

# Knightline

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.

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News for Knights of Columbus Leaders • 1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510-3326, USA

## Earning Star Council Status in 120 Days



Our Star Council Award winners are the leaders of our Order in the areas of membership, insurance promotion and service programs. Even though we are in the final quarter of the 2014-2015 fraternal year, there is still time for your council to qualify for this prestigious honor. To be eligible to earn the Star Council Award, a council must qualify for the Father McGivney, Founders' and Columbian awards. To qualify for these

awards, your council must also submit the *Survey of Fraternal Activity* (#1728) and the *Service Program Personnel Report* (#365).

### Step 1: Columbian Award

To earn the Columbian Award, your council must complete and submit the *Columbian Award Application* (#SP7), found in the *Council Report Forms Booklet* (#1436) or at [kofc.org/forms](http://kofc.org/forms).

Councils must conduct and report at least four major programs in each of the Service Program categories (Church, Community, Council, Family, Culture of Life and Youth).

Or, as an alternative, councils may conduct a single featured program in each category, thereby fulfilling all requirements for that category. The featured programs, and their respective categories, are the Refund Supports Vocation Program – RSVP (Church), Habitat for Humanity or Global Wheelchair Mission (Community), Special Olympics (Council), Food for Families (Family), Ultrasound Initiative or a March for Life event (Culture of Life), and Coats for Kids (Youth).

### Helpful Hints:

- Review your council's activities (especially any featured programs) and determine whether or not any of the categories' requirements remain unfulfilled.
- Meet with your pastor to see which service programs are needed in the parish. Focus on those that can be completed quickly, or choose existing programs with which Knights can currently assist.
- You may also want to consider tying your service programs to upcoming national and Church holidays. Clergy appreciation programs can be held during the Easter season, or a food drive can be conducted during Lent. Consider donating wheelchairs to veterans on Memorial or Victoria Day, or collecting baby items for pregnancy service centers on or near Mothers Day.
- Visit [kofc.org/service](http://kofc.org/service) for detailed instructions on conducting food drives, RSVP programs, veterans programs, support for people with intellectual disabilities, programs for youth, and other activities.

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## New Incentive for Fraternal Year End

Star Councils are the strong foundation upon which the Knights of Columbus' growth in charitable works, membership and insurance rest. In continuing recognition of the outstanding councils that earn this distinction, the Supreme Council has initiated a new incentive.

If a council earns the Star Council Award (at any level) in the 2014-15 fraternal year, it will receive a credit of \$4.50 (\$3.50 per capita and \$1 Catholic Advertising) for each billable member on its roster as of July 1, 2015. Please note that this special Star Council incentive is only offered for insurance territories (United States, Canada, Puerto Rico and Guam).

For example: A council with 100 billable members on its roster as of July 1, 2015, will receive a credit of \$450 on the September 2015 statement. Be advised that non-billable members include Honorary Life members and those who have disability waivers.



## 'Why Join the Knights of Columbus?'

*New membership app lets prospects know what the Order offers*

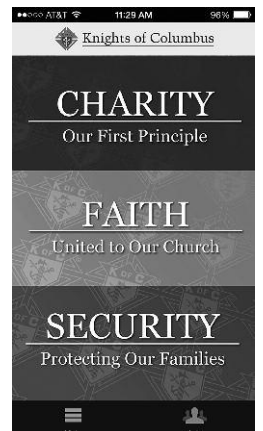
The new Knights of Columbus "Join Us" app shows what the Order has to offer eligible Catholic men and their families. The app is now available, free of charge, on both iOS (iPhone, iPad, etc.) and Android operating systems.

This app features an overview of the Knights of Columbus' work in providing security to families, as well as our charitable and faith-based programs. It's a concise and engaging way to share with prospects the good works and top-rated insurance protection made possible by joining the Order.

Through the app, one can also access the online form interested prospects can complete as the first step in becoming a Knight of Columbus.

This tool is available for download on any compatible device.

Download this app and encourage your fellow Knights to do the same. With such a convenient recruitment tool available at our fingertips, we can all the more easily show qualified Catholic men what the Knights of Columbus can provide for both him and his family.



