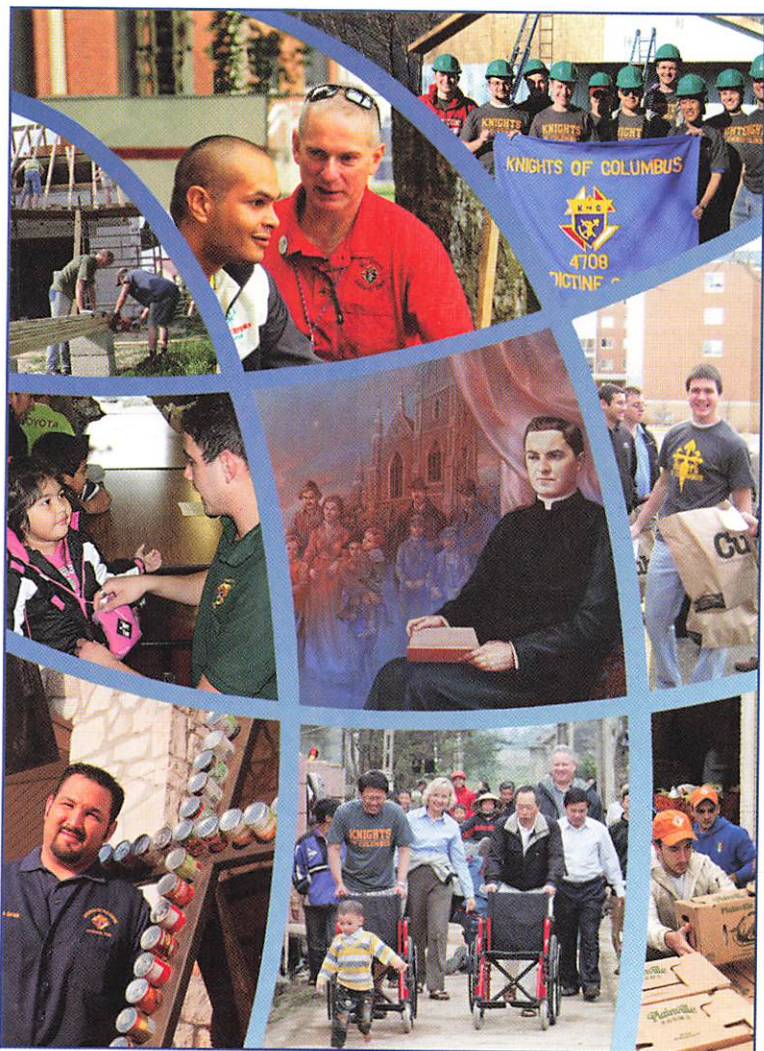


These men they call  
**KNIGHTS**



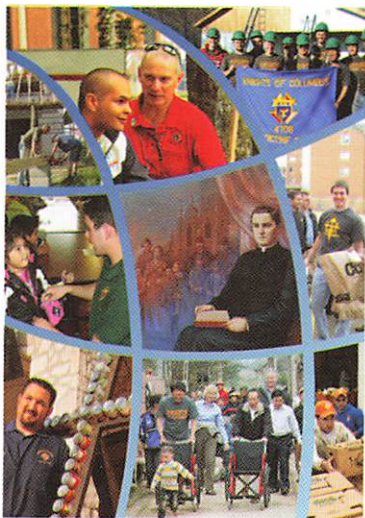
## These Men They Call Knights

Welcome to the Knights of Columbus! By joining your council you have become a part of the largest Catholic fraternal organization in the world, which was founded by a handful of men at St. Mary's Church in New Haven, Conn., in 1882. You are now counted among the nearly two million members in a dozen countries on three continents.

Our common bond is our devotion to the Catholic faith and our brotherhood in Christ. We have joined together to help one another become better Catholics, better husbands, better fathers, better providers for the financial protection of our families and better citizens of the countries in which we live. And we place special emphasis on charity, the first principle of the Order, and the subject of the degree ceremony in which you've just participated.

