

# Kolping Banner

Official Publication of the Catholic Kolping Society of America | Vol. 99 - No. 2 | December 2023

## Christmas Greetings 2023



Dear Kolping Sisters and Kolping Brothers in the United States!

After a long time, we were finally able to reconvene this year in a large group for the International Convention. It was a great pleasure to meet again and to learn what has been going on in our global Kolping family in the individual countries. It was particularly touching for all of us to see that our members from Myanmar and Vasyl Savka from Ukraine were able to attend and report on their situation. They expressed their gratitude for the worldwide solidarity and that we are a real family that sticks together, especially in times of hardship. Besides the concrete emergency assistance, our daily work has not been forgotten, also thanks to your donations. This really does make us feel like Christmas, even though the date is not quite here yet. But at KOLPING INTERNATIONAL Christmas comes around more often: in reaching out to one another, in living together, in praying for one another and in standing by each other. We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all of you and wish you a merry and blessed Christmas!



Msgr. Christoph Huber

On behalf of Kolping international,

Msgr. Christoph Huber  
General Praeses

## National Endowment Fund

The National Endowment Fund received the following contributions for the months of September 15, 2023 to December 15, 2023

*Detroit Kolping Society*

*In memory of Jerry Murphy, deceased member of the Detroit Kolping Society*

*In memory of Julie Kessler, deceased member of the Detroit Kolping Society*

*Donation - William Conte Brooklyn Kolping Society*

**Kolping Society National Endowment Fund**

c/o Lisa Brinkmann

311 Greene Street | Mill Valley, CA 94941-4132

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## Kolping Banner

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### Catholic Kolping Society of America

#### Mission Statement:

We, the members of the Catholic Kolping Society of America, extend the vision of our founder, Blessed Adolph Kolping, by promoting the development of the individual and family; we foster a sense of belonging and friendship through our program of spiritual, educational, charitable and social activities.

#### Episcopal Moderator:

Bishop John M. Quinn

#### National Officers:

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Associate Praeses  
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**Chicago Kolping Family**, 5826 N. Elston Ave., Chicago, IL 60646-5544, 773-792-2190  
**Cincinnati Kolping Family**, 10235 Mill Rd., Cincinnati, OH, 45231-1924, 513-851-7951  
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**New York Kolping Family**, 165 E. 88th St., New York, NY 10128-2241, 212-369-6647  
**Philadelphia Kolping Family**, 9130 Academy Road, Philadelphia, PA, 19114, 215-606-7020  
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**Saint Louis, Missouri**, 5410 Oakvilla Manor Dr., Saint Louis, MO, 63129-3012, 314-894-2136  
**San Francisco Kolping Family**, 440 Taraval Street, San Francisco, CA, 94116-2530, 415-831-3989

For more information about the Catholic Kolping Society of America, becoming a member, or establishing a Kolping family in your parish or community, please contact the Catholic Kolping Society of America, P.O. Box 4907, Clifton, NJ, 07015-4907, Telephone: 1-877-659-7237, e-mail: PATFARKAS@optonline.net.

Please visit the Catholic Kolping Society  
of America internet website at:  
<http://www.kolping.org>.



## From the President's Desk ...

### Merry Christmas!

I always find this time of year to be an emotions-packed, reflective period when we tirelessly balance family and fun with thoughts and plans for the New Year. It's a time to express gratitude for the positive aspects of our lives and savor a few weeks filled with the warmth of Christmas tunes, classic treats, and cherished memories. Simultaneously, as the year draws to a close, we reflect on our achievements, remember those we've lost, and express appreciation for the blessings bestowed upon us. And as we embrace these memories, let's cast our gaze towards the future, contemplating ways to enhance the upcoming year for both ourselves and our loved ones.

Being a gerontologist, I tend to read a lot about aging and well-being. More and more I am reading articles about the effects of loneliness and isolation on one's health – physical, emotional and mental well-being. In a recent Wall Street Journal article, it was quoted, "Just like we need to make time in our busy lives to be physically active, we need to make time in our busy lives to be socially active." The article further underscored that maintaining an active social life not only enhances quality of life but could potentially delay the journey to an early grave.

