

Quincentennial Ceremonies
Columbus Day 1991
Washington, D.C.



GREETINGS! We are just one year short of a global celebration of the tremendous changes that came about when three small sailing ships from Europe, with Christopher Columbus in command, found their way in 1492 across unknown seas to the New World. That was 499 years ago.

Religion and science, commerce and art, the daily lives of most human beings were all changed by that voyage of discovery. It doubled the size of the then-known world. It moved all men and women toward new frontiers of imagination, new concepts of personal freedom and dignity. It provided the inspiration — and a noble role model — for the world's largest and still-growing organization of Catholic laymen and their families, the Knights of Columbus.

When we salute Columbus, we celebrate the personal vision and courage that moved him so far ahead of those around him. We also celebrate the God-given purpose and moral duty that Columbus expressed, beneath cross and flag, in his prayerful first landing.

The faith he carried beyond all the boundaries of his time provided a spiritual foundation, in thought as well as in action, for the universal ideals of liberty, justice, self-reliance and democratic sharing with which the New World has since inspired people everywhere.

The Knights of Columbus stand firm in their belief that the Columbus lesson most valuable in our present-day search for the right course to tomorrow is the lesson of spiritual self-dedication and evangelization — offaith renewed, restated, and re-offered to people everywhere.

Sailing down the closing years of a crowded and uncertain century into an unknown future, we are all challenged to find the same belief in ourselves, through unwavering belief in God, that sustained Christopher Columbus and made him always so sure of the way he was to go and the great deeds he would accomplish.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Virgil C. Dechant". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Virgil C. Dechant
Supreme Knight
Knights of Columbus

Columbus Day 1991

Program

Master of Ceremonies

Virgil C. Dechant

Supreme Knight, Knights of Columbus

Invocation

Very Reverend William J. Byron, S.J.

President, The Catholic University of America

The Star-Spangled Banner

Alvy Powell

Welcome

James Toliver

D.C. State Deputy, Knights of Columbus

Introduction of Guests

Virgil C. Dechant

Supreme Knight, Knights of Columbus

Remarks

Frank Donatelli

Chairman, Christopher Columbus Quincentenary
Jubilee Commission

Essay Contest Winners

Zulima Espinel, District of Columbia

Brian Elieson, Maryland

Stephanie Crewe, Virginia

America the Beautiful

Alvy Powell

Columbus Day Address

William P. Barr

Acting Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice

Wreath-Laying Ceremony

God Bless America

Alvy Powell

The Columbus Memorial

Its history and its significance

ON Saturday, June 8, 1912, Washington, D.C., was overflowing with people from all parts of the country. Among them were more than 20,000 members of the Knights of Columbus and their families. The occasion was the long awaited unveiling of the monument to Christopher Columbus.

The monument is constructed of Georgia marble and is 66 feet broad, 44 feet deep, and its central pylon or shaft is some 45 feet high. This shaft is crowned with a globe which is supported by four eagles connected by garlands. From the front of this shaft a boat's prow extends into the upper basin of the fountain — for the whole memorial is a monumental fountain. The winged figurehead of this decorative prow symbolizes the spirit of discovery. The prow serves as a pedestal for the statue of Columbus, which is 15 feet in height, and carved from a single block of beautiful white marble.

“This figure,” wrote Lorado Taft, its sculptor, “wrapped in its medieval mantle, stands in quiet pose with folded arms and steady gaze, expressive of the confidence of the great spirit within.”

For the Knights of Columbus particularly, the occasion of the unveiling of the Columbus statue was a milestone. Three decades earlier, in 1882, in New Haven, Conn., Father Michael J. McGivney and





the men who joined with him to establish the Catholic fraternal society, chose the Great Navigator as their patron specifically to symbolize their claim to their rightful place in U.S. society. The name Columbus evoked the aura of Catholicity and affirmed the discovery of the New World as a Catholic event.

Today, the modest Catholic fraternal death-benefit society founded by a handful of men has grown into an organization of more than 1.5 million Catholic families in nearly 10,000 local councils in the United States, Canada, the Philippines, Mexico and several nations in Central America and the Caribbean.

