



Massillon Council 554



Knights of Columbus

June, 2020

To all our Members: Massillon Knights Foundation Complex is re-opening for business in June.

The Activities and Dates of Reopening are as follows:

1. **Weekly Hot Lunch**, reopening Wednesday June 3, with take-out meals distributed under the canopy at our front door, from 10:45 a.m. to 12 Noon.
2. **All Council Meetings**: starting Tuesday, June 9, per regular schedule.
3. **K-Club Bar**, Wednesday, June 10, with normal hours.
4. **K-Club Dining**, Wednesday, June 10, with normal hours and regular days & menus. (Wednesdays – Wings, Fridays – Fish Fry, etc) And picking up take-out orders
** PLEASE NOTE: Fish Fry Meals available for takeout at front door on June 5
Hours 4 – 7 PM Call 330-837-9101 to order meals for takeout **
5. **BINGO**. Cancelled until further notice.
6. **Bishop Massillon Assembly Meetings**: beginning July 7, per regular schedule.
7. **Columbian Ladies Meetings**; beginning June 10, per regular schedule

All regularly activities will take place WITH SOCIAL DISTANCING measures. We highly recommend the wearing of masks, especially in our clubroom when moving around. Hand sanitizers will also be available. Please bear with us as we implement our safety measures during this COVID-19 pandemic.

Grand Knight's Report, by Robert Pittinger, Grand Knight

Unfortunately, with the Coronavirus still with us it is so important that we stay safe and abide by the restrictions set forth by our Governor. We will have to adjust to a new normal.

Paul Haig - PGK, and I attended the virtual State Convention on May 16th.

We held the first nominations of officers on May 12, 2020. The election of Officers will take place on June 9, 2020 at 7:00 pm at the Regular Council Meeting. See list on page 4. This meeting will be held at the K of C. All members are welcome to attend, please let us know if you plan to attend so we can set up following the guidelines.

The installation of Officers (District wide) will be held on July 21, 2020 at the K of C.

The Cash Bonanza drawing will take place during the District Deputies' Meeting on Saturday, June 27, 2020 at the Columbus Airport Marriott Hotel. We will post the winners in the July newsletter.

As you know this will be my last report as Grand Knight as my term will end on June 30, 2020. These past two years have taught me a lot on how the Knights of Columbus truly show the Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity. I have a lot of people to thank for my term in office. I especially would like to thank Msgr. James Kolp for all his help and his support to the Knights of Columbus and our council. I also want to thank Ken McLaughlin for his dedication and professionalism in conducting the council programs. As you know Ken McLaughlin will be our next Grand Knight and I cannot think of a better person to hold this position. Next, I would like to thank Tim Paul for all the time and effort he has put in as our Financial Secretary, thank you Tim for your support. Another person who was valuable to helping me along the way was Ken Girt who manages the newsletter and is membership chairman. He has also graciously accepted the position of Deputy Grand Knight. A big thank you to all my officers who contributed so much time and effort to our council. Please come and attend a meeting and support Ken McLaughlin and all the new officers.

Chaplain’s Report, by Msgr. James Kolp, Chaplain

We have received some great news about our founder Father Michael McGivney. On May 27, 2020 the Vatican reported that Pope Francis has approved a miracle attributed to the intercession of Father McGivney. The miracle involved an unborn child in the United States who was healed in utero (in the womb) of a life-threatening condition. This happened in the year 2015. The family of the unborn child had been praying for a miracle through the intercession of our founder Father McGivney. A date will be set soon for the Beatification Mass. It will take place in Connecticut. This event should bring great joy to every one of us. Once Father McGivney is beatified his title will be Blessed Michael McGivney. The next possible step will be declaring him as a saint. This would require one more authenticated miracle. He would then be considered for canonization.

It is good to recall that at this time we have six Mexican members of our Order who have been canonized. They were martyred in Mexico during the Cristero War of 1926-29 and its aftermath.