As members of Kolping, we possess a valuable resource for cultivating these essential social connections. Our monthly meetings, diverse activities, and engaging events provide meaningful opportunities to connect with friends, forge new acquaintances, and actively participate in volunteer initiatives. On the national level, Kolping USA will once again offer a scholarship program, support a nationwide Lenten project and host its bi-annual National Convention. At the local level, our families are always looking for members to help lead interest groups, manage activities and serve on our leadership teams. There are also many members who may not be able to attend social activities, but who would enjoy a hearing the voice or seeing the friendly face of a fellow Kolping member.

Going into this next new year, I encourage members to participate when possible, invite friends to share in their activities and consider volunteering. Let's shift the mindset from viewing our efforts as "fun" to understanding that participating in Kolping parades, bingos, lunches, fests and other social activities may well be the best medicine yet for a long, good life.

I wish you all a healthy, active, happy New Year.

Lisa Brinkmann

*"Never get tired of doing little things for others.  
Sometimes those little things take up a big place in their heart!"*  
- Snoopy



# A Praeses Proclaims...

## MAY THERE BE PEACE ON EARTH AND MAY IT START WITH YOU!

By Fr. Richard Bretone

National Praeses and Praeses of the New York Kolping Society

Here we are again, another year come and gone. What a year it has been! Has it been good? That is a matter of perspective.

I remember last year writing for our National Convention Journal just after some awful school shooting took place in our nation, and now I come here to this page after the terrible atrocities in Israel. We may definitely start to wonder what has gone wrong in our society and in our world. What can make people do such things? However, we already know the answer. It is sin—the darkest and gravest of all sin—mortal for the soul of the predator, as it is mortal for the body of the victim.

One of the odd things that occurred to me when the Slaughter of the Innocence was happening in the Israeli border towns, was that it was happening on October 7th, the Feast Day of the Holy Rosary when Europe won a decisive naval battle over the Turks in 1571. They did this by dedicating the battle to Our Lady and praying The Rosary in her honor. They had less ships and poorly trained sailors, but they prevailed because the victory was blessed at the very beginning.

After the terrorists that perpetrated the massacre are driven away and the calls for peace are heeded, what kind of world will be left? My fear is that the avenging of the Slaughter of the Innocence will create a new cadre

*“ May this Christmas be the year that the world finally accepts the peace that was gifted to us by the birth of your Son. ”*

of willing “martyrs” to get even—and there will never be peace!

However, there is this one hope. Mary, our Blessed Mother, was the holiest Jewish woman ever created by God. She is the pinnacle of a long line of strong Hebrew woman who stood for the Jewish people and helped them survive and flourish. Mary was also revered by Muhammad as “the most blessed and prominent of woman (marianlibrary@udayton.edu).” Could Mary be a bridge to dialogue and healing between these bible based “Religions of The Book”.

Wouldn't it be something if this special woman that we revere especially during Advent and Christmas, became the solution to one of the greatest problems to world peace. Her qualities of faith and trust, of perseverance and prayerfulness, gentleness and mercy and, above all, acceptance and forgiveness would be exactly what is needed to stop the never-ending cycle of violence in the Middle-East!

As we gather with our families this Christmas—both at home and in at our Kolping Houses—let us ask our Lady to intercede for our world as she did for the navy 452 years ago. However, this time the victory will be permanent! Peace will finally reign, and what her Son sought to give to this world—His peace, forgiveness and love—will finally be established in the cradle of the world's great western religions. This is historic!

Dear Mother Mary, go to your Son Jesus, and as you interceded for the wedding couple at Cana, ask Him to hasten to our aid! May this Christmas be the year that the world finally accepts the peace that was gifted to us by the birth of your Son. May we, as Kolping Members, sing joyfully the Carols of Christmas doing our part to pray and participate in the bringing of peace to our needy earth!

Treu Kolping!  
Fr. Richard J. Bretone



# Brooklyn Kolping Family Reporting

After a quiet summer at our Kolping Center, our first fall activity was the Kolping Family Mass and Communion Supper on September 23.

It was a very (VERY) wet September in the New York City area! While it was another rainy Saturday afternoon the day of our Mass, it was not torrential and everyone we expected made it to the Kolping Center. There were more than 45 members and friends for the dinner (adults and children), and several more people who could not stay for dinner participated in the Mass.

