



THE BEATIFICATION OF FATHER MICHAEL MC GIVNEY FOUNDER OF KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

WHO WAS FATHER MICHAEL MC GIVNEY?

Father McGivney (1852-1890) was an American Catholic priest based in New Haven, Connecticut. He was born to poor Irish immigrant parents and was the eldest of 13 children, six of whom died in infancy or early childhood. He left school and began working at age 13, to help support his family. At the age of 16 he entered a seminary in Quebec, Canada to study for the priesthood but had to leave in 1873 to help raise his siblings after the death of his father. Later he resumed his priesthood studies at St. Mary's in Baltimore and was ordained a priest there in 1877 and returned to Connecticut.

From his own life experience, Father McGivney recognized the devastating effect the untimely deaths of fathers as the sole wage earners had on immigrant families. In the late 19th century, Catholics were barred from both union employment and from membership in fraternal and social organizations.

In March of 1882, Father McGivney, with a group of New Haven businessmen who were his parishioners, formed the Knights of Columbus as a mutual aid society and whose mission was not only to provide financial assistance to the widows and orphans of Catholic members who died, but to serve as a charitable and fraternal organization for Catholics in the area. Father McGivney was a tireless worker for his parishioners. During the pandemic of 1890, while serving his flock, he became ill and died of pneumonia.

WHY WAS FATHER MCGIVNEY BEATIFIED?

Father McGivney was beatified on October 31, 2020. Beatification requires the Catholic Church's formal confirmation (by the Pope) of a documented miracle, being caused by the intercession of the person being considered and it's one step removed from sainthood. In Father McGivney's case, the miracle was the survival in the womb of a baby boy who had Down syndrome and fetal hydrops, a rare and usually fatal condition where fluids build up around vital organs. The Schachle family is from Dickson, Tennessee. The Schachles had successfully prayed to Father McGivney in the past and they reached out to him again for their baby boy's survival. The doctor who ran the neonatal high-risk clinic at Vanderbilt University told the Schachles that in her 30 years of experience, no child had ever survived this fetal hydrops diagnosis.

Things looked bleak, but the father, a past Grand Knight, and the family, extended family & friends and local Knights all prayed to Father McGivney for the boy's survival. The family also went to Fatima on a pilgrimage with the Knights just before the child was born. After the family's return, an ultrasound was taken, and the doctors were astounded that there was no fetal hydrops! The child named Michael was

born on May 15, 2015. Although he has Down Syndrome, he was otherwise a healthy and happy child. After extensive medical examination, the unexplained healing of Michael was decreed a miracle that arose through the intercession of Father McGivney.

WHO ARE THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS TODAY?

The Knights of Columbus is a 138 year old, non-profit charitable organization, whose members are all Catholic men in good standing with the Catholic Church. From its humble beginnings in 1882, the Knights of Columbus has over 1.9 million members worldwide and 63,000 plus members in New Jersey. In 2019, the Knights of Columbus donated over \$187 million along with 77 million man hours to hundreds of charitable causes. Firmly founded upon the principles of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism, the Knights are able to accomplish a wide range of worthwhile goals thanks to the strength and mutual support of its members and their families.

The Knights of Columbus has five main objectives: (1) to support the Church; (2) to build fraternal bonds through social, religious, educational and athletic activities; (3) to provide comfort and assistance to sick, disabled and needy members and their families; (4) to reach out to meet community needs through programs of charity and service; and (5) to provide for the financial security of its members and their families through its fraternal insurance program. Coming from all walks of life, members of the Knights of Columbus, together with their families, share the common thread of a Catholic faith and the desire to give of their time and talents in support of their church, their community and to their brother Knights.

IS OUR PARISH AND COMMUNITY SERVED BY THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS?

Indeed, there is a council of the Knights of Columbus here at OLMV. Founded in the year 2000, Council 12700 has been engaged in numerous charitable and fraternal activities in support of the parish, the greater Middlesex community as well as our brother Knights and their families. Serving and supporting the needs of the parish. Providing scholarship opportunities. Raising funds for the developmentally disabled and other persons and organizations. Supporting vocations. Fostering fellowship through various events and activities. Developing friendships that will last a lifetime. Doing our small part in Middlesex, NJ to serve as the right arm of the Church as Pope Francis has so referred to the Knights of Columbus.

Gentlemen, if you are a practicing Catholic and are at least 18 years of age, you can become a member of the Knights of Columbus. If you would like more information about what the Knights of Columbus are all about, and possibly joining this wonderful organization, please contact Kevin Mazza, Grand Knight, at 908-392-2711 or Steve Vasinda, Deputy Grand Knight, at 908-227-2601 or visit our website at www.olmv.net/knights-of-columbus.