

Founder of the Knights of Columbus.
 Venerable Michael McGivney,
 Apostle to the Young and
 Protector of Christian Family Life,
 Intercede for Us.


FATHER GABRIEL B. O'DONNELL, O.P.

Vice Postulator & Guild Director

Dear Guild Members:

In one of his published messages earlier this year, Pope Francis spoke movingly of the need to be more sincere in the daily living of our Christian faith. Warning against being too comfortable in our religious spiritual practices, he suggested that we turn more decisively away from the evil that we find in our hearts. That would include everything from serious sin to the attachments we have to lesser sins and moral weaknesses. In an interesting turn of phrase, the pope suggested that we let Christ serve us.

We usually speak of how we should serve the Lord and one another, but Pope Francis emphasized the initiative and power of God rather than our weak human efforts. In the sacraments, most especially the Eucharist, the pope explained, Christ continues to serve our needs so that we may become his partners in the work of evangelization and in his concern for the needs of our neighbors. Pope Francis repeated the



famous words of St. Augustine that in the Eucharist we become what we receive. In the Mass, as in confession and the other sacraments, Jesus serves our spiritual needs, that we might become his partners in the work of salvation. In serving those in need of God's presence and power in their lives, we cooperate with him in the salvation of the world. In feeding on his body and blood in Holy Communion we are served by Christ and we, in turn, serve others, our flesh and blood neighbors, by our helping hands, our works charity, and even in our fidelity to the duties of our particular vocation.

In his very practical approach to the spiritual life, our Holy Father reminds me of Venerable Father Michael J. McGivney. While possessed of high ideals, Father McGivney faced enough suffering and enough of life's serious problems among his parishioners to be firmly grounded in reality. His flock needed him to serve them and so he first of all allowed Christ to serve him in prayer and daily Mass. He, in turn, served his Lord in a life of virtue and by untiring service to those committed to his care. For Father McGivney, faith was not simply a religious aspiration or a confession of certain dogmas, but a way of life.

The transformation worked in us through the grace of the Eucharist and the other sacraments, is a long-held conviction of the Church. Because we cannot physically see the grace given, we might be tempted to doubt its reality. The pope is concerned that we strengthen our faith by expressing it in concern for others. When we allow faith to move us

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PERSEVERE IN PRAYER

The power of prayer is shown throughout sacred Scripture. From the words of Jesus to the letters of St. Paul, the centrality of prayer to the Christian life is demonstrated over and over.

Jesus taught his disciples to pray the Our Father, the perfect prayer which offers praise to God and meets all our needs. Jesus also told a parable "about the necessity for them to pray always without becoming weary" (Luke 18:1).

St. Paul exhorts the disciples often to pray with persistence and faith, telling the Thessalonians, "Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing" (1 Th 5:16-17). To the Ephesians, he wrote, "With all prayer and supplication, pray at every opportunity in the Spirit" (Eph 6:18).

As members of the Father McGivney Guild, we are called to pray in a special way. We receive many benefits from the Guild, including a weekly Mass offered for our intentions and regular novenas, yet we also have a commitment to fulfill. That commitment is to pray for the canonization of Venerable Michael McGivney and to report any favors received through his intercession. Now that a possible miracle is under consideration at the Vatican, it is a perfect time for you to storm heaven for the cause of this holy priest and founder.

For your convenience, the Prayer for Canonization is printed on this page. You may also contact the Guild to obtain one or more copies of the prayer card.



PRAYER FOR CANONIZATION

God, our Father, protector of the poor and defender of the widow and orphan, you called your priest, Father Michael J. McGivney, to be an apostle of Christian family life and to lead the young to the generous service of their neighbor. Through the example of his life and virtue may we follow your Son, Jesus Christ, more closely, fulfilling his commandment of charity and building up his Body which is the Church. Let the inspiration of your servant prompt us to greater confidence in your love so that we may continue his work of caring for the needy and the outcast. We humbly ask that you glorify your venerable servant Father Michael J. McGivney on earth according to the design of your holy will. Through his intercession, grant the favor I now present (here make your request). Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO A BELOVED PRIEST – 125 YEARS AGO

The measure of a man often is seen after his death. It is then when his hidden works tend to come to light as people who did not remark much upon the deceased during his life feel free to report on how he touched their own lives for the better.

This was the case with Father Michael McGivney, who died on August 14, 1890. Certainly, he was known as a faithful and pious parish priest during his life, and he gained some visibility within the Church and society as the founder of the Knights of Columbus. But the extent of his pastoral influence was not fully recognized until he passed away in the rectory in Thomaston, Conn., at the age of 38, only 13 years after ordination.

