

England. Today, the Knights of Columbus are the largest Catholic lay fraternal organization in the world and has 1.6 million members in the United States and twelve other nations around the world. Members of the organization and their families donate over \$100 million to charities in addition to the 50 million hours of their own time that they volunteer each year.

Since May 10, 1910 in the State of Nevada, the Knights of Columbus have been committed to the highest ideals and principles of humanitarianism, and it gives me great pleasure to congratulate them on nine decades of volunteer service that has certainly enhanced and improved the quality of life for all Nevadans.

Mr. President, the members of the Knights of Columbus of Nevada, are truly deserving of recognition for their nearly century-long dedication to promoting the teachings of the Catholic Church, and for living those teachings by serving those in need in their community. I hope my colleagues will join me in offering congratulations to the Brother Knights and their families on the occasion of their 90th anniversary, and in wishing them continued success.●

HONORING VETERANS ADMINISTRATION NURSES

● Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, as we prepare to celebrate National Nurses Week during the week of May 6 through May 12, 2000, I would like to give special recognition to the dedicated nurses who serve the largest healthcare system in the world, the Veterans Health Administration. I rise today to recognize our Veterans Administration nurses for the critical care which they have provided throughout our nation's history and continue to provide today.

The first VA nurses served the needs of veterans of the Spanish-American War and World War I. In the 1930's, the VA Nursing Service was created, and employed 2,500 registered nurses. Throughout World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf War, VA nurses continued the tradition of outstanding service to our nation's veterans. The number of VA nurses has grown substantially, and today the Veterans Health Administration employs 34,000 registered nurses and 26,000 licensed practical nurses and nursing assistants, serving an average of 25 million outpatients and 1 million inpatients annually. The VA Nursing Service maintains its tradition of excellence by encouraging nurses to pursue higher education, and was a forerunner in introducing advanced employment and educational policies. These trained professionals work in a nationwide system of VA health facilities located throughout the continental United States and its territories.

I have been privileged to personally witness the hard work and dedication of Veterans Administration nurses. From 1946 until 1985, my mother served as a VA nurse at several hospitals including Aspinwall Veterans Hospital in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and Butler Veterans Hospital in Butler, PA. As Chief of Nursing for 32 years, my mother can attest to the commitment which is typical of VA nurses everywhere. During times of low funding and limited staffing, VA nurses worked harder than ever to care for the needs of their patients. While my experience on the Senate Armed Services Committee has served as affirmation of the dedication of Veterans Administration nurses, it pales in comparison to the hard work and sacrifice that I personally witnessed as the son of a VA nurse.

As we celebrate National Nurses Week, it is imperative that we remember those who have faithfully served and continue to care for our Nation's veterans.●

TRIBUTE TO REVEREND JAMES A. SCOTT

● Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to Rev. James A. Scott on the occasion of his retirement as Pastor of the Bethany Baptist Church in Newark, NJ.

For more than three decades, Rev. James A. Scott has devoted his life to building a new legacy for the Bethany Baptist Church congregation and the Newark community. Since its founding in 1871, Bethany Baptist has evolved into an international network. The church's more than 2,000 members represent 22 different countries, including many in the Caribbean and Africa. Under Reverend Scott's leadership, Bethany Baptist helped establish a daughter church in Johannesburg, South Africa, and renovated a church in Cuba. The church also provides scholarship funds for students to attend the Moscow Baptist Seminary, and it educates primary students in Kenya.

Reverend Scott is not just building bridges to the international community, he is also playing a major role in the rebirth of Newark and surrounding areas. In the Roseville Avenue neighborhood, for example, Reverend Scott's church helped build 100 affordable homes. His church also helped build a community outreach building in Newark as well as the Newark-Bethany Christian Academy Day School.

These facilities have created a sense of stability and rootedness in their respective neighborhoods. Low-income families now have new housing options and new reasons to feel proud of where they live.

Reverend Scott's commitment to Newark is unsurpassed. I hope that Bethany Baptist Church will be inspired by his example to achieve even

higher goals. I salute Reverend Scott on his retirement and wish him well.●

TRIBUTE TO GRACE WALSH

● Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to the memory of Grace Walsh of Eau Claire, WI, who passed away on Monday, April 24. I will remember Grace as a wonderful person and brilliant teacher, someone who taught me lessons in debate and in life that I have relied on so often throughout my career in public service.

Grace coached her debate team to six national championships at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, where she co-founded the Speech Department and served as both a professor and director of forensics. During the summer of 1970 when I was still in high school, I was lucky enough to study debate with Grace at the Eau Claire Debate Institute. Grace was a consummate teacher who brought out the best in her students, and a fierce competitor who built a debating dynasty in Eau Claire. With warmth, wit, and a mastery of forensics, Grace quickly won her students' respect. While small in size, Grace was commanding in stature, thanks to her keen understanding of how to coach winning debaters. "Always slip them the blade nicely," she told us.

Many years after I attended that summer debating program at Eau Claire, I saw Grace again. I gave a talk in Eau Claire after I won an upset victory in the Democratic primary in 1992, and who was in the front row but Grace Walsh, urging me again to "slip them the blade nicely, Russell." She was still coaching me, and displaying a love of debate that made her a coaching legend in Wisconsin and around the country.

Grace passed away last week at the age of 89, but her spirit lives on through all those who knew her and had the opportunity to learn from her. As her student, I am grateful for her guidance, and as a Wisconsinite, I am proud of her many achievements. Her work did honor to our state, and I think it only fitting that we pause to honor and remember her here today.●

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the President of the United States submitting a nomination which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

(The nomination received today is printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)