

# Knights Life



[www.kofc8157.org](http://www.kofc8157.org)

Holy Spirit Catholic Church – Duncanville, Tx,

## Council #8157 Assists in Building Water Well in Nigeria

Joachim Edozie Okoli went by “Edo.” Close to graduating in law early in 2016, he was a shining light to everyone in his family and in his community, the small, southeastern Nigerian village of Umuonyiuka within the town of Ufuma.

He was born in 1991. Two years later, one of his uncles – Eugene Okoli – was ordained as a Catholic priest. Young Edo soon became keenly interested in the Church, became an altar server at his uncle’s Masses at St. John Bosco and later mentored the parish’s other servers.

The Okoli family and all of Umuonyiuka were therefore devastated when Edo contracted hepatitis and, because the disease was discovered late, died in March 2016 at the age of 25. The night before his death, his grandmother sat by his side and heard him sing, “I have decided to follow Jesus Christ. There is no going back. No going back.”

“We grieve, but we are reassured at least that at the moment of his passing that he realized it’s Jesus who is the way and the truth and the light,” Father Okoli said. “We got some consolation from that.”

Father Okoli, now just months short of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his ordination, has been Parochial Vicar at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Duncanville, Texas since July 2015. When the parish community learned of the tragedy experienced by the Okoli family back in Nigeria, it joined the grieving process.

That included Knights of Columbus Council 8157, of which Father Okoli is a member (and of Fourth Degree Assembly 2799) and has been a public advocate of KC membership.

Grand Knight Jim Richardson personally expressed the council’s condolences, and the two discussed ways the council could honor Edo’s passing.

Such circumstances often call for purchasing a plant or making a donation to a specific organization. Council 8157’s efforts in this instance went far beyond that, thanks in part to a gentleman living in England.

Godrick Okoli, an older brother of Father Okoli living in England, suggested that a fitting tribute to Edo would be construction of a water well to serve the people of Umuonyiuka. The village lacked such a basic service as clean, running water. In fact, water that the 1,000 or so villagers used in their homes was drawn from a nearby stream that Father Okoli and his siblings played in as children.

Father Okoli passed along to Richardson plans for such a substantial undertaking, to be totally absorbed financially by the family, and the Grand Knight took the news to the council early in 2017. With that, Council 8157 voted to cover all of the costs of construction plus any potential overrun. As the council went through its standard procedure of two monthly votes to approve such an expenditure, a parishioner came forward to anonymously cover half of the cost.



Construction on the project had to wait until after the area's rainy season, which runs from June into late September or early October. Work began in November. When Father Okoli traveled home for his annual post-Christmas visit, the project had already been completed.



"Water is running," he said. "Very clean water. We are so happy."



Three 1,500-gallon tanks were built on the property of the home of Edo's father, Innocent Okoli. They provide a stream of water to a common area that's accessible to the villagers. Because electricity in the local area is unreliable, the water pump is powered by solar panels.

"Everything is paid for," Father Okoli said. "We don't owe anything to anybody."

There's also signage that identifies the Edo Okoli Water Project. Mrs. Janet Okoli – Edo's grandmother and Father



Okoli's mother – is among those who are bolstered when they see the sign. The message to her is: He's still there; he's giving water to the community.

Father Okoli updated the council on the completed project during 8157's May general membership meeting at the invitation of Richardson.

"Knowing that a thousand people now have potable water, you've done a tremendous deed," the Grand Knight told the evening's gathering.

Father Okoli said in closing: "I don't have the words enough to explain myself or to say thank you. Just know it's only God who can reward you for all the goodness and endless devotion to people. My family and my community have benefitted immensely. They're overjoyed.

"You are angels they haven't seen before."