Let us thank God for this honor. Let us strive to imitate Father McGivney in every possible way.

From the Editor.....Ken Girt, PSD, PGK, Newsletter Editor

Our “printed” newsletter format includes the first four pages of our multi-page electronic newsletter. This four-page document will be mailed to those who requested it. There will be copies of the four-page newsletter in the clubroom. We have also included instructions on taking the new “on-line” 3rd Degree Exemplification on page 5, the list of Council 554 Officers and Trustees that will be elected this June on page 4, our Insurance Agent’s report on page 7, and Supreme Council’s Prayer for Protection during this pandemic on page 8, articles about our founder, Fr. Michael McGivney on page 9 and 10. We encourage you to read the complete electronic newsletter on our website....

<http://www.massillonkofc554.org>.

What’s Happening in...

.....June, 2020

- 2 7:00 PM 4th Degree Meeting on Zoom PFN Dinner postponed until August, replacing picnic.
- 9 7:00 PM Reg. Council Meeting; Election of Officers
- 14 **Flag Day**
- 16 7:00 PM Officers & Trustees Budget Meeting
- 21 **Father’s Day**
- 23 6:30 PM Officer and Trustee Meeting
- 25 7:00 PM Stark County Chapter Meeting

..... July, 2020

- 4 **Independence Day**
- 7 7:00 PM 4th Degree Meeting
- 14 7:00 PM Reg. Council Meeting, 1st Budget reading & MKF Report
- 18 1:00 PM Youngstown Diocese - OSC Tour Meeting
- 21 7:00 PM Installation of Officers (District-wide)
- 22 1:00 PM Bloodmobile
- 28 6:00 PM Program Director’s Meeting
- 6:30 PM Officers and Trustees Meeting
- 7:30 PM Council Social Night

Bingo: Every Monday Night **Hot Lunch:** Every Wednesday **Massillon Knights Foundation Mtg:** 3rd Tues of month 6pm
Massillon Squires Circle Meeting: 1st and 3rd Wednesday, 7pm at St Joseph School



Fraternal Report, by Ken Girt PGK

On Our Sick List: Gerald Meyer, Bill Ringley, Ron Blogna, Bill Hamit, Jim Kracker, Richard Rootes, John Scheetz, Walt Featheringham, Paul Renier, Terry Phillips & Chuck Meyer. If you want your name added to our sick list, or if you know of a member who should be added, please send me an email at girtken@sssnet.com or call 330-837-6670.

Family of the Month and Knight of the Month for May

Congratulations to **Bob and Barb Pittinger** for being selected as our Family of the Month for May. Bob is completing two years as grand knight. We also congratulate **Tim Paul** for being selected Knight of the Month for May. Tim is finishing five years as our financial secretary, being replaced by Paul Haig.

Super Cash Bonanza – Charity Raffle

Please help us receive the needed the ticket revenue for our council’s charity donations. **Please buy or sell the tickets and return the stubs to the council in the envelop provided, by our FINAL Turn-in date on June 21.** Please Note: the drawing will be held on Saturday, June 27, during the District Deputy Meeting in Columbus. Thanks.

Columbian Ladies Guild, by Karen Franz

Columbian Ladies, our roles as “prayer warriors” continue in this time of need”. Our prayers are for our family, friends and our country.

We hope that all of you are well and safe and looking forward to being able to be outside and finally to see our family and friends, but being safe. In this time of staying in we hope that you have been thinking of ways that you can help the Columbian Ladies and the Knights of Columbus .Do you have time to volunteer for bingo , working bingo , baking something for bingo lunch, holding office in the organization?

Don't forget to use the walking path, spend some time reflecting with Mary (on the KC grounds), supporting Friday take outs at the club and look forward to being able to be together again.

We will not be meeting over the summer so we will see all of you in September if it is safe to meet.



