillips, a K of C member since 1973. “I have seen many Grand Knights over the years; Rich has the potential to be a strong supporter and administrator of our council and our activities,” he predicted – accurately as it turned out.

Also interviewed in 2009 was Past Grand Knight Richard Grimm. He said his successor possessed "a wealth of K of C experience that makes him an exceptionally qualified Grand Knight. Rich has served in the position of Faithful Navigator and was a key factor in organizing our highly successful Fourth Degree Exemplification ceremony. He has volunteered in a multiplicity of K of C activities. We expect great things from him.”

By all accounts, Rich -- whose knighthood was inspired by a yearning to help humanity -- exceeded expectations during his year as Grand Knight when he represented all Knights from St. Mary’s in Ballston Spa, St. Peter’s and St. Clement’s in Saratoga Springs, St. Joseph’s in Greenfield Center, St. Paul’s in Rock City Falls as well as some members from Ballston Lake, Gansevoort, Glenville and Wilton.

Rich was subsequently elected to a four-year term as a District Deputy who was responsible for five councils (Council 208 in Mechanicville, Council 237 in Waterford, Council 246 in Saratoga, Council 10869 in Clifton Park and Council 6862 in Ballston Lake.

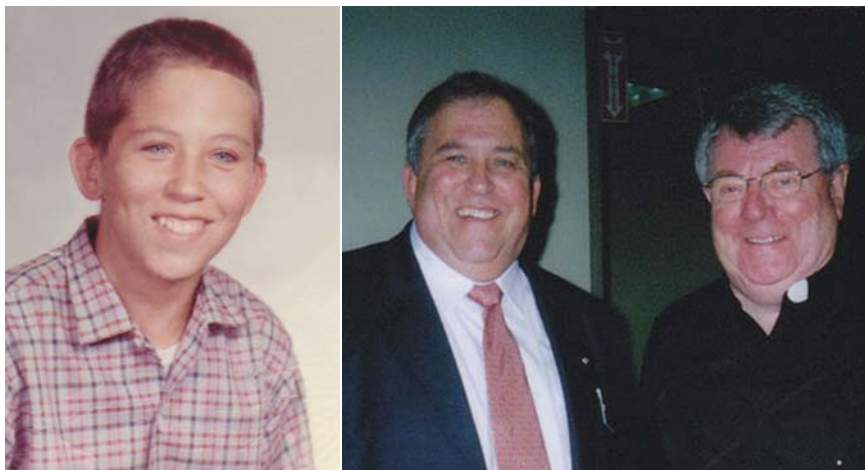
This position entailed being the liaison – or messenger – between the Councils and both the State and Supreme hierarchical structures of the K of C. Other duties included ensuring the Councils were adhering to the principles of the order and assisting should any problems arise.



I feel blessed to have had opportunities to interact with Rich Gorman in a diversity of settings since we were first introduced inside of an Internet café in 2008. These have ranged from the joyous occasion when Redemptorist missionary priest Rev. William Tracy was honored at banquets inside of the K of C Hall in Saratoga Springs to a moving ceremony when a chapel was dedicated to the memory of the late Rev. Anthony Maione at Saratoga Central Catholic High School to funeral services for close friends inside of St. Mary’s Church in Ballston Spa.

He was, without exception, always chivalrous and gallant.

O! What a Knight!



Lifelong quest to serve led to knighthood

Past Grand Knight Rich Gorman -- seen above as a lad in Ballston Spa, NY and with St. Mary's Pastor Thomas Kelly -- is proud to serve beside members of the historic organization who have adapted to the ever-changing times while remaining true to the principles that were laid down by its founder, the Rev. Michael J. McGivney. "The K of C is the largest Catholic fraternal and humanitarian organization ever created, but members are ever mindful of its humble beginnings and the vision set forth by Father McGivney," observes Rich Gorman. "I find it helpful to reflect back upon the small group of parishioners that assembled in a church basement at St. Mary's in New Haven, Connecticut in 1882 to establish an order that would unite men in their faith as well as providing for Catholic families in times of need."