Days later, a solemn Requiem Mass was offered in St. Thomas Church, with the bishop of Hartford presiding and 70 priests present. All business was shut down in Thomaston, and four cars were added to the funeral train to accommodate the mass of mourners. The funeral cortege proceeded along the tracks to Waterbury, followed by one of

the largest processions in the history of McGivney's hometown, with civic leaders heading the march and thousands of ordinary parishioners following. Newspaper accounts said that every carriage for miles around was rented by mourners flocking to pay tribute to their beloved priest. Father McGivney's earthly remains were laid in a family plot at St. Joseph Cemetery in Waterbury. The gravesite is still there, with an impressive headstone that was added later. However, the body of Father McGivney has since been moved to St. Mary's Church in New Haven, as we will relate in this space in the next Guild newsletter.

At the time of his death, when the Order was only eight years old, there were some 6,000 Knights in 57 councils throughout Connecticut and one recently established in Rhode Island. Today, as we approach the 125th anniversary of his death, membership stands at more than 1.8 million in some 14,000 councils around the world. The great growth of the Order can be attributed to the vision of the founder, and the mission that Knights have embraced in his name.

EASTER NOVENA MASSES

As a parish priest devoted to his flock, Father McGivney offered Mass regularly for the intentions of his parishioners, both living and deceased. The Guild carries on his practice by offering a weekly Mass for the intentions of Guild members, as well as novenas at special times during the Church year.

In April, Guild members will be remembered in a novena of nine Masses offered by priests in Rome during the Easter season. Easter this year is April 5, 2015.

Guild members are encouraged to send in their intentions for placement on the altar during each Mass of the novena. You may submit your intentions by regular mail, by email or through the Father McGivney website (fathemcgivney.org), for inclusion in the Easter novena.

The deadline for submissions is March 25, 2015.

The mailing address is: Father McGivney Guild, 1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510. The email address is: guild@kofc.org.

FAVORS REPORTED

Dear Father

My father had congestive heart failure. Thank God he was in a public place when it happened, because he lives alone. They rushed him to the hospital after a stranger gave him CPR. When I got to the hospital, I was told things did not look good and they did not know how much time his brain was without oxygen. As I sat there helplessly wondering if my dad was going to make it, and what to do, I remembered my father talking about the Venerable Father McGivney. I proceeded to go online to see if there was a prayer that I could say. I found it on your website and prayed it over my father that night and for the following night in the ICU then in his hospital room and now he is home. The doctors told me that he is a miracle. His memory is coming back and he is returning to his life faster than expected. I am a brother Knight, as is my father from Council 4488 in California. I made a promise to God the first day I said this prayer that I would post this and share the works that were done for my father. I truly believe this was due to the intercession of Father McGivney for an old fellow Knight.

California

Dear Father

Recently, the man in my life was thinking of leaving and breaking up our family. I petitioned Father McGivney, and less than three hours later

he came to me saying that he was willing to stay and work things out. Thank you!

Ohio

Dear Father

I accompanied my aunt, who was 61 years old at that time, to the hospital with stomach pains that turned out to be a mass on her colon. The surgeon told us that it is a risky operation to remove the tumor because of her age and the length of time for the operation to complete. The surgeon also said that my aunt may have a colostomy (or an opening) on her abdomen after her operation. I and my family prayed to Father McGivney to help my aunt survive her operation. The operation was a success and we were also thankful that my aunt doesn't have a colostomy which was actually an immense relief for her. Our prayer has been answered through the intercession of Father McGivney.

Philippines

Dear Father

Thanksgiving to our Almighty God because I was transferred from my previous job assignment to my hometown. Because of this, I am now with my family anytime of the day. The worries are lessened. I can now join them anytime we want to go to Mass, and to join to any Knights of Columbus activities.

Philippines

GUILD ITEMS

Please Send Items Below To:

Indicate the number of items desired in the space provided. All prices are in U.S. dollars and include shipping and handling, unless otherwise noted.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Country _____

Zip/Postal Code _____

- _____ Mousepad — \$8
- _____ Pen — \$8
- _____ Coffee Mug — \$12
- _____ #A/#B Note Cards (6-pack) — \$5
- _____ #A/#B Note Cards (12-pack) — \$10
- _____ 4-Foot Statue Flyer/Order Form
- _____ 4-Foot Statue — \$2,400 (Plus Shipping & Handling)
- _____ 8" Figurine (Fiberglass) — \$50
- _____ 8" Figurine (Wood) — \$150
- _____ Reliquary (Case with Second-Class Relic) — \$25 donation
- _____ 1" Sterling Silver Medal — \$25
- _____ 18" Women's Chain — \$14

- _____ 24" Men's Chain — \$15
- _____ Guild Lapel Pin — \$7.50
- _____ Red Rosary (PG-614) — \$10
- _____ White Rosary (PG-615) — \$10
- _____ Pewter Spoon — \$11
- _____ Luggage Tag — \$5
- PRINTED ITEMS — FREE OF CHARGE, EXCEPT AS NOTED
- _____ Parish Priest (Paperback, 240 pp.) — \$12
- _____ Parish Priest Study Guide
- _____ A Model for Our Times booklet
- _____ Prayer for Canonization
- _____ Spirituality of Father McGivney flyer

COMPLETE AND RETURN TO THE FATHER MCGIVNEY GUILD, 1 COLUMBUS PLAZA, NEW HAVEN, CT 06510-3326.

