

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:

Pope Francis has shown himself to be an eloquent preacher of the Church's social teachings. He often reminds us of the Christian obligation to be aware of the wider world in which we live and of Christ's command to tend to the needs of our neighbors.

In this, he calls to mind Venerable Father Michael McGivney, who was well aware of the needs of his people and designed a new and practical way to meet them, based on Gospel values, through the Knights of Columbus.

For those deprived of the basic necessities required for a life of human decency and dignity, Christ calls us to care for the "least" of our brothers and sisters. Yet listening carefully to our Holy Father, one discovers that his message is not simply about the needs of others. He speaks repeatedly of the deep hunger in the human heart, "the hunger for happiness that only God can fill, the hunger for dignity." In the midst



of serving our neighbor, we are called to personal holiness, to a personal relationship with God. We are called to be saints. That is the challenge of the teaching of Pope Francis.

It was also the vision of Father McGivney when he founded the Knights on the principles of charity and unity, and set out to develop the religious knowledge and practice of Catholic families.

He would have understood well the words of Pope Francis about the family in the context of society: "There is neither real promotion of the common good nor real human development when there is ignorance of the fundamental pillars that govern a nation, its non-material goods: life, which is a gift of God, a value always to be protected and promoted; the family, the foundation of coexistence and a remedy against social fragmentation."

The pope's words clarify the theme of the coming World Meeting of Families, "Love is Our Mission: The Family Fully Alive."

For Pope Francis, the "family is important and it is necessary for the survival of humanity. Without the family, the cultural survival of the human race would be at risk. The family, whether we like it or not, is the foundation."

The family is the "essential cell" of society and the Church. Basic human life cannot flourish without the support of the family, and when it fails, as it often does today, societal chaos will surely follow.

In his series of audiences on the family, Pope Francis does not paint

See **DIRECTOR'S DESK**, Page 4

MASS REMEMBERS FOUNDER'S PASSING INTO ETERNAL LIFE

At a Mass marking the 125th anniversary of the death of Venerable Father Michael J. McGivney, Knights and families from throughout Connecticut gathered in St. Mary's Church in New Haven, where the Order was founded in 1882.

The principal celebrant and homilist on Friday, Aug. 14, was Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, the most recent successor of Father McGivney as the Order's supreme chaplain. He spoke of his predecessor in deeply personal terms to bring to life the founder's vision and ministry.

"I like to think that Father McGivney's priesthood models the teaching of recent popes," the archbishop explained in his homily. "St. John Paul II said that the priest's personality must be a bridge to Christ, and indeed Father McGivney's unassuming, lighthearted, yet determined character attracted many to the Catholic faith and to St. Mary's Church. When Pope Francis tells priests to acquire 'the smell of the sheep' and 'to bring the Gospel to the margins of society,' I think

See **MASS**, Page 2



FAVORS REPORTED

As a past grand knight devoted to our founder, I have to tell you about an event that happened to me in 2001, when I had a stroke in which I lost total use of my left arm and left leg. I felt totally helpless and depressed because I could not help my family nor fulfill my duties as grand knight.

As I lay in the hospital, feeling sorry for myself, I decided to pray to Father McGivney to help me heal and possibly regain the use of my left side. I told him if he helped me that I would be the best grand knight I could possibly be. I prayed to him every night. As the result, I rehabilitated for six months and slowly recovered. I now have full use of my arm and leg. I am eternally grateful to God and Father McGivney. I fulfilled my obligation to both him and the Knights of Columbus. Without him, I don't think I would have fully recovered. I am now 82 years old and retired.

New Jersey

I am a past state deputy with a great devotion to Father McGivney. On Aug. 3, 2015, while preparing new drywall for painting in our home, I was suddenly struck with severe chest pain, extreme dizziness, and profuse sweating from my head, neck and chest. My vision narrowed to a small, dark box, and I was struggling to breathe. I collapsed into a chair and

slowly the pain subsided, the sweating stopped and my breathing somewhat improved.

Even though I knew I was suffering from a severe medical condition, I walked to the sink to wash out the brush, and was slammed a second time with even greater pain and more difficult breathing. I collapsed back in the chair, barely conscious. In desperation, I prayed silently, "Father McGivney, what's happening to me?" and then recited The Memorare to the Blessed Mother.

Recovering again, I walked slowly downstairs. My wife saw my pale, sweaty face, as I whispered, "911." The paramedics rushed me to the emergency room, where multiple tests indicated bilateral pulmonary emboli—multiple blood clots in both lungs. The doctor told me I was lucky; many victims don't even make it to the hospital. Yet the next morning, I felt completely normal, as though nothing had happened. I spent the day in the hospital, watching the opening festivities of the Supreme Convention on EWTN.

I credit Father McGivney and our Blessed Mother for my recovery.

Maine (by way of Connecticut)

MASS, from Page 1

of Father McGivney. He loved the priesthood deeply and lived it for others, including widows, orphans, and outcasts."

At the conclusion of Mass, Archbishop Lori was joined by Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson, other supreme officers and John Walshe, a great grandnephew of Father McGivney, at the sarcophagus near the entrance of the church, where the remains of Father McGivney are interred. The archbishop incensed the sarcophagus as church bells tolled, and then led the congregation in prayers for canonization.