# Cardinal George Receives Gaudium et Spes Award

Cardinal Francis George, who served as archbishop of Chicago for more than 15 years until his retirement in 2014, received the Knights of Columbus' highest honor at a lunch in Chicago on Jan. 30.

The Gaudium et Spes Award, named after the Second Vatican Council's pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world, was established by the Knights of Columbus in 1992.

Cardinal George is the award's 11th honoree. Previous honorees have included Blessed Teresa of Kolkata, l'Arche founder Jean Vanier, Cardinal John O'Connor of New York, Cardinal Stanisław Dziwisz of Krakow, and Cardinals William Baum and James Hickey, former archbishops of Washington.

Cardinal George has been a member of the Knights of Columbus since 1991. He has served as Knights of Columbus state chaplain for the state of Washington, in addition to host ordinary for the Knights of Columbus Supreme Convention in Chicago in 2005. The cardinal also presided over the Knights' Eucharistic Congress following that convention, and he was a keynote speaker at the Knights of Columbus Supreme Convention in 2002 and 2009.

Cardinal George's successor, Archbishop Blase Cupich, a member of

the Knights of Columbus for more than three decades, gave the invocation. Archbishop William Lori of Baltimore, supreme chaplain of the Knights of Columbus, read the award's citation: "For his courage and

strength, and for his long and selfless service to the Church and her people, the Knights of Columbus is honored to pay tribute to a faithful shepherd and profound teacher of the faith by bestowing the 11th Gaudium et Spes Award upon His Eminence Francis Cardinal George, Archbishop Emeritus of Chicago."

"The Cities of Yakima, Portland and Chicago were blessed to have Cardinal George as their bishop and spiritual leader. And his leadership has benefited not only those cities which he served, but the Knights of Columbus and Catholics across the United States," said Supreme Knight

Carl Anderson, who presented the award.

"In his brilliant speeches, homilies, letters and books, and in the brave witness to the faith that he has shown to the world — in sickness and in health — Cardinal George has proven over and over again one of the leading voices in the Catholic Church in the United States, and the Knights of Columbus is pleased to be able to honor him in this way for the great work he has done for so long," Anderson added.



*Supreme Knight Carl Anderson bestows the Gaudium et Spes Award medal to Cardinal Francis George (far left), naming him the 11th recipient of the prestigious distinction.*

## Knights Sponsor Football Clinic for Special Olympics



*Luke Willson coaches a young athlete on football fundamentals.*



*Aside from meeting the professional football players, the Special Olympic athletes also participated in a flag football game.*

Seahawks tight end Luke Willson experienced firsthand the joy of the Special Olympics athletes during a football skills clinic and flag football game at Nozomi Park in Chandler, Ariz., sponsored by the Arizona Knights of Columbus, Arizona Special Olympics and Catholic Athletes for Christ.

"What I saw in you today brought me back to my younger days and reminds me that the key to sports is having fun, taking joy in the game," said Willson, who was joined at the Special Olympics event by NFL Hall of Fame offensive tackle Anthony Muñoz.

"I watched you kick the football and throw the football," Muñoz told the young athletes, "and you did it with spirit. It's a great grace if you know how to have fun."

Willson and Muñoz, who played in two Super Bowls for the Cincinnati Bengals, were joined by Muñoz's son, Michael, a former collegiate football player; former Kansas City Chief's wide receiver Chris Horn, who now lives in Phoenix; Catholic Athletes for Christ President Ray McKenna and Arizona State Deputy Larry Becker.

"The Knights of Columbus has been a partner with the Special Olympics from the very beginning in 1968, and we are pleased that we could help these young people share in the excitement of the big day here in Phoenix," said Supreme Knight Carl Anderson. "Special Olympics does great work for so many people, and that work and events like this serve as a powerful reminder of the dignity and value of every human being."

The Knights of Columbus has always had a close relationship with Special Olympics. To help record local involvement, make sure that your council completes the *Partnership Profile Report with Special Olympics* (#4584). The form is available at [kofc.org/forms](http://kofc.org/forms).

## Celebrating the Culture of Life in LA

Supreme Knight Carl Anderson joined California Knights at the OneLife LA celebration on Jan. 17, which invited all people to join in declaring a commitment to valuing and protecting all human life, particularly the most vulnerable.

