

**YOUNG MEN'S INSTITUTE
SINCE 1883**

Grand President's Program

YOUNG MEN'S
INSTITUTE



Pro Deo

Pro Patria

The YMI

Faith, Service, Country, Fraternalism

**MICHAEL DIMECH
GRAND PRESIDENT
JUNE 20, 2016**

**“Start by doing what’s necessary, then do what is possible, and suddenly you’re doing the impossible.” –
St. Francis of Assisi**

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2016-2017**

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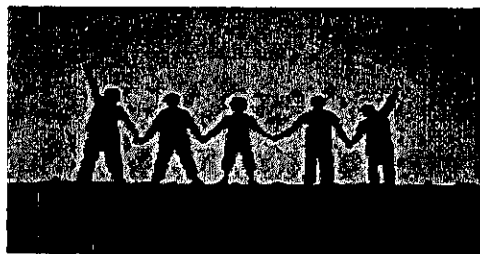
Introduction

When I joined the Young Men's Institute in November of 2006, I really did not know much about the organization. Like many individuals, I was a little bit timid when I attended my first business meeting because I only knew one member, however, by the end of the meeting I learned enough about the YMI to want to return for a second meeting. Over the next month, I researched the YMI and learned that the purpose of the organization revolved around our Catholic Faith, our Country, Community Service and Fraternalism.

Be Involved

I learned that our Catholic Faith has been the heart of the organization since the inception of the YMI dating back to 1883 and continues to play a large part in what we stand for today. Many of our Brothers are active participants in their parish organizations. Some of us have coached parish sport teams, worked bingo and festivals, been members of the Parish Council or a lector. Some of us are Eucharistic Ministers, ushers or members of the parish choir or school advisory board. As you can see we have been and are involved in our parishes and we should continue this participation.

I believe if our Brothers continue to remain involved in our parishes, the YMI will reap the benefits for many years to come. We need to continue to work with the pastors and principals of our parish churches and schools. Our parishes can always use our support. I suggest each Brother seek out the leaders of our parish and offer their help. If you do not know your pastor or school principal, introduce yourself and let them know that you are a member of the Young Men's Institute and would like to provide some assistance or volunteer at an upcoming parish event or school activity. Many of us have skills or abilities that our schools and parishes can utilize. With the cost of a Catholic education increasing yearly, I imagine that your pastor or principal will be very grateful to hear from you.



Be Connected

From personal experience, I worked on many school and parish activities for the 14 years my children attended St. Veronica Catholic School. During these years, I formed many friendships, however as I found out, once my children graduated from their grammar schools, the activities and fundraisers that brought the school parents together became less and less. For the most part, children attend different high schools and some of the friendships that have been in place for many years are lost. I recall a conversation that one of my friends had with our parish pastor several years ago. He said

that once the children of our parish school graduate there was nothing in the parish that brought the parents together again. Although this was not entirely true, in a way I can see where he was coming from.

This is where I feel the Young Men's Institute can fill a void in someone's life and help form new friendships, and as a result, the YMI will benefit as our membership base increases. Since many of our Councils work within a parish that has a school, I think our Brothers should make a connection with these schools especially with the fathers of the 7th and 8th graders. We need to get to know the fathers of these children and make them aware of the Young Men's Institute. I believe many of these fathers do not know that the YMI exists! In my case I had never heard about the YMI until many years after my children had graduated from grammar school. If your parish has a men's club, we need to schedule some time at one of their business meetings to talk about the Young Men's Institute and the value of our membership. Maybe an individual Council can provide financial support to the schools' basketball, volleyball or baseball program? We need to get the YMI name mentioned in our parish schools. The parish school is a great recruiting ground to bring in new Brothers.

Be Visible

Another goal that I feel the Young Men's Institute should continue to support and promote are the charitable works and services that we provide to our local communities. When I reviewed the Advance Proceedings from the past few years, I saw many wonderful examples of charity and community involvement by our YMI Brothers. For instance, one of our Councils gives out approximately 400 food baskets every year during the holiday season. While another Council collects canned goods and toiletry items for the homeless at their

monthly business meetings and Christmas party. There is no better example of our mission then to see our Brothers helping out a group of people or a community.