Friday Fish Fry's

Every Friday 4:00 to 8:00 PM In our Clubroom
Starting June 12.

With weekly specials. Take-Out meals available.

The Massillon Knights Foundation

Foundation Trustees 2019-2020: **One-Year:** Bill Shane (Vice President), Jeff Heitger (Secretary), Jim Sieber **Two Year:** James Brelish (Treasurer), Paul Lambert (President), (Open). **Three-Year:** (Open), Bob Catazaro, Terry Phillips.

Foundation Report, By Paul Lambert, President

I hope everyone is healthy and being very careful. Everyone needs to be patience and help each other during this time. These are very trying times and God has been listening to our prayers and hopefully things will get better. He gives us choices to make so please wear your masks and practice social distancing that way we all can get thru this.

We have decided to try opening the building on Wednesday, June 3. Club room, meeting rooms and for any events that we have scheduled. We cannot have Bingo as of yet. Hopefully in the near future. The pavilion will be opened in June so book your party now.

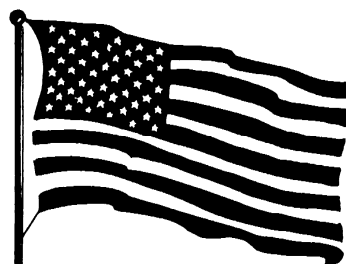
If you have any questions, please call the office. We stay in close contact with the Massillon Health Department who has been a great help to us.

I would like to thank all the volunteers who work on Thursday and Fridays for the To Go Boxes. We really appreciate all that you do. It really helped with the bills since we lost many of our events in March and April.

Also, I would like to thank everyone who has made a donation to the Foundation. I cannot tell you how grateful I am for the generous donation which has kept our doors open.

We will be starting up the Hot Lunch Program but only giving out To Go Boxes. You can come to the front doors and they will hand them to you. The time is the same 10:45 to 12:00. If you know of anyone that needs help with food, please let them know we have the lunches. They are prepared that morning.

Flag Day
June 14



Bishop Massillon Assembly Fourth Degree

Faithful Friar	Fr. Raymond Paul 833-2607	Faithful Navigator	Matthew Meyer, 284-9365
Faithful Purser	Edward Shuman 854-3691	Faithful Inner Sentinel	Charles Meyer 833-0593
Faithful Captain	Roger Piper 936-0974	Faithful Outer Sentinel	Jim Coughlin, PFN
Faithful Admiral	Paul Haig, PFN 837-1185	Faithful 1-year Trustee	James Sieber, PFN 478-2363
Faithful Comptroller	Dan Flanagan 966-4937	Faithful 2-year Trustee	Frank Csipke, PFN 833-6176
Faithful Pilot	Leonard Hughes 834-5586	Faithful 3-year Trustee	Fred Russell, PFN 832-5420
Faithful Scribe	Mike Huryn	Commander	James Sieber, PFN 478-2363

Faithful Navigator Report, *By Matt Meyer, Faithful Navigator*

Our June 2 meeting will be another Zoom meeting. The hall is opening back up on June 10 so we will resume normal meetings on July 7th.

The June 2 meeting will also be our elections of Officers for next fraternal for our assembly. As of now, the list of nominated officers is as follow.....

<i>Faithful Friar</i>	<i>Fr. Raymond Paul 833-2607</i>	<i>Faithful Navigator</i>	<i>Roger Piper 936-0974</i>
<i>Faithful Purser</i>	<i>Edward Shuman 854-3691</i>	<i>Faithful Inner Sentinel</i>	<i>Charles Meyer 833-0593</i>
<i>Faithful Captain</i>	<i>Bob Pittinger 571-5150</i>	<i>Faithful Outer Sentinel</i>	<i>Jim Coughlin, PFN</i>
<i>Faithful Admiral</i>	<i>Matthew Meyer, 284-9365</i>	<i>Faithful 1-year Trustee</i>	<i>Frank Csipke, PFN 833-6176</i>
<i>Faithful Comptroller</i>	<i>Dan Flanagan 966-4937</i>	<i>Faithful 2-year Trustee</i>	<i>Fred Russell, PFN 832-5420</i>
<i>Faithful Pilot</i>	<i>Leonard Hughes 834-5586</i>	<i>Faithful 3-year Trustee</i>	<i>Paul Haig, PFN 837-1185</i>
<i>Faithful Scribe</i>	<i>Mike Huryn</i>		