The event began with a walk up Temple Street, across Grand Avenue and down 1st Street. The walk was led by Archbishop José Gomez, California State Deputy Avelino Doliente, Mother Agnes Mary Donovan from the Sisters of Life, and Supreme Knight Anderson and his wife, Dorian. The event culminated in a family-friendly picnic with music, entertainment, food trucks and exhibits from community organizations.

“My brother Knights and I are pleased to be here for OneLife — celebrating with you the dignity of every human being at every stage of life. We know that every human being should be loved, respected and aided. This is true of the cold child in need of a coat, the hungry family in need of food, the poor in need of education and the child in utero waiting to be born,” Supreme Knight Anderson said in his introduction of Rick Smith, the director of Digital Ministries at Watermark Community Church in Texas.

Smith’s two-year-old son, Noah, has Down Syndrome. Immediately after Noah’s birth, Smith turned to social media to share with the world how great his life has become since becoming “Noah’s dad.” Smith and his wife, Abbie, have since been blessed with the birth of their second son, Jaxten.

Supreme Knight Anderson joined Jeff Suppan, a former player with the St. Louis Cardinals, in presenting the Smith family with signed baseballs and hats.



Supreme Knight Anderson introduces the Smith family during the event.

## Join the Campaign for Life in Canada

The National March for Life in Canada will be held in Ottawa on Thursday, May 14, 2015. A candlelight prayer vigil will be held the evening before. Prayer services, Masses, rallies, conferences and other events, including the Youth Conference and annual Rose Dinner, will also be held in Ottawa during this three-day period.

Attendees of this year’s march may also wish to express their opposition to the Supreme Court of Canada’s recent decision in the *Carter v. Canada* case, which declared that a ban of physician-assisted suicide is unconstitutional. Show your support for life at all stages, from conception until natural death, and encourage members of Parliament to invoke the “notwithstanding clause” (Section 33) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to override the assisted suicide ruling.

To receive materials in time for your council to show its support, order *Defend Life* signs (#9341) and other culture of life support materials by calling 203-752-4403 or sending an email to [william.obrien@kofc.org](mailto:william.obrien@kofc.org). Provide your name, address, council number, telephone number and the number of signs you would like. The signs are available in English and French; please specify language preference when ordering.

For more information on the National March for Life and other pro-life events in Ottawa, visit [www.marchforlife.ca](http://www.marchforlife.ca).

## Former Supreme Secretary Passes Away

Former Supreme Secretary Howard E. Murphy Sr., 95, passed away Feb. 1, 2015, in Cheshire, Conn.

Murphy served as supreme secretary from 1980–84. Prior to that, he served as administrative assistant to the supreme knight and assistant supreme secretary. He was elected a member of the Board of Directors in Aug. 1980.

Murphy became a member of the Knights of Columbus in 1947, when he joined Paugassett Council 28 in Derby, Conn. He later transferred to Carmel Council 3605 in Hamden. As a member of the Commodore John Barry Assembly in New Haven, he was presented with the Charles Carroll of Carrollton Award for outstanding service to the Church and community.

In 1973, he was named a Knight of St. Gregory by Pope Paul VI.



## Grand Knight Checklist – March & April

- Remember these upcoming dates:
  - April 1 — Submit the *Application for Refund Support Vacations Program* (#2863).
  - April 10 — Suspension date for councils failing to submit the Per Capita Tax, Catholic Advertising Fund and Culture of Life Fund assessments to the Supreme Council.  
Failure to pay the assessments prior to April 10 will result in suspension of the council. A suspended council may not be seated at their state convention, nor are its members eligible to be delegates to the Supreme Convention.
- If your council has not yet done so, submit the *Survey of Fraternal Activity* (#1728).
- Make sure your council is on the path to earning the Star Council Award.





## In Award and Incentives, Star Councils Set the Pace

Only through growth can councils be successful as they strive to earn Star Council Award status. Recruiting and retaining members is the result of successful, active council programs.

As a fraternal leader you should continually review the council and its membership numbers. Ask yourself: Is your council on pace to make its membership and insurance quotas? Is your council conducting programs that include a large percentage of its membership? Where do you stand on insurance and membership? Is your council in tune with your chaplain? Does your council involve your field agent? How are your programs and activities doing?

