



Knights of Columbus®

Timeline for the Cause of Father Michael J. McGivney

March 1982 – Early plans are made for considering a cause for canonization during the centennial observances of the Knights of Columbus, when the Vatican and McGivney family members permit the bodily remains of Father McGivney to be moved from the family plot in Old St. Joseph Cemetery in Waterbury, Connecticut, and interred in a sarcophagus in St. Mary's Church (where he founded the Knights of Columbus in 1882), where they now serve as a focal point of prayer and devotion.

May 1, 1997 – Most Reverend Daniel A. Cronin, archbishop of Hartford, recognizes the Knights of Columbus as the “actor” (promoter) in the canonization cause of Father McGivney and Father Gabriel B. O'Donnell, O.P., as postulator.

June 19, 1997 – Archbishop Cronin presents the cause of Father McGivney at a meeting of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and receives the unanimous endorsement of the nation's assembled bishops.

Sept. 15, 1997 – An official *Nihil obstare* (“nothing obstructs”) is received from the Vatican's Congregation for the Causes of Saints for the cause to commence. Father McGivney is accorded the title of Servant of God. The Father McGivney Guild, with Father O'Donnell as its director, releases the new “Prayer for Canonization.”

Dec. 18, 1997 – Father McGivney's cause officially opens at the Chancery of the Archdiocese of Hartford, with Archbishop Cronin presiding at the ceremony and Supreme Knight Virgil C. Dechant in attendance.

Archbishop Cronin appoints an archdiocesan historical commission to investigate all public and archival sources regarding the life of Father McGivney and an archdiocesan tribunal to record testimony on all aspects of Father McGivney's life, works and reputation for holiness.

March 6, 2000 – A ceremony for the closing session of a diocesan tribunal is held, with Archbishop Cronin presiding in the presence of Most Reverend Thomas V. Daily, bishop of Brooklyn and supreme chaplain, and Supreme Knight Virgil C. Dechant.

2002 – Father O'Donnell completes the official *Positio*, a 1,000-page document incorporating all the information from the historical commission and tribunal, which provides a “spiritual biography” of Father McGivney, focusing on his heroic virtue and holiness of life.

The *Positio* is presented to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints with the following conclusions: Father McGivney was the “Saint of the Ordinary”; his spirituality was “sacramental” with a strong

ecclesial sense; he was a man of deep prayer and practical action who was always among the people of God and working for the people of God.

2008 – The Rome phase of the cause begins with Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson’s appointment of Dr. Andrea Ambrosi as the new postulator. Father O’Donnell becomes vice-postulator and remains director of the Father McGivney Guild.

March 15, 2008 – Father McGivney is declared a Venerable Servant of God in a decree by Pope Benedict XVI that confirms his heroic virtue. The decree states, in part:

“Concerning the theological virtues of Faith, Hope, and Love both toward God and neighbor as well as the cardinal virtues of Prudence, Justice, Temperance, and Fortitude, and those others joined to them, they existed to a heroic degree in the Servant of God Michael McGivney, Diocesan Priest and Founder of the Fraternal Order the Knights of Columbus.”

April 2016 – Research begins on a possible miracle in the case of a child who was healed *in utero* of a fatal condition after his family and others prayed to Father McGivney.

Sept. 2017 – Findings of the tribunal on the possible miracle are sent to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints at the Vatican.

April 27, 2018 – The congregation recognizes the juridic validity of the submitted miracle.

May 26, 2020 – After extensive medical and theological reviews at the congregation, Pope Francis approves the decree of validity for the miracle attributed to the intercession of Father McGivney, and the way is opened for the beatification of the Venerable Servant of God. The Vatican announced the pope’s approval the next day, May 27.

Oct. 31, 2020 – Father McGivney’s beatification Mass took place at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Hartford, Connecticut. At that liturgical celebration, an apostolic letter from the Holy Father was read bestowing the title of Blessed on Father McGivney.

FOR PRESS INQUIRIES

Please contact the Knights of Columbus News Bureau,
news@kofc.org,
203-752-4264 or 203-430-2585