(A sermon from a Traditional Latin Mass on April 15, 2018 in honor of Blessed Karl of Austria)

Welcome to today's Traditional Latin Mass in which we honor Blessed Karl of Austria, who is a candidate for sainthood. Emperor Karl (also known as Charles) died at the age of 34 on April 1, 1922. This month marks the 96th Anniversary of his death. He was beatified in 2004.

We welcome all those from 'The Emperor Karl League of Prayer' who are with us here today. The Emperor Karl League of Prayer promotes the canonization of Blessed Karl of the House of Austria, who reigned as Emperor and King in Austria-Hungary from 1916-1918.

I would like to thank the Knights of Columbus Woodlawn Council 2161 Traditional Latin Mass Guild, for organizing and hosting these 3rd Sunday of the month 12 noon Traditional Latin Masses at Saint Titus Church in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania.

And with that, I will begin my sermon…

In Nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.

Today is the Second Sunday after Easter, traditionally known as "Good Shepherd Sunday." In our Gospel reading, Our Lord and God Jesus Christ said to the Pharisees: "I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd giveth His life for His sheep." (John 10:11)

Blessed Emperor Karl of Austria was first and foremost a Catholic. As a Catholic, Karl knew, as should all Catholics, that we should live our lives in imitation of Christ. In addition, we as followers of Christ and as members of the flock that Our Lord shepherds should be attentive to the voice of the Good Shepherd, as was Emperor Karl. Our Lord Jesus Christ speaks to us through the twin pillars of our Catholic Faith: Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition.

Today we are worshipping Almighty God at the same Traditional Latin Mass that Blessed Karl attended. This Holy Sacrifice of the Mass comes to us through Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. The Immemorial Latin Mass historically united members of the flock of Christ together, including Catholic kings and their subjects.

Born in 1887, young Karl loved praying at daily Mass with his mother. He was married in 1911 to Princess Zita, another devout Catholic, at a Mass conducted by a papal legate of Saint Pope Pius X. As parents, Karl and Zita would see to it that their children were taught their prayers and catechism as soon as they could understand. As monarchs, Karl and Zita

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were anointed and crowned in 1916 by the Hungarian Cardinal Primate with the duty to uphold the Hungarian constitution and the welfare of the Roman Catholic Church.

In those days, there were no such concepts as 'separation of Church and state' or 'religious liberty' in the Church. Such secular/Masonic concepts are not traditional teachings of the Catholic Church. The Church had officially taught the 'Social Kingship of Christ' in which all peoples and all governments were Divinely called to follow the teachings of Christ and His One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

The Emperor Karl took his duties as a Catholic, a husband, a father, and a King as a Divine commission to live as a 'good shepherd' to all those entrusted to his care. He would refer lovingly to the flock that he ruled as "my people." When Blessed Karl became Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, he sought to follow and imitate Christ as a good shepherd by loving his people to the extent of caring for their temporal and spiritual well-beings.

This duty to follow Christ, the Ultimate Good Shepherd, and to imitate Our Lord as a good shepherd towards those entrusted to one's care does not just apply to Kings and Queens, but to all of us according to our vocations. Priests, husbands, wives, mothers, fathers, adults and children, each according to their responsibilities and abilities are called upon to imitate Christ as a good shepherd, caring for the temporal and spiritual needs of others.

During World War I, despite his efforts to make peace between the warring nations, in union with Pope Benedict XV, Emperor Karl was unable to counter the revolutionary forces that sought, among other objectives, the end of Catholic monarchies. At the end of World War I, as the revolution spread, Emperor Karl was asked to abdicate. Karl resolutely refused stating: "My crown is a sacred trust given to me by God. I can never forsake that trust or my people."

Eventually, Emperor Karl was taken prisoner and sent into exile on the island of Madeira, with his pregnant wife and seven children, where he soon became fatally ill. On his deathbed, Karl called his eldest child, Crown Prince Otto, to his side saying: "I want him to see how a Catholic and an Emperor dies."

Jesus said: "I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for His sheep." Blessed Karl laid down his life for his people of Austria-Hungary. The voice of an earthly good shepherd concerned for his sheep for which he would lay down his life, are expressed among the last words of Emperor Karl, as he said: "I must suffer like this so that my peoples can come together again."

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Through the intercession and holy example of Blessed Emperor Karl of Austria, may each of us follow Jesus the Good Shepherd in our lives in order for us to better serve – to the point of death – the needs of those entrusted to our care.

In Nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.

NOTE: See the Knights of Columbus Woodlawn Council 2161 Traditional Latin Mass Guild report on the Blessed Karl of Austria Mass, Luncheon & Conference 2018 at: https://knightsofcolumbuslatinmass.blogspot.com/

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