What do these results tell you? The numbers are the report card. The better the numbers, the better the programs have been in connecting the members of the council and uniting them in a common cause.

The only way to improve these numbers is to expand the programs of the council, to include and connect to more members, and to be involved, visible and connected to parish life. Good programs and activities involve your council members, build enthusiasm and bolster your membership efforts. Programs provide opportunities to welcome new members into your council, which is the first step in qualifying for the Star Council Award.

District deputies should also remember this is the last fraternal year in which they can win Star District without any of its councils attaining Star Council. Districts should begin assisting their councils in attaining Star status by planning and hosting at least one First Degree per month.

To attain Star District status their district must meet the quotas that appear on the *District Deputy Report* (#F049). Eligible districts may win a plaque and lapel pin containing stars reflecting the number of Star Councils in their district. If all of its active councils attain one of the levels of Star Council, the district wins the All Star District Award.

For further details on achieving these awards and incentives, please refer to the *Knights of Columbus Leadership Resources* booklet (#5093).



## Prospect a New Member

Before you consider HOW to recruit, you must address the question WHO to recruit. Identifying the many eligible Catholic men who would enjoy participating in the Order is easier than you think.

- It's all about gathering names. Utilize all possible sources of potential leads, including:
  - Parish Directory
  - Catholic Newspapers
  - Church Bulletins/Advertisers
  - Church-Related Activities
  - Community Activities
  - Athletic Associations/Activities
  - Recruiting Drives
  - New Parishioners
- Make the appointment:
  - Send a letter to each prospect explaining how he will benefit from membership in the Knights. Include a *Membership Invitation* (#2599).
  - Within a week of the mailing, follow up with a phone call to the prospect.
  - Ask for a convenient time to meet with him and his wife to discuss the benefits of the Order.
- While in the home:
  - Discuss the Order's many charitable, fraternal and spiritual programs, and explain the various benefits extended to his family, community and church.
  - Discuss any concerns or questions posed by either the prospect or his spouse.
  - Help the prospect complete a *Membership Document* (#100). Please be advised that all *Membership Documents* must be received, processed and recorded at the Supreme Council before noon EST on June 30 to be counted toward 2014-15 fraternal year quotas.
  - Advise the prospect of the date of the First Degree. If possible, accompany the candidate; if not, make arrangements for a council member to act as mentor and guide to the candidate. Don't forget to send a card, congratulating the member upon his reception of the First Degree.



### Fraternal Survey: Submit Now

Councils, assemblies and circles should have completed the 2014 *Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity* (#1728) and submitted it to the Supreme Council office by Jan. 31. If you have not already done so, please send in your survey immediately. This form is available at [kofc.org/forms](http://kofc.org/forms) or in the *Council Reports Forms* booklet (#1436).

## Use VIP Points for Knights Merchandise

Between Jan. 1 and June 30, 2015, district deputies will receive 10,000 VIP points for every new, reactivated or reinstated council in their district.

Recruiters also have the chance to double their points between Jan. 1 and June 30, 2015. If a Knight recruits 1-5 members, his points will double from 500 VIP points to 1,000 VIP points per new member. For each additional member recruited, the proposer will receive an additional 2,000 VIP points. These points can be redeemed for select merchandise available at [knightsgear.com](http://knightsgear.com), with 1,000 VIP points being equivalent to \$6. The website covers all Knights of Columbus-related gift and clothing needs, as well as Knights of Columbus apparel, accessories,



books, religious and liturgical items, flags and a variety of other products. To order Knights Gear products through your council's account, please visit [kofc.org](http://kofc.org). After signing into Officers Online, click on the Knights Gear logo. A *Requisition Form* (#1) is no longer needed to order supplies and gift items when ordering through this website.

Additional items mentioned in this newsletter may also be ordered through the online request form or by faxing (800-266-6340) or mailing a *Requisition Form* (#1) to the Knights of Columbus Supply Department at P.O. Box 1670, New Haven, CT 06507. To avoid duplicate orders, please do not mail in a hard copy of your order if you have already faxed it in or submitted it online.