## About our Council

### Council Monthly Meetings

General Meeting every 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday 7:30pm  
Officer's & Directors every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday 7:30pm

### Postal address and meeting location

1111 W Danieldale Rd. Room 221  
Duncanville Tx, 75116 USA  
972-298-4971

### KC District 86 - Assembly 2799

The council Officers listed below were officially installed for their 2<sup>nd</sup> term in office on July 8, 2017. Their term runs through June 2018

<b>Grand Knight</b>	Jim Richardson
<b>Deputy Grand Knight</b>	Tom Greco
<b>Chancellor</b>	Jeff Miller
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	Jim Stavinoha
<b>Treasurer</b>	James Smith
<b>Warden</b>	La'Don Wright
<b>Inside Guard</b>	Sanka Jayasinghe
<b>Outside Guard</b>	Tony Gonzalez
<b>Financial Secretary</b>	Peter Perta
<b>Advocate</b>	Russell Gully
<b>Lecturer</b>	Jim Russell
<b>District Deputy</b>	Andy Goza
<b>Chaplain</b>	Fr. Joe Lee
<b>Trustees</b>	Nick Kleinhaus, 3-year Frank Salazar, 2-year Mike Fitzgerald, 1-year

### Service Program Directors

Awareness Committee	Jorge Ruiz
Football Committee	Jim Richardson
Church Activities	Jim Stavinoha
Community Activities	Dan Murphy
Council Activities	Andy Goza

Family Activities	Jeff Miller
Health Activities	Pat Stepniewski
Pro-Like Activities	Mike Moloughney
Youth Activities	Art Senato

### Knights Life Newsletter

Our Newsletter is published quarterly at the end of the following months: March, June, September, and December. The Newsletter is delivered electronically to your email address and is posted on our website. If you would like to receive a paper copy, they will be available at the general meeting.

**Newsletter Editor and Publisher** Allen Reitmeier

#### Newsletter & Website Writers

Jeff Miller, Allen Reitmeier, Jorge Ruiz

#### Newsletter and Website Photographer

Tony Gonzalez, Allen Reitmeier, Jorge Ruiz, Andy Goza

### Council Website

<b>Website address</b>	kofc8157.org
<b>Website Editor</b>	Jorge Ruiz
<b>Website Admins</b>	Jorge Ruiz

### Email Communications

Emails are sent to our members on a regular basis. Make sure you add the email address below to your contact list so our emails do not go to you junk/span folder.

**Email address:** [admin@kofc8157.org](mailto:admin@kofc8157.org)

### Membership Rosters

A full membership roster is available in paper form to all Knights in good stand at the general meeting



**Knight of the Month  
Jan 2018**

**Chris Edwards**

Anyone who is skeptical that the Lord sometimes works in strange

and mysterious ways might consider the sequence of events that happened to our Knight of the Month for January in early December. Edwards was shopping at a local WalMart a few days before Holy Spirit's annual "Breakfast with St. Nicholas." Chris ran into the Deborah Pearson, Holy Spirit's director of children's faith formation and hostess of the parish's annual "Breakfast with St. Nick." Chris volunteered his services as St. Nick if there ever was a time when our council's "go-to" St. Nick for years, Leo Mattingly, was unavailable. It just so happened earlier that Friday morning, Leo became ill while attending morning Mass and was briefly hospitalized. Deborah contacted Chris on Saturday and took him up on his offer, and he served as Holy Spirit's St. Nick much earlier than he'd anticipated and delighted children for hours in the community center gym. Chris has long been generous with his time and talent when it comes to Holy Spirit and Council 8157. He joined the council in August 2005 soon after coming through Holy Spirit's RCIA program and took his major degree a few months later. Chris quickly rose among the council ranks and was our Grand Knight for the two fraternal years 2008-10. He grew up in Oak Cliff and graduated from Mountain View College. Chris and wife Cecelia have two children, son Trevor (who joined our council in 2014 before heading off to Texas A&M-Commerce) and daughter Sophie.