Father McGivney passed away Aug. 14, 1890, two days past his 38th birthday, in the rectory of St. Thomas parish in Thomaston, Conn., where he served as pastor for six years. He was also pastor at the time of Immaculate Conception parish in nearby Terryville. Previously, he was assistant priest for seven years at St. Mary's, where he gathered a handful of parish men in the church's basement to found the Knights of Columbus.

Among the Mass attendees were Connecticut State Council officers, including State Deputy Thomas J. Vita, who brought up the offertory gifts with his wife, Rosemary. John Walshe served as lector and Brian Caulfield, vice postulator for Father McGivney's cause, read the Prayer of the Faithful.

Speaking of the profound influence Father McGivney had on the early Knights in embracing the Order's principles, Archbishop Lori said, "These men would not have committed to the principle of charity had they not seen in Father McGivney a man of tireless pastoral charity, who reflected God's love through acts of personal generosity and compassion. These men would not have committed to the principle of unity had they not seen how Father McGivney brought together the people of St. Mary's parish and

how he served as a source of unity in the wider community of New Haven. Nor would they have committed to the principle of fraternity had they not witnessed how Father McGivney was not only the father but also the brother to his parishioners and indeed to anyone in need."

Concluding his homily with personal reflections, the archbishop said that as supreme chaplain, he considers Father McGivney to be "my parish priest, the parish priest of my soul. Every morning I pray to him and I pray that he be canonized, as I know you do. Every day I load his plate with all kinds of intentions—some are personal, some pertain to the Order, and some to my ministry. How earnestly we should pray that he be raised to the dignity of the altar."



Archbishop William Lori, supreme chaplain, incenses the sarcophagus containing the remains of Father McGivney after Mass at St. Mary's Church in New Haven. Looking on are, from left: Dominican Father John Paul Walker, pastor; Dominican Father Joseph Allen, former pastor; Supreme Knight Carl Anderson, and John Walshe, great grandnephew of Father McGivney, who served as lector for Mass.

GUILD ITEMS

Please Send Items Below To:

Name _____

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.

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.



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 1 1/4" 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

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS • 1 COLUMBUS PLAZA • NEW HAVEN, CT 06510-3326

DIRECTOR'S DESK, from Page 1

a picture of some idealized home where there is no conflict, suffering or stress. For him, the love that governs family life and inspires spouses, parents and children to make decisions that are good and virtuous is the sacrificial love of Jesus himself. Only in living for others, in laying down one's life for the beloved, will we come to know the fullness of Christian family life marked by deep contentment and the joy of living a life of Christian holiness.

Christian family life is one of giving rather than taking. It is living for the other rather than looking out for oneself. In a culture so strongly oriented to self-fulfillment, success and material indulgence, this vision of Christian family life is a challenging ideal. Yet it is a challenge that Father McGivney wove into the life and work of the Knights of Columbus, more than 130 years ago.

Long hailed as the Protector of Christian Family Life, Father McGivney was well-known as a champion of the needs of families. He knew firsthand the burdens and struggles of family life in the late 19th century. His own family suffered the early death of his father and the plight of a widowed mother of a large family that had lost children in infancy. As a priest, when he established the Knights of Columbus, we can be sure that he was as much concerned about wives and mothers as he was about forming Catholic men ready to face life with faith and a commitment to care for others.

He anticipated the challenge of Pope Francis with his vision of the family as the fulfillment of the love of Christ himself. Love is made perfect in laying down one's life for the beloved. Every family has this love as its central mission, for it is this kind of love that we give to our children, to our parents, to our brothers and sisters.

Venerable Father McGivney believed that this sacrificial love was to be found in the ordinary choices and decisions of daily life. It is in living ordinary life in a spirit of self-giving and service to others that love becomes extraordinary, even heroic. For him, holiness is found in doing

the ordinary in an extraordinary way. The unending patience required of parents, the responsibility to guide and protect younger family members, the struggle to show respect to elders even when their weaknesses and foibles are clearly evident, these are moments when love must express itself.

Love is the mission of the Christian family. Only when this love, exemplified in the cross of Christ, becomes our focus and source of strength is the family fully alive.

Father Michael J. McGivney's challenge is not different from that of Pope Francis. Both call Catholics, particularly the young, to take up a counter-cultural vision of what family means and show how the vision can become a reality. Both acknowledge that holiness is not to be found in the family itself, but in the family in its relationship to God. True happiness and peace are not products that the world can manufacture or supply. Only the author of life, the author of the family—God himself—can promise true human fulfillment and the contentment of mind and heart that come from being truly his sons and daughters.

We who are the spiritual friends and devotees of Venerable Father McGivney, who pray daily for his beatification, can well understand the message of our Holy Father. As we look forward to the pope's first visit to the United States in late September, during the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia, we can confidently state that Knights of Columbus have learned the theme of the gathering from our founder's vision: "Love is our Mission: The Family Fully Alive!"

Devotedly yours in Christ,

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

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

Guild Director

Vice Postulator