We will also open nomination for any positions and then vote, either by voice vote over Zoom or by email to me.

The Past Faithful Navigator dinner has been rescheduled for August and it will replace the picnic. We will have it in the hall like a normal Ladies Night.

July will be the start of the new fraternal year and with it a new Faithful Navigator. My time as Faithful Navigator has been enjoyable and rewarding. I want to thank all my officers who helped make it as smooth as possible. Our new Faithful Navigator is Roger Piper. He is married to Anita and they have two children. They attend St. Michael's Parish. Roger has been an integral part of the 4th degree ever since joining. I know he will do well and look forward to his leadership.

We will also be getting a new Master this fall. Bill Howe has been our current Master and it was great working with him and his wife. We will work with the new Master to schedule an installation of officers. Officers, please plan on attending this when we schedule it.

There will be no Christmas Ball this year. We plan on expanding the Tom & Jerry night at our December meeting. This of course is still pending on where we are at with the social distancing order and when the corona virus gets under control. Stay safe and I look forward to seeing everyone again in person.

Nominations for Officers for Council 554 2020-2021 Fraternal Year

Chaplain *	Msgr. James Kolp	330-871-8346	1 st Year Trustee	Gary Lamielle, PGK	330-327-7223
Grand Knight	Ken McLaughlin	330-571-1203	2 nd Year Trustee	Jim Sieber, PGK	330-478-2363
Deputy GK	Ken Girt, PGK	330-837-6670	3 rd Year Trustee	Bob Pittinger, PGK	330-571-5150
Chancellor	Tim Paul				
Recorder	Matt Meyer, PGK	30-284-9365			
Treasurer	Joe Vilhosky	330-833-0130			
Financial Sec *	Paul Haig, PGK	330-837-1185			
Advocate	John D. Ferrero, Jr	330-833-3534			
Warden	Bill Shane, PGK	330-268-0545			
Inside Guard	Bob Catazaro	330-478-2264			

All officers and trustee except (*) will need to be elected for the 2020-2021 Fraternal Year

Massillon Knights Foundation Trustees running for three Three-Year positions; Bill Shane, Jeff Heitger, Jim Sieber. Also, two positions need to be filled; one One-Year Trustee and one Two-Year Trustee. You must be a Third-Degree Members to run for a trustee position as well as to vote in the election. All Third-Degree Members of Council 554 are members of the Massillon Knights Foundation and eligible to run for a Foundation Trustee position.

Attention Council 554 First and Second Degree Members:

The Ohio State Council has instituted a “virtual” online Third-Degree Ceremony that is held every Tuesday and Friday at 7 PM. If you are interested in advancing to the third degree, and we do encourage it, please email me (Ken Girt) and I will provide a link for registering. My email is... girtken@sssnet.com. You then will be sent a link for viewing the 30-minute ceremony at home. And yes, your family can view the ceremony as well. Call Ken Girt with any questions. 330-837-6670

Procedure for Online Exemplification for Advancing Members:

1. The GK, FS or other council designee forwards the Exemplification Registration to members that wish to advance to the third degree.
2. The Exemplification Degree Link is sent to member after he registers.
3. Advancing Member attends the online exemplification via recorded degree, on Tuesday or Friday, at 7 PM. Member must be on-line and attend the entire degree. Family members are welcome to view ceremony.
4. The FS or GK are notified that member attended the online Ceremony.
5. FS sends in Form 100 to Supreme indicating member or members advanced to Third Degree. FS issues new Degree card.