We are very grateful to Father Jomi Antony who celebrated the liturgy for us. Our friend, Father Johny Thomas, was our original celebrant but his schedule was changed over the summer. He introduced us to Father Jomi, who was visiting our area this summer from his normal



*Above: Jeff Blatz was our lector.*



*Above: Father Jomi celebrated our Mass.*



*Above: Father Jomi blessing our latest Kolping baby, Sebastian Rodriguez, and his parents Jon and Evelyn.*

Many thanks to Chris Gerage for preparing the bratwurst and kraut and organized the kitchen and serving. We are very lucky to have Chris, who is a professional chef. We appreciated everyone who helped with the food, raffle and clean-up, including: Barbara Augstein, Pat Gerage, Alice Kokasch, Gary & Valerie Meyer, Jessica Meyer, Diane Wenzler, and Scott Stahl. We can't forget to mention our Junior Members who also pitched in: Phoenix Josten, Gio Stahl, Jayden Stahl, Sonada, and Zoey Josten.

Thank you to those who attended and helped make this a successful event.

-Bill Conte

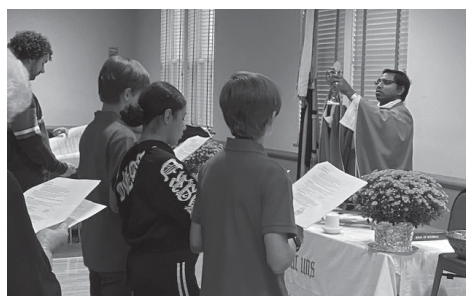


*Above: Lingering after Dinner.*



assignment in Ghana. Father Jomi did a wonderful job and we were delighted to welcome him.

Jeff Blatz was our lector, and a three of our 'junior members' acted as ushers. We don't have live musical accompaniment, but we found recordings of the hymns and sang along. We passed the collection basket during the offertory; all of the proceeds went to nearby Blessed Sacrament parish's food pantry.



After Communion Father Jomi asked to meet our newest Kolping member, four-month-old Sebastian Rodriguez. Father Jomi blessed the little guy, along with proud new parents, Evelyn and Jon Rodriguez.

During the Mass we recalled our departed members and friends, and afterwards we signed about a dozen cards, sending greetings to both homebound members and several who have moved out of our local area.

# 2024 Kolping National Convention

**Mark your calendar for the  
2024 Kolping National Convention!  
St. Charles, Missouri  
Friday, September 6 - Sunday September 8, 2024**

The next Kolping convention will be held in St. Charles, Missouri, a city right next to St. Louis, the site of the first Kolping Society in the US. Since no individual Kolping family was able to host the convention, our national organization stepped in, with volunteers from many of our families across the U.S. working to make this a fun event. We hope you will be able to join us and help keep the values of Blessed Father Kolping alive through this next century. Look for the registration notices in the next Banner!

## Jr. Meet-Up Update

Applicants from our last three scholarship programs were invited to take part in our first-ever virtual Jr. Meet-Up via Zoom. While there were fewer participants than hoped, committee members, Monika Weiss, Lucille Colletti and Lisa Brinkmann, appreciated the time taken, insight provided and ideas shared. A few “lessons learned” from this experience were:

- Most college students want to focus on their studies, networking and careers and, while interested in Kolping, cannot dedicate time at this point in their lives;
- «Students could benefit from a mentor program, matching students with Kolping professionals working in their field of study;
- High school students should be offered opportunities to earn community credits through volunteering at our events and/or working on projects;
- Start younger, in middle and high school, to interest and engage younger people.

All in all, it was a valuable use of our time and perhaps, a topic for discussion at our next convention.

**Please Remember To Pray For All Our  
Dear Departed Members Who Have  
Gone To Their Eternal Rest**

DETROIT  
*Julie Kessler  
Jerry Murphy*

# International Convention

by Lisa Brinkmann

Ted Wilke, Kolping USA’s International Representative, and I were able to represent Kolping USA at the XXXIV (34th) International Kolping Convention in Cologne (Bensburg), Germany. Over 153 delegates representing 43 countries spent three days, discussing projects, sharing ideas and learning how Father Kolping’s values resonate throughout the world. We met representatives from Europe, Asia, Africa and South America. Kolping members came from Myramar to Uganda, from Chile to Romania. Some of the most interesting revelations included hearing that the second largest National Kolping family was in India, with over 40,000 members and countries like Tanzania supported over 15,000 members.