Among the distinguished Saratoga Knights of Columbus members who participated in the dedication of a chapel named in memory of the late Rev. Anthony Maione that is documented on a forthcoming page were (front row, left to right) Mark Phillips, Elwin Rivenburg, Rich Gorman, Rick Schwartzbeck (wearing powder blue jacket), Don DiBiase, John Wagner and Dave Marsh (beige jacket) and (second row) Joe Mendez, Joe Scensny, Roger Lampron (purple feather), Ed Connelly, Mike Planko and John Crooks.



DEDICATION

Spa Catholic chapel memorializes chaplain

BY ANN HAUPRICH
CORRESPONDENT

A former weight training room at Saratoga Central Catholic High School is being transformed into a chapel dedicated to the weight room's best customer.

In the 1990s, Spa Catholic campus minister Rev. Anthony Maione earned the nickname "the powerlifting padre" for his weight training exercise routine. The priest died in 2006, but his legacy lives on in Rev. James Ebert, who credits Father Maione with heavily influencing his decision to enter the priesthood.

An alumnus of Spa Catholic, Father Ebert recalled the first time he met Father Maione at a parish picnic: "He was wearing shorts and a t-shirt and didn't look much like a priest to me, but over the next several years, he became my role model and my friend."

Today, Father Ebert is associate pastor at St. Mary's Church in Ballston Spa. He appreciated being asked by Spa Catholic principal L. Stephen Lombard

and development director Jean Taylor to provide input on plans for the new chapel.

Closer to home

"Although St. Peter's Church is next door, going there requires students to leave the school building. There is currently no designated place inside of the school where students may go for confession or to receive one-on-one spiritual counseling," Father Ebert explained.

Renovations on the room are beginning this month, with help from the Saratoga Knights of Columbus. Plans include new drywall and carpeting and the installation of a window in the chapel's main door so that staff and students may see what's happening inside, but may not eavesdrop on counseling or confessions.

"The ceiling will be dropped and the fluorescent lighting will be replaced by recessed lighting to create a warm and welcoming ambience," Father Ebert said. The priest's "wish list" also includes stained glass windows.

Father Ebert expressed gratitude to St. Paul's parish in Troy, which

closed, for donating pews, paneling and an altar. St.

Teresa of Avila School in Albany which merged with Holy Cross School to become All Saints Catholic Academy, offered a crucifix and statues.

In addition, Rev. Thomas Moretti, pastor of St. Joseph's Church in Broadalbin and St. Francis in Northville, is helping to secure vestments and liturgical ware for the chapel.

"It was during Father Tony's



FATHERS MAIONE AND EBERT. To donate toward the chapel, visit www.saratoga-catholic.org or call Jean Taylor at 587-7070, ext. 108.

tenure as campus minister that [Spa Catholic] was named one of the 25 most innovative Catholic high schools in the nation," reflected Father Ebert.

Lasting legacy

While that honor was an important part of Father Maione's legacy, Father Ebert believes the addition of the chapel with the eucharist — which he describes as "the heart of every Catholic school" — will strengthen Spa Catholic's campus ministry program.

"One of the things Father Tony said that helped me with my decision to become a priest was that my concerns about priests not being able to experience the joys of fatherhood were unfounded," recalled Father Ebert. "He said, 'Look at me! I've got 250 kids' — a reference to his students. These days, I tell people I have 450 kids — 217 at SCC and another 235 at St. Mary's in Ballston Spa."

Father Ebert hopes that, through the chapel in his honor, Father Maione will continue to inspire young hearts and minds.

Members of the Saratoga Knights of Columbus march to St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church en route to a service honoring the Rev. Anthony Maione in 2010. The Rev. James Ebert (seated above left with Past Grand Knight Rich Gorman) told those in attendance at the chapel dedication ceremony how Father Tony (opposite) had helped to inspire him to become a priest. Details of the event were captured in the above article Ann Hauprich wrote for *The Saratogian* in which Father Ebert described the padre at right as having been an important spiritual advisor and mentor. "One of the things Father Tony said that helped me with my decision to become a priest was that my concerns about priests not being able to experience the joys of fatherhood were unfounded," shared the then newly ordained Father Ebert. "He said: 'Look at me! I've got 250 kids — a reference to his students.'" To learn more about the late campus minister's legacy, please see guest chapter by Timothy Hauprich titled *My Highway to Heaven Journey with Father Tony*.