Attention All Members of Council 554:

If you know of a worthy candidate for membership in the Knights of Columbus, he can also attend the new online Exemplification. See procedure below. Call Ken Girt with any questions. 330-837-6670

Procedure for Online Exemplification for New Member

1. NEW MEMBER completes a Form 100 and submits to Council.
2. Council Admission Committee contacts and talks with the NEW MEMBER. This can be over the phone or an online meeting.
3. Upon approval of the Admission Committee, the Council votes on the NEW MEMBER.
4. Once the council approves the NEW MEMBER, the GK, FS or other council designee sends the candidate the link to the online Constitutional Roll
5. NEW MEMBER completes the Constitutional Roll including signing it with an electronic pen on a tablet or via mouse and click Submit.
6. The system will automatically forward the Exemplification Registration link to the NEW MEMBER. NEW MEMBER completes the Exemplification Registration and submits.
7. The system will automatically forward the Exemplification Ceremony link to the NEW MEMBER. NEW MEMBER attends the entire online exemplification via recorded degree. Family members welcome to view ceremony.
8. Upon completion of the degree, the State Warden or other appointed designee will complete the Form 450 and submits to Supreme, State and GK/FS per normal procedure.
9. GK, FS or other council designee completes the Form 100 with the dates, ensures all signatures and the proper check boxes are complete. GK, FS or other council designee scans or takes a picture of the Form 100 and sends to Supreme and State via the form100@kofcoho.org.
10. FS issues a Third-Degree card to NEW MEMBER.

Super Cash Bonanza – Charity Raffle

Please help us receive the needed the ticket revenue for our council’s charity donations. **Buy or sell the Super Cash Bonanza tickets that you recently received in the mail and return the stubs to the council in the envelop provided by our FINAL Turn-in date on June 21.** Please Note: the drawing will be held on Saturday, June 27, during the District Deputy Meeting in Columbus. Thanks.



New Membership Recruiting Tool – Council 554 Landing Page

Supreme Council has now created a “Landing Page” for recruiting members for Council 554. For those with I-Phones or I-Pads, you can save the link below as one of your web favorites. When you find a potential candidate, access the link, have your candidate enter the contact information and press [Submit]. The information goes to Supreme and copied to Council Membership Chairman Ken Girt. We will process the application and you will get credit for recruiting a new member. Just access the link below and save.

https://info.kofc.org/OH-Landing-Page-Council-554_Landingpage.html

For the citizens of Massillon.....

The following article was submitted by Council 554 Member and Massillon Ward 2 Councilman James Thieret.

Neighborhood Watch Program

We are looking for, ideally, at least three (3) people as contacts in each precinct of each ward throughout the city willing to act as a hub of information. The police can’t be everywhere so we are trying to assist them as eyes and ears to provide them with data they can use to help them help us all live in a safer community.

We are looking to inform and educate households all over the city. We want to employ technology as much as possible with apps like “Next Door” and social media platforms like Facebook’s “Massillon crime watch” page. For the residents without the use of social media access we need to provide names and phone numbers so that neighbors can connect with neighbors so that everyone can be included in the safety net system.

We are looking to include the city administration, the police department, city council, safety experts and concerned citizens to work together to share information and resources available to make our city the best it can be. We would also like to see the local churches and civic organizations be involved. Networking is a key element in this plan.

Encourage people to know the names, addresses and phone numbers of all their adjacent neighbors and encourage them to do the same throughout the neighborhood. We know that there will be holes in the network, for example, renters may be less inclined to be supportive than property owners/occupants.

Encourage residents to call the police when necessary and maintain their own personal safety. Things like proper lighting, security systems and cameras when affordable can be huge deterrents of crime. Again, knowing your neighbors and having a list of addresses and phone numbers at your disposal is important if you need to contact the police. Taking notes including details like date, times, frequency and even taking pictures or videos of the activities being witnessed is a tremendous aid to law enforcement. We are not law enforcement but we can be of help.