Now that you've taken your Admission Degree, it's important that you become active in your council even if the time you're able to give is limited. It's also important that you acquire an understanding and appreciation of Knighthood in the fullest sense by advancing through the higher degrees as well, taking to heart the lessons that each one teaches.

For members of the Knights of Columbus, our degree ceremonies remain highly relevant, because they play a key role in establishing a common culture among Knights as Catholic gentlemen. Each of our degree ceremonies

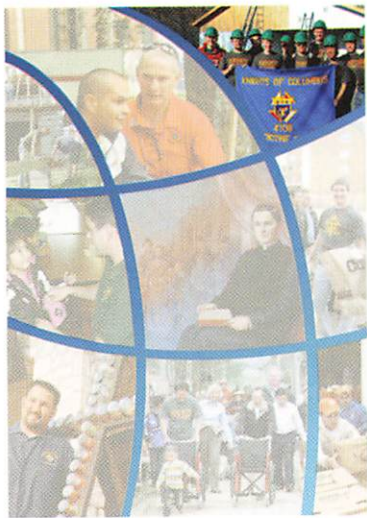


explores one important aspect of our core values and how we approach our shared commitment to charity, unity, and fraternity. The Patriotic Degree emphasizes patriotism.

This booklet is designed to help you get started in council activities right away and to assist you in your preparation for participation in the Formation and Knighthood Degree ceremonies that lie just ahead.

## **A Charity That Evangelizes**

Becoming a Knight opens many many opportunities to you, from helping to support your parish and giving back to your community, to growing in your faith and having exclusive access to our top-rated insurance program.



As you learned through the degree you just participated in, charity is the first principle of the Knights of Columbus. Knights are men — like you — who get things done. We volunteer our time to serve our parishes and our communities, and we've been successful at this. By working together, Knights of Columbus were able to collectively donate

more than \$823 million and 352 million hours to worthy causes over the past five years.

Volunteer opportunities abound in the Knights of Columbus. For example, a council grew more than 14,000 pounds of fresh food in a K of C garden for donation to a food pantry, a jurisdiction in one year raised and donated \$37,000 to Special Olympics and provided volunteers at 56 Special Olympics events, and a third council built a ramp

which gave a 9-year-old boy who uses a wheelchair the gift of mobility. Your council probably has projects like these that you can become a part of.

Along with projects that are unique to local communities, Knights of Columbus councils also participate in Orderwide initiatives such as:

- ❑ “Coats for Kids” which provides warm winter coats to children who may be without warm clothes

- ❑ “Food for Families” which provides food to those facing tough economic conditions by restocking local food pantries

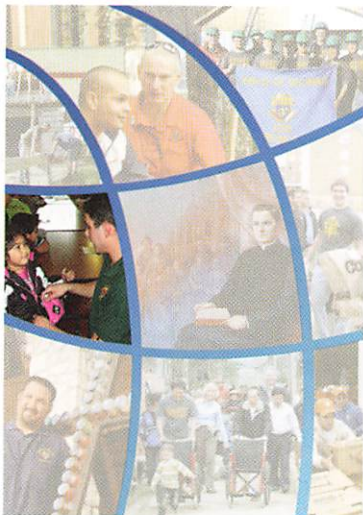
- ❑ Partnerships with the Global Wheelchair Mission to purchase and deliver wheelchairs to those in need across the globe

- ❑ Collaborations with Habitat for Humanity to provide volunteers and monetary donations that help supply shelter to families in need

