

The Knights of Columbus is a fraternal organization of Catholic men formed in 1882. On December 13, 1953, the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus chartered council 3761, which consisted of men from St. Joseph Parish in Homewood and St. Anne Parish in Hazel Crest and others from the surrounding area. As 1953 was designated by the Catholic Church as a Marian Year, the members, as a tribute to Our Lady, chose the name Marian Council. Father Stephen Sullivan, pastor of St. Joseph Church, and Knight's District Deputy Harold Hilbert, were instrumental in the formation of the new council and had the foresight to place this council in the center of an area that saw tremendous growth over the next decade. Marian Council 3761 shared greatly in this growth also.

Formative meetings of the Marian Council were held in St. Joseph school and the membership elected Frank Mikes as the first Grand Knight. Frank served two terms in this position while many subsequent Grand Knights have only served for one term. Early meetings for the council were held in the Homewood Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) hall on Harwood Avenue. When the VFW hall proved too small, meetings were moved to the Homewood American Legion post on Ridge Road. By 1958, after only five years - but years that were ones of great growth for the council, plans were made to find a permanent home and members organized a building corporation under the name of the Marian Kaycees of Homewood, Inc.

Providentially, about the same time, St. Anne Parish had just completed construction of their new church and school building in the fall of 1957 and no longer needed the old frame church on the corner of 171st and Wood Streets, several blocks south and east of their new building. The building corporation, with the assistance of St. Anne's pastor Father Michael Sweeney, made arrangements to purchase this structure as a meeting space and social hall. Funds for this purchase were raised by floating a bond issue among members of the council and other generous benefactors.

The clubhouse served for many years as the center of council activities. The clubhouse was also the scene of two bad fires, one which occurred in January 1969 and the second which struck in September 1973. Each time repairs were made and the building was improved and updated. In the 1990's, the clubhouse was sold and the building is now home to a Protestant denomination.

In 1955, several members who were already members of the Fourth Degree urged eligible members to take the Patriotic Degree and 18 members responded. The Marian Fourth Degree Club was formed and arrangements were made for members who were interested to purchase capes and chapeaux with the financial assistance of the council. An Honor Guard was formed and Sir Knight William H. Stiemman was the first marshal. Since then, the Honor Guard has participated in numerous wakes, Memorial Day Masses, Confirmations and other church and religious functions.

Over the years, the Marian Council has been very active in fraternal, civic and parish affairs. Golf leagues, bowling leagues, dinners and other events have helped to hold our membership. The ladies auxiliary, the Ladies of Marian, were invaluable during

the years in assisting the council with moral, physical and many times financial support. Without their encouragement and support, the council would not have been a success.

Since it was established over 60 years ago, the Marian Council has been blessed with outstanding leaders and scores of hard working members who have devoted countless hours of time to make the council what it is today. God bless those members who have passed on and we ask God's blessing that the Marian Council may continue to serve our parishes, our communities and our Church faithfully for many years to come.