



Brother Knights,

As the holiday season approaches, memories of my family flood my thoughts. Each year around this time, my parents Paul and Jan Hostert would start the Region 4 Christmas program. Many of you know that I had a sister, Lori, with special needs. She attended Region 4 Services and lived in a group home in O'Neill. The first Christmas she was there, my parents bought every resident a jar of candy decorated as a Santa Clause. The staff told my parents how much they loved the gift and how many of them did not have any gifts for Christmas because they had no family. This was so hard for my family to hear so the following year my mom requested a list from each resident of what they would like for Christmas. With no idea how we would pay for such an extensive list, we prayed that it would work. The list we received taught us the true meaning of Christmas. The wants included soap, Kleenex, a book, socks, maybe a shirt. The requests were simple, and heart felt. Our extended family heard of our gift giving and also wanted to be involved. Word spread to family, to our local Knights council, our town residents, and soon to towns across northern Nebraska. We were so blessed with donations and gifts that we would stay up all hours of the night wrapping, sorting, and labeling present after present. The excitement of watching them open the gifts taught us all the true meaning of giving. For years and years, my family continued to provide gifts for this special group of people.

So, with these memories fresh in my mind, I started "Project Lori" last year. For the first project I chose Villa Marie Home and School. The Marian Sisters and Villa Marie staff provide 24-hour care for children with special needs. When I asked Sister what the children may need, the responses were similar to what my parents heard all those years ago. The requests are simple...hair bows, football cards, maybe a book. Sister also said they could use new sheets for their beds. Simple requests that I believed the Knights could fulfill. The Knights and councils across the state were so generous!! Everyone was so generous that I would love to expand "Project Lori" to all three dioceses of Nebraska. We will again provide gifts to Villa Marie. We will expand to additional places in the diocese of Grand Island and the archdiocese of Omaha providing enough donations are received.

I am asking again to all Knights and Councils and families across Nebraska to express the true meaning of giving this Christmas. Please take a moment and consider a gift of money to "Project Lori." All monetary donations will be used to purchase gifts for children. We will work on Project Lori during the Mid-Year Ladies Program on December 10 in Nebraska City so we would like to receive all donations by December 1.

If you can assist us in the effort of bringing a smile to a child's face, please send your monetary donation payable to Nebraska Knights of Columbus to:

Nebraska Knights of Columbus  
C/O Connie Richardson  
2621 SW 19<sup>th</sup> Street  
Lincoln, NE 68522

Your donation will make a difference in the life of a child. Thank you for all your support and may God Bless you and your families.

Connie Richardson

Wife of State Deputy Richardson

Father Justin Fulton

State Chaplain