Meetings and public forums to educate and inform residents of issues and changes, face to face or electronically, needs to be ongoing. We will be emphasizing all the COVID-19 guidelines as we progress to ensure that we are not contributing to another problem. We are researching educational webinars to keep information available so residents can access it when needed. For the households without internet access we will need hard copy available to make sure the information is in front of everyone.

Insurance Report, by *Stephen Hamrock, FIC*

Brother Knights,

The world is slowly beginning its return to the way things were - at least as much as it can. It'll likely be months before we know what normal looks like now.

You've probably heard the saying attributed to an unsavory (to say the least!) historical figure that "there are decades where nothing happens, and there are weeks where decades happens."

It certainly feels that way now. We have crammed decades of changes into these last several weeks, and it's hard to know what change is permanent, and what changes will prove temporary.

Not everything is fluid though. I am struck by the resilience of the permanent things - our faith, our fraternity, our families. I'm sure you've seen the tremendous ways in which the Knights of Columbus in particular has proven itself equal yet again to this current challenge. Whether it was the establishment of the Leave No Neighbor Behind Initiative, or the launch of the diocesan loan fund, or just the every-day, every-city response of councils across the globe, we have responded as we always do: swiftly, powerfully.

Sure, we've had to cancel some things. We've had to have some virtual meetings. We've had to stay a safe distance apart. But our distance hasn't diminished our unity, nor has it changed our impact.

I continue to be proud to be a part of this great organization - especially in moments like this. And I know you are too. That's for me, being financially committed to the Knights is such a point of pride. We all need life insurance. We all need to plan for retirement. We all need to think about and prepare for life's what-ifs.

But when it comes time to decide who to make those preparations with, and who to choose to buy those products from, we can choose to spend our money with the company who establishes a multi-million dollar loan funds for Catholic dioceses in their most desperate time of need, or we can go another route. We can choose to buy our insurance from a company who leaves no neighbor behind, or a company who has no real concept of who their neighbor is. We can prepare for our retirement with a company whose members are - once again - setting an example of true Christian charity for all to follow, or we can go in a different direction.

I would challenge you, whether you've never inquired or its been a long time - to take a fresh look at the Knights of Columbus as a trusted financial partner, and see what products and services we may have that might help you and your family. As we all start to get back to things, I can meet with you in person or by video, whichever you prefer, and we can have stress-free, no-commitment conversation about the possibilities.

It's a way to further your commitment to all that we stand for, and - at the same time - obtain some much needed peace of mind in times like these.

I hope we'll chat soon.

Fraternally, Stephen J Hamrock, FIC





Knights of Columbus[®]
INSURANCE
YOUR SHIELD FOR LIFE

Stephen Hamrock, *FIC*

330-284-4034

stephen.hamrock@kofc.org

Life Insurance • Long-Term Care Insurance
 Retirement Annuities • Disability Insurance

Protecting Catholic families since 1882.

A PRAYER FOR PROTECTION IN TIME OF PANDEMIC



The ancient fresco of Madonna del Soccorso (Our Lady of Help) in St. Peter's Basilica was restored with the support of the Knights of Columbus to mark the Year of Faith (2012-2013). Photo courtesy of Fabbrica di San Pietro/M. Falcioni.

O Mary,
you always brighten our path
as a sign of salvation and of hope.
We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,
who, at the Cross, took part in Jesus' pain
while remaining steadfast in faith.

O loving Mother,
you know what we need,
and we are confident you will provide for us
as at Cana in Galilee.

Intercede for us with your Son Jesus,
the Divine Physician,
for those who have fallen ill,
for those who are vulnerable,
and for those who have died.

Intercede also for those charged with
protecting the health and safety of others
and for those who are tending to the sick
and seeking a cure.