In addition to the meetings and workshops, we enjoyed a bus trip to Kerpen, the birthplace of Father Kolping, and toured the museum where he once lived. The local Kolping family treated us to coffee and cake, before we boarded the bus to Cologne for Mass at the Minorite Church, where Blessed Father Kolping was entombed.

On the third day, we met up with Kolping families from around Germany where over 400 participants listened to presentations on individual projects, including micro lending in Chile, water preservation in Africa and sustainability endeavors in Germany.

Our final morning included a discussion on the synodal church and closing of the convention. For more information on Kolping International and the International Convention, visit: <https://www.kolping.net/en> and scroll down under “Kolping News.”





*Wishing you a joyous Christmas  
and a New Year Full of blessings!*

For God so loved the world that he gave his  
one and only son, that whoever believes in  
him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

John 3:16

**Best wishes from The  
Brooklyn Kolping Family**



# *Holiday Greetings*

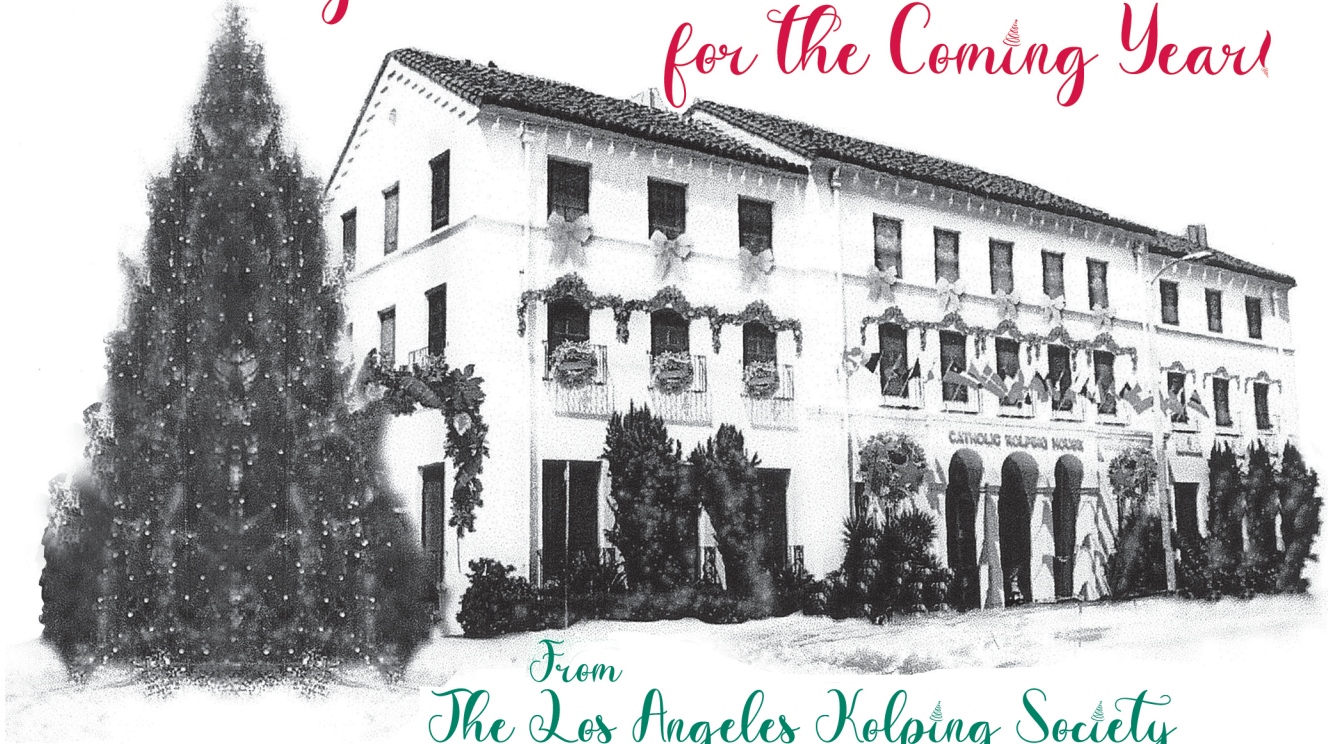
*from the Kolping Family  
in  
Rochester N.Y.*