1974. "The Knights of Columbus are very important to me because of the work that we do around the world and in the community," Art said. "Like the military, we're a band of brothers." And he knows the military, too, having worked with the Air Force (1952-56) and the Army (1958-77) as a helicopter and airplane mechanic. It was the Air Force that sent the native New Yorker to Carswell Air Force Base in 1955, and he has been in North Texas ever since. He retired as a sergeant E-7 and decided he liked it around here. Art has lived in Arlington since 2001 and has been a Holy Spirit parishioner (and a member of our council) since 2005. He doesn't get to as many council functions as he used to because of his health, but he remains a vibrant member who is generous in multiple ways. He has been our Warden, was a "charter member" of 8157's degree team, has long been involved in the council's youth activities and is also a Fourth Degree member. He and Maureen White (a New Jersey native) have transplanted their love of baseball to the Texas Rangers; Maureen has worked as a ticket-taker at Globe Life Park's home plate gate for years.



**Knight of the Month  
Mar 2018**

**Howard Bohlin**

Howard joined our council in May 2016 and added his major degrees the following April. He's a member of membership director Tom Greco's relatively-new admission committee. The members meet with perspective new inductees and determine whether their names should be brought forward for a vote at the next monthly council meeting. Howard has been a Holy Spirit parishioner since 1991, when he retired from the U.S. Air Force and moved to DeSoto. The Chicago native flew C-5 transports in the service and then became a commercial pilot. He and wife Elaine have been instructors for Southwest Airlines. Their sons, Christopher and Andrew, live in Fort Worth and greater Houston, respectively. Each son is the father of twins. Howard has been a parish lector for years. During this spring's Easter Vigil Mass, he was again one of the effective readers. And during Lent, Howard was a valuable contributor by overseeing the condiment area most Fridays.



**Knight of the Month  
Feb 2018**

**Art Senato**

Never doubt Art's devotion to the Knights of Columbus, which he joined in

## Annual Fish Fries

A well-attended dinner event marked the start of our 2018 Lenten Season Fish Fries this past Friday evening February 16. Once again this year our Church Activities Director **Jim Stavinoha** continues to surprise us with new menu features and his addition of the Po Boy shrimp sandwich was a welcome culinary delight. To ensure the sandwiches were as tasty as could be the shrimp were purchased with their shells on, something to which Elvis Fajardo can attest to since he had the crucial task of peeling and deveining hundreds of them. The peeled crustaceans were then dipped in a special batter and breaded before being submerged in hot vegetable oil by our own fried shrimp specialist Ray Rivera.



Also this year a new vendor was selected to provide our farm raised catfish, otherwise we continued other diner favorites such as hush puppies, French

fries, the baked potato bar and the fish taco station. Finally we're adding two Echo Dots to the big flat-screen TV as end-of-Lent raffle prizes. The Raffle will be held during the final fish fry on Friday March 23rd. The fish fries are held every Friday from 5-7:30 PM during the Lent season



## District 2018 Free Throw Competition

Council 8157 Knights conducted the District Free Throw Competition at St. Elizabeth of Hungary Catholic Church on Monday, February 12 at 6 PM. The event was led by District Deputy Andy Goza who was assisted by fellow Knights, Larry Balagna, James Smith, Tom Greco, Jeff Miller, Jim Stavinoha, Jim Russell and Jorge Ruiz. The winners will go on to compete in the Diocese Free Throw competition next Sunday at Bishop Dunne High School in Dallas.



Election of Officer will be conducted at the June general membership meeting. The Officers in nomination are:

Tom Greco  
 Jeff Miller  
 Jorge Ruiz  
 James Smith  
 Recorder  
 Warden  
 Inside Guard  
 Outside Guard  
 Trustee 1<sup>st</sup> Year  
 Trustee 2<sup>nd</sup> Year  
 Trustee 3<sup>rd</sup> Year

Grand knight  
 Deputy Grand Knight  
 Chancellor  
 Treasurer  
 Jim Russell  
 Art Senato  
 Tony Gonzalez  
 Jeff Traub  
 Jim Richardson  
 Mike Fitzgerald  
 Dan Murphy

Come and vote!!!