Help us, O Mother of Divine Love,
to conform to the will of the Father
and to do as we are told by Jesus,
who took upon himself our
sufferings and carried our sorrows,
so as to lead us, through the Cross,
to the glory of the Resurrection. Amen.

*Under thy protection we seek refuge,
O Holy Mother of God.*

*In our needs, despise not our petitions,
but deliver us always from all dangers,
O glorious and blessed Virgin. Amen.*

Adapted from the prayer of Pope Francis

MIRACLE APPROVED! FATHER MCGIVNEY TO BE BEATIFIED!

ROME – The Vatican today (May 27) announced that Pope Francis approved the promulgation of a decree recognizing a miracle attributed to the intercession of the founder of the Knights of Columbus, Venerable Father Michael J. McGivney, a Connecticut priest who served his flock during the pandemic of 1890, before himself becoming ill and dying of pneumonia.

The pope's action means that Father McGivney can be declared "Blessed," the step just prior to sainthood. An additional miracle attributed to Father McGivney's intercession will be required for his canonization as a saint.

McGivney is best known for founding the Knights of Columbus in 1882. Nearly a century before the Second Vatican Council, his prescient vision empowered the laity to serve Church and neighbor in a new way. Today, the Knights of Columbus is one of the largest Catholic organizations in the world with 2 million members in North and Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia, and Europe.

The miracle recognized as coming through Father McGivney's intercession involved an unborn child in the United States who in 2015 was healed in utero of a life-threatening condition after prayers by his family to Father McGivney.

A date will soon be set for the beatification Mass, which will take place in Connecticut. It will include the reading of an apostolic letter from the Holy Father and the bestowing of the title "Blessed" on Father McGivney.

Earlier this year, in an address to the Knights of Columbus Board of Directors, Pope Francis said the organization has been faithful "to the vision of your founder, Venerable Michael McGivney, who was inspired by the principles of Christian charity and fraternity to assist those most in need."

"Father McGivney has inspired generations of Catholic men to roll up their sleeves and put their faith into action," Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson said. "He was decades ahead of his time in giving the laity an important role within the Church. Today, his spirit continues to shape the extraordinary charitable work of Knights as they continue to serve those on the margins of society as he served widows and orphans in the 1880s. Father McGivney also remains an important role model for parish priests around the world and left us a transformative legacy of effective cooperation between the laity and clergy.

Born of Irish immigrant parents in 1852 in Waterbury, Connecticut, Father McGivney was a central figure in the dramatic growth of the Church in the United States in the late 19th century. Ordained in Baltimore in 1877, he ministered to a heavily Irish-American and immigrant community in the then-Diocese of Hartford. At a time of anti-Catholic sentiment, he worked tirelessly to keep his flock close to the faith in part by finding practical solutions to their many problems – spiritual and temporal alike. With a group of the leading Catholic men of New Haven, he founded the Knights of Columbus in 1882 at St. Mary's Church to provide spiritual support for Catholic men and financial resources for families that had suffered the loss of their breadwinner.

The fledgling group soon became a major force in the areas of evangelization, charity, racial integration, and the defense of religious freedom.

Father McGivney spent his entire priesthood in parish ministry and died of pneumonia on August 14, 1890—two days after his 38th birthday – after falling ill amid a pandemic. Recent scientific evidence indicates that that pandemic – like the current one – may have been caused by a coronavirus.

Known by his contemporaries for his devotion to the faith and his embodiment of the characteristics of the "Good Samaritan," his cause for sainthood was opened in the Archdiocese of Hartford in 1997. St. John Paul II – who was pope at that time – lauded Father McGivney's principles, stating in 2003, "In fidelity to the vision of Father McGivney, may you continue to seek new ways of being a leaven of the Gospel in the world and a spiritual force for the renewal of the Church in holiness, unity and truth."