*A Joyous Christmas to you.  
The Editor and Staff of the Kolping Banner*

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*Merry Christmas & Best Wishes  
for the Coming Year!*



*From  
The Los Angeles Kolping Society*

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*Merry Christmas*



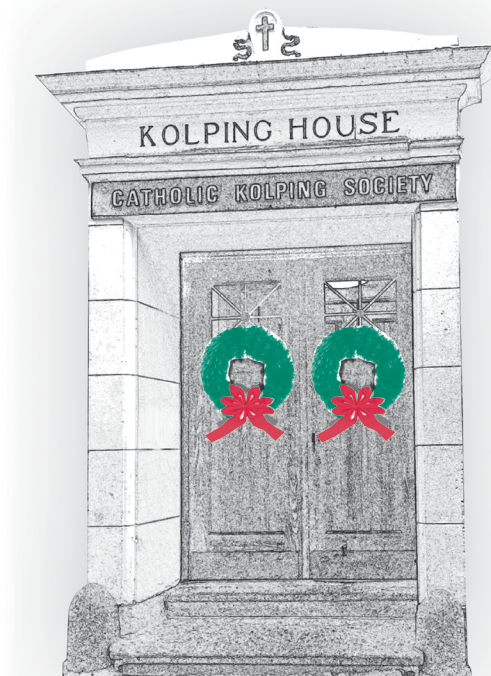
**FROM THE  
KOLPING KICKS  
SOCCER CLUB  
OF  
ST. LOUIS MO**





*from the*  
**St. Louis**  
**Kolping**  
**Family**

*During this holiday season  
and the coming year, may  
you find peace in God's love,  
and comfort knowing your  
Kolping family is always with you.*



**CATHOLIC KOLPING SOCIETY OF NEW YORK**

PRAESES: **REV. RICHARD J. BRETONE** | PRESIDENT: **GERHARD SCHMITT** | VICE PRESIDENT: **KATRINA DENGLER**  
KOLPING HOUSE—88TH STREET • KOLPING-ON-HUDSON • KOLPING-ON-CONCOURSE





*May Baby Jesus bless  
Our Kolping Brothers and Sisters  
on His Birthday  
and all through the New Year*

*The Chicago  
Kolping Family*



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**Wishing you and your families  
a Merry Christmas and Blessed New Year**



**From all of us at  
the San Francisco Kolping Society**

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*May this season find you among those you love, sharing in the twin glories of generosity and gratitude. —Oprah Winfrey*



FROM WILLIAM CONTE

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*May the peace of  
Christ Jesus  
fill your hearts this  
Christmas  
and bring happiness  
to you in 2024*

*from the  
Cincinnati Kolping Family*





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**BEST WISHES FOR  
A JOYFUL CHRISTMAS  
AND  
HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

*Catholic Kolping Society of Philadelphia*  
*9130 Academy Road, Philadelphia, PA 19114*

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To All Our  
**KOLPING BROTHER AND SISTERS**

**A MERRY CHRISTMAS**

and a

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

from the

**DETROIT KOLPING FAMILY**





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## International Kolping



### **Spirit of optimism in Sri Lanka**

The delegates from three dioceses in Sri Lanka had a tight work programme when they met a fortnight ago at the Jesuit Fatima Centre in Kandy. They adopted an amended constitution of KOLPING Sri Lanka and elected a new Board of Directors and Finance Committee for the association, which has about 700 members.



### **Kenya: Project visit in a drought region**

Desk officer Laura Plosinjak visited Kolping Kenya in September. She had a chance to visit various local projects and to talk to Kolping Families. "Water means life", she was told again and again. After all, the effects of climate change are omnipresent in Kenya as well, making life difficult for its people.



### **Kolping Lithuania celebrates its 30th anniversary**

General Praeses Msgr. Christoph Huber and representatives of the diocesan board of Kolping Trier were present at the festivities of the Eastern European association to honor 30 proud years of partnership. Partners from KOLPING Switzerland and the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation as well as numerous other guests from the church and the association attended to celebrate with the Baltic Kolping brothers and sisters.