



Knights of Columbus Founder's Day—March 29, 2022

The Knights of Columbus, a Catholic and family fraternal organization, celebrates its anniversary today. On March 29, 1882, Father Michael J. McGivney gathered together with other Catholics with similar views and established the order's first council in the basement of St. Mary's Church in New Haven, Connecticut, where he was an associate pastor. The order, which now has close to 2 million members in over 16,000 councils, was created in response to hardships suffered by the poor, Catholics, and Irish immigrants.

Father McGivney's belief that laymen could lead a Catholic organization was far ahead of its time. The order is devoted to four principles, known as degrees, which are charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism. It holds a conservative Catholic view on social policy issues. Members must be men who accept Catholic doctrine. Women can participate through auxiliaries. The goals of the order have broadened since its inception when its focus was on the support of working-class and immigrant Catholics. Now there is also a focus on issues such as refugee relief, Catholic education, and global Catholic causes, and the order donates tens of millions of dollars and volunteer hours to many charitable projects every year. Notable Catholics who have been members include John F. Kennedy, Ted Kennedy, Vince Lombardi, Babe Ruth, John Boehner, and Jeb Bush.

The day is observed to honor and remember how Knights are important to parishes and communities. Councils are to take part so that they are reminded of what some of the accomplishments of Knights of Columbus have been, what the ideals of the order are, and what some achievements of the local council have been.



How to Observe Knights of Columbus Founder's Day

If you are not a member, you could....

- * Learn more about Father McGivney at the Guild of Father McGivney website.
- * You could also join the Guild. It is not required that you be a Knight to do so.
- * Read a book about Father McGivney or the Knights of Columbus.
- * Join the Knights of Columbus.

If you are a current member, you could....

- * If you are a member of a council, focus on what the ideals of the Knights of Columbus are,
- * what its accomplishments have been, and
- * what the achievements of your council have been.
- * Attend an upcoming event at a nearby council.