

THE BEACON SEPTEMBER 2025

New Beginnings



Our council stands at a meaningful crossroads. Since 1982 we have been known as Ponce de Leon, and our members have now voted to take the name Sacred Heart, uniting us more closely with the parish we serve. The change is not yet official, but the vote has passed and the path is set. At the same time, we launch *The Beacon*, a monthly newsletter created to be a guiding light for our council, keeping us connected to our works and to one another. These are true new beginnings that echo the vision of Father McGivney, calling us to live more fully in **Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism.**

The idea of new beginnings is deeply woven into our faith. We see it in the Gospel

when Christ washed the feet of His disciples and showed the world that true greatness is found in service. We experience it every time we gather at Mass and share in the Eucharist, drawing closer to God and to each other. We encounter it when we ask His forgiveness in the confessional, when we welcome a neighbor into our home, and when we extend a hand to someone in need. These everyday acts of service are the living out of Father McGivney's vision, just as much as the name we now embrace and the words we publish. With Sacred Heart as our new identity, rooted in our history as Ponce de Leon Council 8074, and with *The Beacon* as our new voice, may we shine more brightly as witnesses of Christ. May we carry His light into our parish and our community with renewed purpose as we open wide the doors of Christ!

Written by Terry Callaghan & Daniel Constance

The Month Ahead

Event	Date
Raffle Tickets	Saturday, September 13 After Mass
Raffle Tickets	Sunday, September 14 After Mass
Pancake Breakfast	Sunday, October 5 7:00am – 1:00pm

Chaplain's Corner

Dear Brothers, friends, and parishioners of Sacred Heart Church,

Greetings from your pastor, Father Jerry Kaywell. It is with great joy and gratitude that I welcome you to the Knights of Columbus inaugural newsletter, "The Beacon." We have an outstanding council of brother Knights, whose fraternity, loving kindness, and warm-hearted goodness illuminate our parish life. Their steadfast service blesses Sacred Heart and our parish family blesses them in return. The mutual gift of faith and fellowship here is a precious blessing for us all.

I am honored to continue my role as chaplain for a second full year, and I look forward to growing closer in faith and service with this remarkable group. I am grateful for the friendship and support we share, and I am excited for all that God has in store for us this year. We are especially blessed to welcome our new Grand Knight, Brian Greathouse. I anticipate a wonderful year under his leadership, filled with opportunities to serve our community, strengthen our bonds of brotherhood, and deepen our devotion to our mission.

May "The Beacon" faithfully bring light to our path, warmth to our hearts, and renewed energy to our work for the Gospel in Punta Gorda.

In God's unfailing Love,
Father Jerry Kaywell

Our History

Council 8074 was founded in 1982 through the leadership of Father David Cronin, pastor of Sacred Heart Church and the council's first Chaplain. Father Cronin, who also served as Chaplain for the Royal Order of Ponce de León Conquistadors, had a deep admiration for the Spanish explorer whose name was adopted for the council. Valentine Basinski was elected the first Grand Knight, and in the early years the Knights held meetings in their own rented spaces while building momentum for a permanent home.

In 1984, members established Valcron, a corporation formed to support that vision, named from the combination of Fr. Cronin and GK Basinski's names. Though the building never came to be, Valcron has continued to assist the council through the years. You can explore our full history through [the interactive timeline on our About page](#).

History Provided by Ronald J. Muschong

Medical Minute

In this first edition, let us be reminded that hurricane season is not over. Prioritize your physical safety. Should you have chronic medical conditions, maintain all refills active and readily available. Access proper nutrition and ensure adequate hydration by drinking plenty of water. Hurricanes and storms are stressful. Keep mentally active by reading, playing board games and learning new skills. Social connections are critical: connect with your Brother Knights, family and friends for support.

In our future editions on healthy aging, we will focus on staying healthy and active well into our 60s, 70s and beyond. Every month, we will tackle a

specific area, including heart health, muscle and bone, and nutrition, and discuss managing stress and improving our mental agility. In our next edition, we will visit respiratory diseases, as influenza season kicks off.

Written by Elvin M. Mendez, M.D.

Faith & Finance

We schedule routine wellness visits with our doctors even when nothing seems wrong. We perform preventative maintenance on our vehicles to stop small issues from becoming major and costly problems. The same applies to a financial check-up. One important step is reviewing and updating beneficiary designations on financial accounts and real property. Often this information is vague, outdated, or incomplete. Wills should also be current, valid in Florida, and updated as family dynamics or circumstances change. Careful planning now can prevent stressful and costly problems for loved ones later.

Ask me about getting your complimentary KofC Personal Planning workbook.

Written by [Alan Kotlarski](#), Field Agent

[Book an appointment!](#)

Our Newest Knights



Phil Lore

Third Degree Knight

Phil grew up in Jersey during the doo-wop era and went on to a 40-year Army career, earning three Purple Hearts, a Silver Star, and other honors across three wars. He also served as a first responder on 9/11. Phil and his wife Cathy live in North Fort Myers, enjoy visiting their grandson Kyle in Pensacola, and he looks forward to working with veterans through our Council.



Jay Hanley

Third Degree Knight

Jay was born and raised in New York City and attended college in Rochester. He and his wife Mary Ellen have been married 45 years and have two sons, Ian and Ryan, along with two grandchildren, Hadley and Hayes. With a father who was a lifelong Knight, Jay grew up around the Order and now looks forward to volunteering with CROSSROADS.



George Young
Third Degree Knight

In Memoriam



Gerald Reilly

May 13, 1936 – March 9, 2025

A devoted father, grandfather, and Army veteran, he was also a successful entrepreneur and former Grand Knight at Holy Trinity Church in PA. He loved boating, motorcycles, and vintage cars, sharing his passion with family and friends. Known for his generosity and legendary sweet tooth, he will be dearly missed.



William (Mickey) Kerwin

December 11, 1942 – June 27, 2025

A devoted husband, father, and grandfather, he served in the Army and built a long career in purchasing and sales. He enjoyed cards, golf, camping, and trips to Punta Gorda with his wife Sandy. He was a proud member of the Knights of Columbus, the American Legion, and the Elks.



Robert Byrne

February 16, 1939 – July 2, 2025



Ignazio Gino Treppiedi

March 20, 1932 – July 5, 2025

A proud Sicilian, skilled barber, and Brooklyn Union Gas retiree, he was a Fourth Degree Knight and faithful member of Sacred Heart Parish. A devoted husband, father, and grandfather, he was known for his warmth, humor, and quiet strength. His legacy of family and faith lives on in all who loved him.



Larry Bisso

November 11, 1942 – July 27, 2025

A gifted musician and Berklee graduate, he spent years touring as a performer and later shared his talents as a teacher and local TV host. After music, he built a career in the auto industry but never lost his passion for the arts. A devoted father, grandfather, and Red Sox fan, he will be remembered for his kindness and love of family.

Bryan Orr

December 6, 1946 – August 8, 2025

