

There are reasons that we are called “Knights of Columbus.”

When Fr. McGivney founded the fraternal organization in 1882 there existed a strong anti-Catholic sentiment in this country with existing citizens thinking new immigrants were loyal only to their country of origin and the Pope. Fr. McGivney wanted to have a mutually beneficial organization that emphasized that the “new American” immigrants and their families were very patriotic to their new country. What better why than to name the organization after that American hero, Christopher Columbus.

And, with all due respect to our good friends in other service organizations, he did not call the members Kiwanis— or Rotarians. He called them “Knights.”

A Knight was noble, courteous, brave, and pious. Despite often being called upon to perform great deeds he was expected to be humble. He gave service to others and was what we might now refer to as a “gentleman,”

A knight was often placed in a situation in which he was asked to right a wrong. However, the WAY that he resolved a situation was often more important than the result of his intervention. This quality, having **class**, was

not only admired in Knights but also when his Lady acted in a similar and admirable manner.

Let me give you an example.

My grandfather had immigrated from Italy and brought with him all the qualities both good and bad of the Italian culture. He married in the United States to another Italian immigrant and subsequently raised 7 children. In addition to being a successful physician and playwright, he was a rabid aficionado of the opera.

One day Grandma, who was of course affectionately known as Nana, was straightening up my Grandfather clothes and found tickets to an upcoming opera. Since it was fairly close to her upcoming birthday she surmised that they were a surprise outing for her. She replaced them and said nothing.

As the days came and went she realized that the tickets were not for her but — for s o m e o n e e l s e. Grandma had **class**. No histrionic explosion of emotions in the household to right the wrong. Instead, she went to the opera sales office and bought 8 tickets in front of Grandpa's two — one for each of the children and one for herself.

On the evening of the performance she and the children arrived a little early and when Grandpa was spotted coming down the aisle with his "companion" they all turned around and greeted him: "Hi Papa."

He immediately turned around with his “guest” and walked out of the theater.

The event was never openly mentioned in the family.
Grandma had class.

But everyone knew the score:

Grandma 1

Grandpa 0

Amen