## Family of the Month Jan 2018



**Elvis and  
Thelma  
Fajardo**

Elvis Fajardo mentioned to wife Thelma that the parish's annual "Breakfast with St. Nicholas" would be held the following day, and she said she planned to attend along with the couple's two daughters, 14-year-old Ana-Isabel and 10-year-old Vanessa. To which Elvis reminded her that he planned to be part of the KC workforce during the breakfast. The Fajardo women did more than attend; they joined the council contingent and were valuable members of the serving line while Elvis spent the morning keeping a close watch on the bacon among other culinary duties. "Our daughters said they actually had fun," Elvis said. And Thelma, too. Elvis, likewise, "had a blast" and discovered how stressful it can be to make sure there isn't too little bacon, too much bacon and whether is too crispy or not crispy enough. (He was so focused on being the "baconator" that he forgot to attend Mass that morning.) Elvis joined the council in September, responding to an invitation from Jim Kowalski, and immediately became a regular attendee of our monthly general membership meetings and a participant at multiple 8157 activities, like the seminarian cookout only a few weeks after his induction. The Fajardos will celebrate their 17th anniversary in April. The family came to north Texas from New Orleans in 2003.

## Family of the Month Feb 2018



**Mike and  
Karen  
Moloughney**

Mike and Karen have long established a strong faith foundation at home for their four children and have also shared that as Holy Spirit youth faith formation catechists — Mike for 20 years, Karen for 15. They came here in 1997 from Jersey City, N.J., where they met while working in the mailroom of a finance company when Mike was also attending college, and were

married in 1991. In late January, Mike made another trip on the parish bus all the way to Washington, D.C. for the annual March for Life. But his devotion to pro-life efforts can also be found in the relatively short trips that he makes most Saturday mornings to the Planned Parenthood operation on West Virginia Avenue in Dallas, just across the street from Methodist Charlton Hospital, to participate in prayers and Rosaries that might literally save a life. In 2015, Mike was one of two Holy Spirit parishioners who were honored with the Bishop's Award for Service to the Church. He joined the Knights in 2005 and later became a Fourth Degree. The Moloughney's have four children (Meghan 25, Jennifer 22, Kaitlyn 18 and Sean 10) along with one grandson, Meghan's Lorenzo (8 months).

## Family of the Month Mar 2018



**Tom  
Greco  
and  
Helen  
Beggane**

Tom can tell you the date that he joined the Knights — Nov. 13, 2007 (back us up on this, Tom), and he took his major degree two months later. Tom and Helen have been parishioners since they arrived in Texas from Omaha in 1982. Their devotion to the parish is probably best explained by the following anecdote. In 1984, Tom was unemployed for two months. After hearing the doorbell one day, he discovered on the front porch an envelope of money that unidentified parishioners left. "Holy Spirit was a haven for us in a new town and part of the country," he said. "We found a family here." They soon after were invited to join the choir for the 5:30 Saturday Mass and have singing and strumming then ever since. Tom is in his second fraternal year as our Deputy Grand Knight and also serves as the Faithful Scribe of Assembly 2799. He spearheaded the creation of 8157's degree team in 2012 and was recognized as the council's Knight of the Year in 2014. Tom and Helen will celebrate their 43rd anniversary on April 19.

# Knight Hands Complete Another Project.

On the morning of Saturday January 13<sup>th</sup>, 7 Knights of Columbus met at the home of Allen Reitmeier to tackle the next Knight Hands project. We all drove from there to the home site. The project involved removing a fallen tree branch from the roof on the home of George (Mark) Dugger located at 1318 Carroll St. in Duncanville.



