



The Blessed Father Michael J. McGivney Honoris

Saint Patrick Basilica
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SPRING BULLETIN

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"Father McGivney's vision remains as relevant as ever in the changed circumstances of today's Church and society." - Pope John Paul II

Just about every day Catholic laymen bound in a common association gather to advance the welfare of their Church and communities. They meet in councils all over the order. Some will help families or secure aid for disaster victims. Others will help finance Catholic schools or independent living for people with disabilities. More will organize nutrition programs for disadvantaged children or prayer services for an end to abortion. They are, we are, the Knights of Columbus, the legacy of Father Michael J. McGivney. Knights and our families have always held reverence for the animator of our lay movement. Since Father McGivney's cause for canonization began in 1997, spreading his story of holiness and priestly service, popular devotion to him has increased. The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., has added a stained-glass window depicting his image.

Father McGivney dedicated his life to the spiritual and physical welfare of others, creating the Knights of Columbus to provide insurance for the protection of widows and orphans, and the spiritual benefit of its members and families. Today, a growing number of schools, medical centers and social service agencies named for him associate their work with his charism, and the Knights of Columbus insures the lives of more than 1.2 million men, women and children. Beyond charitable works, Father McGivney wanted each Knight's heart and mind attuned to greater love of God and his Son, both within the Church and within the family. That is his spiritual legacy.

Through the Knights, Father McGivney sought to form young Catholic men into good spouses and fathers. He has become known as Apostle to the Young and Defender of Christian Family Life. He saw strong families as the foundation of his parish, of the Church and of society at large. He was convinced that the Catholic layman had a unique role in influencing society and promoting the values found in what Pope John Paul II has since named the Culture of Life and Civilization of Love.

Father McGivney did not use the vocabulary of the 21st century, but he espoused the same Gospel values that Catholics affirm today. Increasingly, Church leaders realize that part of Father McGivney's spiritual genius is that nearly a century before the Second Vatican Council addressed the important role of the laity in the Church, Father McGivney built a way for laymen to make a substantial and enduring contribution to their parishes, communities and physical and spiritual security of their families. And he saw that by doing so one parish and community at a time, Catholic families could help build a better world.

He was a man ahead of his time.

Vivat Jesus!

Submitted by Brother Bill Country, PGK, FDD.

For prayers to Blessed Michael McGivney and other prayers visit the "The Blessed Michael J. McGivney Honoris", Ottawa, Ontario website <http://www.michaeljmcgivneyhonoris.ca> .

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