Beyond that, however, members, through a tradition of service to the communities in which they live, are a vital part of society. Last year alone members of the Order united to provide \$94 million in cash contributions to a wide variety of charitable endeavors and, perhaps more importantly, in total they provided 36 million man-hours of volunteer service to charitable causes.

Under the leadership of Supreme Knight Virgil C. Dechant, the Knights of Columbus proudly asserts itself in society today by championing causes important to its members in particular

and society in general. Thus the Knights of Columbus are in the forefront of developing and implementing civic, religious and educational programs that affirm the legacy of Columbus to the Americas.

Quincentenary Cross



THE Quincentenary Cross is the focus of a nationwide religious observance of the 1992 Columbus Quincentenary sponsored jointly by the the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Knights of Columbus.

As part of this plan, the Knights of Columbus has provided funding for replicas of the Quincentenary Cross that Pope John Paul II brought to Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic, in 1984 on a pastoral visit during which he launched a decade of evangelization in the Americas.

Copies of that cross, similar to the one planted in Santo Domingo around the year 1514 in the place where the first cathedral in the Americas would later be built, were given by the pope on that occasion to each of the episcopal conferences of the Americas. The original now hangs in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, near the main altar.

In keeping with the theme of evangelization established for the Quincentenary by the U.S. bishops, the Knights of Columbus replicas of the cross are being used as the centerpiece of evangelization-oriented religious services in Catholic dioceses and parishes throughout the United States and Canada.

Participants in Wreath-Laying Ceremony

Knights of Columbus Supreme Council

Charles P. Riesbeck Jr., Supreme Secretary

William J. Van Tassell, Supreme Treasurer

U.S. Park Service

Robert G. Stanton, Regional Director

Embassy of the Bahamas

Her Excellency Margaret McDonald

Ambassador of the Bahamas in the U.S.A.

Embassy of Spain

Jorge Fuentes

Deputy Chief of Missions

Embassy of Italy

Silvio Fagilio

Chargé d'Affaires

District of Columbia Office of the Mayor

Philip Ogilvie

Public Records Administrator, Office of Public Records

Columbus Celebration Association

John C. Moore, General Chairman

Knights of Columbus

District of Columbia State Council

James Toliver, State Deputy

Maryland State Council

James Olivarri, State Deputy

Virginia State Council

James W. Dagenhart, State Deputy

The National Italian American Foundation

Anthony R. Tringale, Co-Chairman, Columbus Day Celebration

Catholic War Veterans

Nicholas Catucci, District Commander

Ledo Club

Louis J. Figliozzi, Past President

Order of the Sons of Italy in America

Paul V. Popowitz, President, Avanti Italiani Lodge

Dominic J. Spadano, President, Fiumedinisi Lodge

John Oliva, President, G.W. Lodge

Michael Catrone, Past President, International Lodge

Nina Baccanari, Past President, National Institutes of Health Lodge

Joanne Tessitore, President, Prince Georges County Lodge

Joseph DeLuca, President, Roma Lodge

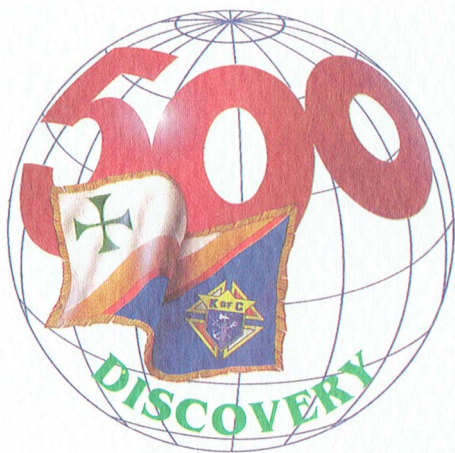
Knights of Columbus Insurance

Robert J. Canter, General Agent

*Music provided by St. John De Matba High School Band
and Wind Ensemble under the direction of John Mitchell*



© 1990 Knights of Columbus



CHRISTOPHER
COLUMBUS



QUINCENTENARY
JUBILEE

OFFICIAL QUINCENTENARY PROJECT