Those Knights who braved a temperature reading of about 27 degrees at 9:00am were: Larry Balagna, Mike Fitzgerald, Ken Raraick, Victor Zaragoza, Tony Almanza, Rod Kinard, and myself. Hector Rubio, the sponsoring Knight, was already at the home site since he practically lives across the street from Mark. The weather turned out to be just right when everyone started working. It wasn't long, in fact, before many Knights were shedding their first layer of clothing. Everyone jumped right to work with a chain saw (manned by Mike Fitzgerald and Larry Balagna) cutting the branch off the roof while a second saw (manned by Rod Kinard) was cutting another branch that had fallen away from the house roof. Hector Rubio was busy with his chain saw as well cutting down many, many smaller trees in the yard. Ken Rarick and his saw was cutting branches to a length of 4' so that we could pile the cuttings at the edge of the road. The home owner (Mark Dugger) also helped wherever he could. The rest of us dragged the cuttings to the edge of the road and made this gigantic pile of tree branches now ready for pickup by the City of Duncanville. By 11:15am or so we had the job completed to the happy satisfaction of the home owner.



It is amazing how much work can be accomplished when everyone pulls together and works as a team. There is no way Mark could have done this work and he could definitely not afford to hire a crew to do this job. Thanks to all who worked on this Saturday morning – you guys rock.

# PIP Days and Knight Hands Replace Fence

Our Council’s commitment to helping our community was evident during the City of Duncanville’s PIP Days program on Saturday May 5th, 2018. The project assigned to our Knight Hands team consisted of replacing a dilapidated six feet high wooden fence for a neighbor in need. The fence which enclosed the backyard on two sides spanned roughly about 175 linear feet, requiring 22 fence panels and several new posts. The longer side of the fence along the alley way stood on flat terrain with about a third of it sloping down on a fairly steep incline toward the back of the house. Fortunately for us the rains seized the previous evening and we had clear blue skies and sunny weather for the early Saturday morning work.



The project was deftly coordinated by our Community Activities Director, **Dan Murphy**, who started the planning for this project weeks in advance. Dan, purchased the materials and with the help of two Knights (Hector and Jorge) had them at the job site two weeks ahead of time. Dan was able to secure the help of sixteen brother Knights for the project. As a result we were able to complete the project on Saturday in about 6 hours, we were done by 2 PM. With 16 knights working that makes a total of 96 man hours.

A big shout out goes to the City of Duncanville executive staff who did a lot of the heavy lifting the

weekend before, by removing all the overgrown weeds, brush and trees along the fence line, making our job much easier. The city had also arranged to have the old fence removed by Republic Services and by mid- morning all the debris was gone.



Volunteers from the First United Methodist Church on Main St in Duncanville were present to finish cutting and removing the large tree which had fallen in the yard due to recent storms. FUMC Pastor **Frank Alegria** and his team of helpers demonstrated their skill with chainsaws and made rather quick work of the otherwise labor intensive task. We wish to thank the FUMC volunteers who made and brought us lunch and specially the “Popsicle Lady” who came to our rescue in the hottest part of the day, which really put a smile on our sweaty faces.

Our thanks to all the Knight Hands team for another job well done, the team was made up of the following brother Knights:

- Allen Reitmeier
- Dan Murphy
- David Dybala
- Mike Fitzgerald
- Jack Ramsden
- Deacon Al Evans
- Ken Rarick
- Rey Estrellas
- Josh Estrellas
- Arthur Rodriguez
- John Balasa
- Elvis Fajardo
- Jorge Barragan
- Hector Rubio
- Jorge Ruiz
- Kieth Archer

## Upcoming World Series

Most Council members are aware that the primary means by which we generate revenue for donations to the parish and the other worthy organizations is the youth sports concession stands that we operate within the city of Cedar Hill. And the time is fast approaching during which we will account for the majority of the year's concession revenue, the annual youth baseball World Series held at both the Valley Ridge and Dot Thomas locations.

This is an all-hands-on-deck effort by the Council. Play is scheduled to begin on the morning of Wednesday June 20 and run through Sunday June 24. Various number can be used to quantify our efforts. Last year, for instance Knights worked more than 100 total shift – though that number should have been slightly larger given that some brothers generously worked multiple shifts at one of the locations in one day. When those shift are factored into man hours, the number approaches 500.