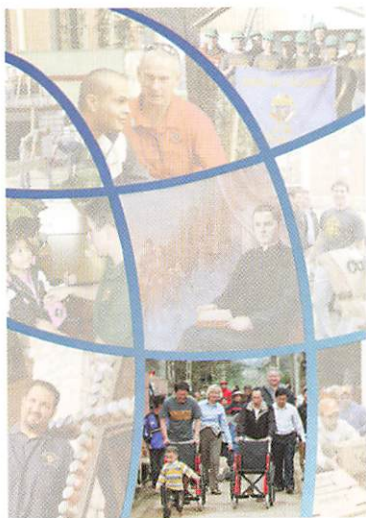
- ❑ Joint efforts with Special Olympics and other organizations to support people with intellectual disabilities

- ❑ Participation in youth-oriented activities such as the Order’s Squires program, Free Throw Championship, Soccer Challenge and various essay and poster contests

In addition to serving the community, Knights are also the “men of action” in their parish. Ever since the first Knights joined with Father Michael J. McGivney to found the Knights of Columbus in 1882, we have maintained a



tradition of support for our bishops and priests. The question every council asks of its pastor is: "What can we do to help?" Knights serve as volunteers in parish ministries, help with special projects and sponsor parish events — in short, we do anything



we can to help our parish priests carry out their ministry. We also provide support to seminarians, sponsor retreats, and assist with virtually anything else that's needed to help our parish communities.

Now is the perfect time for you to pick a program area that interests you, and let your council leaders know you're interested in helping out. You'll soon find that giving of yourself in a worthy cause, hand in hand with your brother Knights, is rewarding in

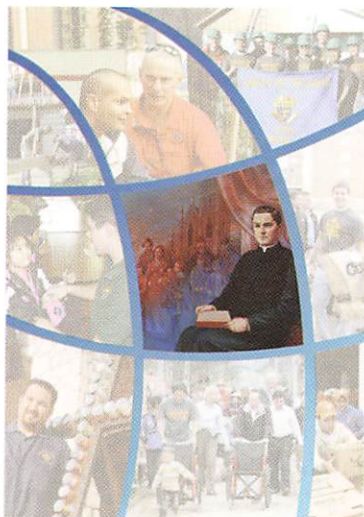
ways you may never have imagined.

Along with the volunteer opportunities that your council provides, there is also the occasion for you and your family to grow in your faith. Councils like yours, often attend Mass and pray the rosary together, as well as sponsors corporate communions. Orderwise, councils regularly participate in prayer initiatives and in the Marian prayer program. Also, the Knights of Columbus offers a variety of publications and devotional materials through its Catholic Information Service ([kofc.org/cis](http://kofc.org/cis)).

Finally, as a Knight, you and your family have exclusive access to our top-quality insurance products. In fact, no insurer in North America is more highly rated than the Knights of Columbus. As an organization

founded to protect the well-being of Catholic families, we have continued to take that mission seriously for more than 130 years.

Generations of Catholics have counted on the Knights of Columbus for their financial stability. In an increasingly turbulent world, you can trust the Knights of Columbus to affordably and securely protect the financial future of your loved ones. Should you choose to purchase life insurance or annuities from the Knights, you'll also have the peace of mind that your funds will be secure and invested in accordance with Catholic Doctrine. To learn more about the insurance products



offered by the Knights of Columbus, make some time to visit [kofc.org/insurance](http://kofc.org/insurance) and then contact your local Knights of Columbus insurance agent.

## **Our Founder**

The founder of the Knights of Columbus was Father Michael J. McGivney, a Catholic priest who was declared Venerable by Pope Benedict XVI in 2008 and whose cause is under consideration by the Vatican's Congregation for the Causes of Saints. All Knights (and all Catholics) are encouraged to join the Father McGivney Guild ([fathermcgivney.org](http://fathermcgivney.org)) and to help promote his cause for sainthood.

The son of Irish immigrant parents who came to America during the famine of the 1840s, he was born in Connecticut and grew up at a time when anti-Catholic

prejudice greatly limited social and employment opportunities in the United States. From an early age, he knew he wanted to become a priest. He was ordained in 1878, and his first assignment was at St. Mary's Church in New Haven, Conn.