In March 2008, he was declared a Venerable Servant of God by Pope Benedict XVI, who during his visit to St. Patrick's Cathedral cited the "remarkable accomplishment of that exemplary American priest, the Venerable Michael McGivney, whose vision and zeal led to the establishment of the Knights of Columbus."

10 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE FOUNDER OF THE K OF C

By Andrew Butler



Maybe you're an old pro and already knew that Father Michael J. McGivney founded the Knights of Columbus in New Haven, Conn. in 1882. Maybe you already knew that he envisioned a Catholic order that would help Catholic men to remain steadfast in faith while providing insurance for their families.

But you probably didn't know these facts:

1. Not only Catholics, but even Protestants were inspired by Father McGivney's witness of faith.

Alida Harwood, the daughter of a prominent Episcopal minister in New Haven, frequented Mass at St. Mary's Church where Father McGivney served. When Alida contracted malaria at the age of 25 and lay on her death bed, it was Father McGivney that she asked to see.

2. He was a heck of a baseball player.

We know that in one game with his seminary team he scored three runs, contributing to a big victory with a score of 23-6. He paved the way for a long history of baseball players who would join the Knights, including [these MLB legends](#).

3. More forward-thinking than Yale? Father McGivney pushed the boundaries as a theater director.

At a time when, according to [Parish Priest](#), nearby Yale University was limiting theater to only male actors, Father McGivney welcomed women to perform when he directed his parish's St. Patrick's Day play in 1880.

4. He helped young people take charge of their lives and create a better future.

Father McGivney saw that many young men were neglecting their religion and turning to alcohol abuse. In response, he founded St. Joseph's Total Abstinence and Literary Society, a group that helped young men stay strong in the faith and become active in their communities. They organized and participated in sports and theatrical productions. McGivney offered members a meeting space with books, magazines, newspapers and a piano. No doubt, Father McGivney's experience with this group prepared him when he later founded the Knights of Columbus.

5. His vision for the role of the laity was very unusual for the time.

Seventy-seven years ahead of the Second Vatican Council, the idea that a Catholic organization could be led by laymen was quite extraordinary. Yet that was Father McGivney's vision for the Knights of Columbus.

6. He ministered to inmates.

Father McGivney was responsible for ministering to inmates in the city jail. One inmate was 21-year-old Chip Smith, who — while drunk — shot and killed a police officer. Smith was convicted for first-degree murder and sentenced to be hanged. Father McGivney visited him daily, and, on the day of Smith's execution, the priest was filled with sorrow. Just before he died, Smith comforted him: "Father, your saintly ministrations have enabled me to meet death without a tremor. Do not fear for me, I must not break down now."

7. He was only 38 years old when he died.

And that's actually not surprising — life expectancy was short for priests in Connecticut in the 19th century, when the Catholic population was growing, disease was common and the priests were overworked.

8. He's on the path to sainthood.

His cause for canonization is open, and he was given the title "Venerable Servant of God" by the Holy See in 2008. You can help promote devotion to this Servant of God

9. His belongings were burned when he died.

When Father McGivney died of tuberculosis, his personal items were burned to prevent the spreading of the disease. Only a small number of his [writings](#) and belongings survived.

10. He is known to intercede especially in four areas (from [Columbia magazine](#)):

- Employment and finances.** Just as parishioners looked to Father McGivney for help when "No Irish need apply" was often included in job postings, so today many receive help when they are laid off or seeking a better job.
- Substance abuse.** In Father McGivney's day, alcoholism afflicted the immigrant population, and many now find relief from drug or alcohol abuse after praying to him.
- Family reconciliation.** Father McGivney helped immigrant families struggling to stay together and to make ends meet. Today, Father McGivney continues to respond to the prayers of families.
- Return to the faith.** Father McGivney founded the Order to keep men from joining anti-Catholic societies. Today, many Catholics receive favors when calling upon him to help their fallen-away children return to Mass.