We have been blessed to operate these concession stands thanks to the years of diligent service, headed first by the late Ross Musso and most recently Allen Reitmeier. That's why the Cedar Hill Baseball Association puts so much trust in our work. That's why Cedar Hill's football organization likewise asked our council to take over the Valley Ridge football stand.

Beginning this spring, our baseball and football stands are both being supervised by the concession committee consisting of church activities director Jim Stavinoha plus Andy Goza, Jim Richardson, James Smith and Greg Warr. Jeff Miller recently pitched in to help with scheduling.

As the spring regular season winds down and a handful of smaller tournaments ae scheduled in late May and early June, it isn't too early to begin thinking about the World Series and June 20-24.

Jeff will be personally getting in touch with dozens of Knights in a few weeks. When he contacts you, please extend the courtesy of a prompt reply no matter whether you can help out. And feel free to get ahead of the curve and contacting him before then if you're aware of a particular day and shift during which you can contribute. He can be reached at cell 214-794-4384 or the email address of [miller.jeff55@gmail.com](mailto:miller.jeff55@gmail.com). Be aware that scheduling of specific shifts can sometimes change at the relative last minute since they'll depend on how many teams enter play.

Thanks in advance for what promises to be another terrific World Series



## Welcome New Knights

### Mike Lewis – January 2018

“One of these days ... One of these days.” That’s what Mike thought about joining the Knights beginning with when he went through RCIA at Holy Spirit in 2012. The time finally arrived last year, after he attended an ACTS retreat and acted on the advice of our Tony Gonzalez. Mike went through exemplification in January. He and wife Teresa have been parishioners since 1984, when they moved to Midlothian from New Braunfels. They met through a mutual friend when Mike attended Jefferson High in San Antonio and have been married 42 years. After high school, he pursued an associate’s degree in welding and did that until retiring three years ago. Mike was reared as a Baptist and couldn’t believe it when he heard Catholics couldn’t go to heaven. He thought the most important thing was a person having a relationship with God. Mike and Teresa have long been active in the parish, including zoning and the Fall Festival rummage sale, and they now regularly serve as Eucharistic Ministers on Sunday evenings. They have two grown children. Michael lives in Arlington. Kristen lives in Aledo (with the Lewises’ one grandchild, Travis).

### Julian Rios – February 2018

A transfer from Council 14549 at St. Maria Goretti parish in Arlington, his first name is pronounced “HOO-lee-on.” Julian grew up in the South Texas town of Crystal City (spinach capital of the world!) and joined the Knights in 2010 in the San Antonio-area town of Helotes because he wanted to be part of an organization that did worthwhile outreach in the community. He was a private contractor but had to retire a few months ago when he was diagnosed with ALS, the result of a bite from a brown recluse spider. Julian and wife Maricela, who goes by “Sally,” have been married for 16 years. Julian has stepdaughters who are 31 and 30 and a stepson who is 22. The Rios family moved to Cedar Hill a few months ago, looking for more elbow room than what they previous had. Soon after they began attending Holy Spirit, Julian spotted Jim Kowalski wearing a KC pin and asked how he could transfer.



### Wendell Jean Pierre – April 2018

Wendell had done extensive reading related to increasing his faith life, including research on the Knights, when he was invited to join our council by Tony Gonzalez during a Holy Spirit ACTS retreat. Joining 8157 is just the latest chapter in his long and varied life.

Wendell grew up in New Orleans, graduated from St. Augustine High and soon after went into the military, in 1965. He spent three years of active duty in the Marine Corps, three more in reserve duty and returned to military service with the U.S. Coast Guard 1985-2006 before retiring.

He and wife Connie celebrated their 35th anniversary in March. They have three grown children and seven grandchildren. They left New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. They were initially put up by a nephew who lives in DeSoto and decided to make their permanent home here.