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: FATHER MCGIVNEY GUILD.

TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS MAY ALSO BE SENT TO THIS ADDRESS.

Write your intentions for the Easter Novena of Masses (submit by March 25, 2015)



Father McGivney Medal

This medal can be worn with a chain (not shown). 1" in diameter.

Chain sold separately.

Sterling Silver Medal: \$25

18" Women's Chain: \$14

24" Men's Chain: \$15



Collector's Spoon

Crafted in pewter by Fort USA. Features a color portrait of Father McGivney resting atop a winged dove of peace. Cross and K of C emblem also featured. Measures approximately 5". **\$11**

Luggage Tag

Pick out your luggage at the airport with this distinctive tag. An image of Father McGivney on one side and spaces for your name and contact information on the other side. **\$5**



Guild Pen

Featuring Father McGivney's face on the dome. Blue ink. **\$8**



Guild Lapel Pin

An attractive cast-bronze lapel pin featuring a color portrait of Father McGivney and the emblem of the Order. Approximately 1¼" in diameter. **\$7.50**



8" Figurine of Father McGivney

Crafted by Italian sculptors. Depicts Father McGivney holding a book with the emblem of the Knights of Columbus embossed on the cover. This figurine can remind us of Father McGivney's presence in our lives and his role as intercessor for our needs. Available in both fiberglass with a golden-bronze finish (left) and hand-carved, painted wood (right).

Fiberglass Statue: \$50

Hand-Carved Wood Statue: \$150



Full-Color Mousepad

Featuring Antonella Cappuccio's painting "Founding Vision: Father Michael J. McGivney and the Knights of Columbus." **\$8**



FATHER MICHAEL J. MCGIVNEY GUILD

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to action, we are confirmed in the strength and goodness of God's life in us. Faith moves us to accept God's loving "service" in feeding us spiritually and then moves us to express that faith in works of compassion for others. This simple formula is at the heart of the pope's message, and in the legacy of Father McGivney that his Knights carry on today.

Father McGivney encouraged Catholics to make the truth of their faith known to the world, what we call today the new evangelization. In his view, this was largely accomplished through care for the poor and efforts to build up the local civic community. In his day, there was silent as well as open hostility to the Catholics by the regnant Protestant population. He knew that Catholics were despised by many and seen as ignorant and unworthy. Consequently, he urged his people to live up to the ideals of their faith in a clear and public way. This was his antidote to religious ghettos. Failure to see how the Catholic family or parish might have a wider impact on society in general was unacceptable for McGivney. For him, Catholics should present themselves and their faith as credible even to those of other religious traditions.

The strength of character that we see in Venerable Father McGivney illustrates how faith not only transforms individuals, but how visionary the man or woman of faith can become. When we look at the created universe through the eyes of Christ, new horizons open up. Venerable McGivney had a vision of life that flowed from his faith. His intention in founding the Knights of Columbus was that they would learn to look at the world through the insight that only faith in Jesus Christ can bring and with it a determination to contribute to the future of our country and our world.

Guild members may not know that Pope Francis has designated 2015 as the Year of Consecrated Life. Hopefully, a deeper appreciation for the vocation to follow Christ through a public vow to embrace the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience will support those already living this vocation and encourage new members, especially among the young.

Most dioceses have developed programs for days of prayer and even visiting religious houses so that the faithful can get a clearer picture of this vocation. Venerable Father McGivney, while still a seminarian, expressed a sincere interest in becoming a Jesuit. While the historical record of his family's reactions to this idea is slim, it is commonly believed that his father's objections convinced young Michael to remain in the diocese where he could be of more immediate help and support to his own family.

It is also the case that Father McGivney came to know the Dominican Fathers and Brothers once they took over the care of Saint Mary's Church in New Haven, Conn. The superior of that community preached the eulogy at McGivney's funeral, all the arrangements having been made personally by Father Michael before his death. He nurtured vocations to the priesthood and religious life among those he served and his high regard for such vocations is well attested to in the historical record.

It is remarkable how in so many ways Venerable Father McGivney's vision and even his pastoral practice anticipated those that came more than a century after his death. He was a man of the 19th century who would adjust easily to life in the 21st century. With a possible miracle through his intercession now being studied at the Vatican, we ask God to raise soon this remarkable, holy man to the honors of the altar.

Venerable Father Michael McGivney, pray for us.

Devotedly in Christ,

Father Gabriel B. O'Donnell, O.P.

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