It was at St. Mary's in early 1882 that he gathered together a group of laymen from his parish and formed the Knights of Columbus. He had two goals for the new group: to provide assistance to widows and children when a family breadwinner died, and to provide Catholic men with a fraternal association that would draw them closer to their Catholic faith and to one another.

For the next several years, Father McGivney helped foster the growth of the Order, first in Connecticut and later in adjoining states. In 1884 he was named pastor of St. Thomas Church in Thomaston, Conn. Never robust in health, Father McGivney was suddenly stricken with a serious case of pneumonia in January 1890. The young priest lost physical strength just as the Order he founded was moving toward new vitality, and died on August 14, two days past his 38th birthday. Father McGivney's well-attended funeral was an indication of the love and respect the people felt for this hardworking, holy parish priest. It also reflected the deep personal appeal that immigrant Catholics immediately found in the Knights of Columbus.

Father McGivney was an idealist. He was a man whose youthful vision and creativity expanded and matured even as his physical well-being diminished. That vision continues today in the organization you have just become a part of — the Knights of Columbus.

## **Our Catholic Faith**

Our Catholic faith is central to the Knights of Columbus. As you advance through the higher degrees in the Order, you may be asked to answer questions about the central tenets of the Catholic faith. As we wish to assist you along your journey through the higher degrees, please take this opportunity to review those central tenets listed below.

### **The Ten Commandments**

1. I am the Lord, your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.



## **Sacraments**

The sacraments are signs instituted by Christ to give us grace.

1. Baptism
2. Reconciliation (confession)
3. Holy Eucharist
4. Confirmation
5. Matrimony
6. Holy Orders
7. Anointing of the sick

## **Grace**

There are two kinds of grace:

- Sanctifying grace makes us holy and pleasing to God.
- Actual grace helps us to do good and avoid evil.

## **Precepts of the Church**

- To attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.
- To fast and abstain from meat on appointed days.
- To confess one's sins at least once a year.
- To receive Holy Eucharist during Easter time.
- To contribute to the support of the Church.
- To observe the laws of the Church concerning marriage.
- To join in the missionary spirit and apostolate of the Church.

## **Baptism**

The ordinary minister of the sacrament of Baptism is a bishop, priest or deacon. In case of emergency, anyone can validly baptize. Water is poured on the forehead of the person to be baptized. While the water is being poured, the following is spoken: "I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit."

## **Pentecost**

Pentecost is known as the "birthday of the Church." On that day, the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles, giving them the graces they needed to go forth and teach the Gospel to all nations. This is one meaning of the word "Catholic." The Church is found in every land, and therefore it is "universal" or worldwide.

## **The Seven Capital Sins**

1. Pride
2. Covetousness
3. Lust
4. Anger
5. Gluttony
6. Envy
7. Sloth

## **The Gifts of the Holy Spirit**

- Wisdom
- Understanding
- Counsel
- Fortitude
- Knowledge
- Piety
- Fear of the Lord

## **The Rosary**

The rosary (from the Latin *rosarium*, or “rose garden”) is a form of mental and vocal prayer centered on the mysteries in the lives of Jesus and Mary.

### **The Joyful Mysteries**

- Annunciation
- Visitation
- Birth of Jesus
- Presentation of Jesus in the Temple
- Finding of Jesus in the Temple

### **The Sorrowful Mysteries**

- Agony in the Garden
- Scourging at the Pillar
- Crowning with Thorns
- Carrying the Cross
- Crucifixion

## **The Glorious Mysteries**

- Resurrection
- Ascension
- Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles
- Assumption of Mary
- Crowning of Mary as Queen of the Angels and Saints

## **The Luminous Mysteries**

- Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan
- Manifestation of Jesus at the Wedding at Cana
- Proclamation of the Kingdom of God
- Transfiguration of Jesus
- Institution of the Eucharist



**KNIGHTS**  
**OF COLUMBUS®**