The one thing that I ask is that every Council promote their charitable work at the local and YMI level. If you perform work for your parish or community, make sure your parish bulletin mentions the good work of your YMI Council.

Be visible in your parishes and communities. We have to make it a point to get our organization recognized in the parishes and communities that we live in. I also ask that you inform the Grand Council of your Council's good work so that we can place this information on our website. If you have any pictures, send them in.



Be Counted

I know that many of us are tired of hearing about membership, but one of my objectives this year is to help increase the membership of our Councils. This is a challenge we have to

face together. We all have to be active participants in the recruiting of new members. This cannot be left up to a few members of each Council. We all share in this responsibility. We are bringing in new members every year, unfortunately due to attrition, our membership base has not increased and when you look at the numbers, our membership has decreased by 337 Brothers in the past 6 years. To remain a viable organization we have to work on increasing membership.

The YMI actually has a tool in our By-Laws that can help us achieve an increase in membership. A couple of years ago we amended our By-Laws to add Junior YMI members between the ages of 13 and 23 to the Order. To date, it is my understanding that many Councils are not utilizing this tool. I thought the passage of the By-Law change was a great idea and I encourage each Council to review this By-Law and actively reach out to prospective Junior YMI members. Remember if you add a Junior YMI member to your Council, you do not necessarily have to charge them individual dues. At Council #613 we decided to withhold charging dues to Junior YMI members until they complete their education, whether it be at the high school or college level.

Another change the Grand Council has made to help our local Councils increase membership can be seen in next years Grand Council Budget. At a Grand Director's meeting I recommended funding be set aside to help our Councils attract new members. This suggestion was approved and \$500.00 was earmarked for this purpose. This funding can be used to subsidize a reasonable cost for a membership drive. For example, if a Council wants to set up a table after Mass to promote membership and needs a couple of dozen donuts, send in your receipts and the Grand Council will reimburse you. The fund is set at \$500.00 this year and will be paid out on a first come first serve basis until it is depleted. If we find that this fund helps attract new members, I'll request an increase in the budget amount for the following year.

One last word on membership. I want to issue a challenge to all of our Brothers. **The challenge is for each Brother to sponsor one new member for their Council before the 2017 Grand Council Session in South Lake Tahoe.** If every Brother brought in one new member, we would double our membership.

Be Proud

Another area that we as a group should continue to honor is our veterans. Grand President George Terry brought this effort to the forefront during the past YMI year. I recommend that we dedicate the month of November as YMI Armed Services month. Each Council can do whatever they want to honor their own YMI veterans. They can choose to take the member out to dinner or if your Council charges a dinner fee for business meetings, maybe consider waiving this charge during November. This effort can certainly be combined with the traditional YMI November remembrance ceremonies.

Be Safe

Finally the safety of our Brothers and their families are of utmost importance to everyone. With this in mind I would recommend that every Council have a safety moment during their business meetings. These moments can be about anything surrounding safety. Getting flu shots, maintaining proper car maintenance, summer time driving, cooking for the holidays, etc. You can find all the safety moments you want on the Internet.

Thanks

At this time I would like to thank some YMI Brothers who have helped me along the way. First, I want to thank my Council #613 Brothers. I thank Br. Mike Amato for bringing me into the YMI and helping me learn the ropes. His father, Br. Cosmo Amato, has personally shared his expertise with me especially as I have chaired events. Br. Richard Pisciotta has always supported me and given me his ear when I had questions. Br. Bob Fiorito has lent me a hand on many occasions. I also want to thank Council #32 Brothers. Br. Bob Bartoli, Alan Patrick and Larry Andreatta have always been there for me. And where would I be without Business Manager and Past Grand President, Br. Tom Fourie. Additionally, I want to thank Worthy Grand Presidents George Terry, Luther Evans and Frank Hepburn for letting me learn from them over the years. Finally, I want to thank all of our YMI Brothers for your continued support and hoping that we have a great year together.

Yours for God and Country,

Michael Dimech #613
Grand President