## Help Feed Your Community

The Knights of Columbus Food for Families initiative has helped feed thousands of needy men, women and children in communities across the the United States and Canada. As part of the program, councils have organized hundreds of food drives and programs, including the Knights of Columbus Journey for Charity, a 30-mile event that collects donations along the route; the 40 Cans for Lent food drives, which aim to have every council member and parishioner contribute one can of food for each of the 40 days of Lent; and the planting of community vegetable gardens.

Help join in the fight against hunger and organize your own local initiative. Promote your event through parish and council bulletins, announcements at Mass (with your pastor's permission), council meetings, email blasts, or postings to the council's Facebook page.

As an added incentive to conduct Food for Families programs, the Supreme Council is offering a rebate of \$100 for every \$500 or 1,000 pounds of food that a council contributes to a food pantry, food bank or soup kitchen, up to a maximum refund of \$500 per council per fraternal year. Simply complete the *Food for Families Reimbursement Program Report Form* — found at [kofc.org/forms](http://kofc.org/forms) — and submit it by June 30.

For ideas on conducting your own Food for Families event and for further information on this program, please contact Quianna Richardson at 203-752-4402 or [quianna.richardson@kofc.org](mailto:quianna.richardson@kofc.org).



## Humanum: John Paul II Institute's Online Quarterly Review

In 2011, the Center for Cultural and Pastoral Research of the Pontifical John Paul III Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family in Washington, D.C., began a free online quarterly review of books and publications addressing current issues of family, marriage, love, children, health and human life.

The name of the journal, *Humanum*, was chosen because each issue aims to discuss precisely what makes and keeps us human, and what does not. Articles address topics such as how we can rescue our humanity when it is at risk of being lost, particularly in its most vulnerable stages. Other topics of interest include: childhood, education, vocation, work, artificial reproductive technology, Catholicism and the future of medicine, same-sex unions, and technology in the home.

*Humanum* is offered to anyone concerned with the renewal of the civilization of love. Issues may be accessed at [www.humanumreview.com](http://www.humanumreview.com).



## Honor Your K of C Families



*James and Stefanie Bell and their children — pictured here with Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William Lori, Supreme Knight Carl Anderson and his wife, Dorian — were recognized as the International Family of the Year at the 132nd Supreme Convention in Orlando, Fla. The Bells received the recognition after being named the Wyoming State Council Family of the Year due to their exemplary service to parish, community and the Knights of Columbus.*

Families are the foundation upon which our Order is built. Because of the importance that the family holds for the Knights of Columbus, councils regularly participate in the “Family of the Month” and “Family of the Year” programs. Each month, your council should organize a committee to select an exemplary K of C family to honor as the “Family of the Month.”

At the year's end, select a “Family of the Year” from your “Family of the Month” recipients. Each council's “Family of the Year” is eligible for entry into the state council's “Family of the Year” competition. Entry forms can be found in the *Family of the Month* booklet (#1993) and at [kofc.org/forms](http://kofc.org/forms).

Although state “Family of the Year” winners are traditionally announced at state council conventions, local councils should not send their “Family of the Year” entries to the Supreme Council. The forms should instead be submitted to your state deputy, program director or family activities director, along with the other entries for your council-sponsored service programs in the categories of Church, Community, Council, Culture of Life, Family and Youth Activities. Contact your district deputy or state program director for details on where to send entries and your state's entry deadline. State and provincial winners are then entered in the Supreme Council.

For details concerning the Family of the Month program, visit [kofc.org](http://kofc.org).



## Tell Us About Your Outreach Programs

All Knights of Columbus councils are encouraged to take part in the Orderwide Outreach Week and Recruitment Drive held March 21-29 in conjunction with Founder's Day. The Order has many programs in place to help people in need. Outreach events and drives are a way to coordinate Knights' efforts on an international level. For more details on outreach programs and events, please consult the Fraternal Training Portal and Officers Online. Once your program(s) has been conducted, please let us know about it by sending an email to [knightline@kofc.org](mailto:knightline@kofc.org). We will consider the best programs for future publication in the Knights in Action section of *Columbia*, in *Knightline* or on the website.



# Supreme Knight Addresses Participants at the Annual March for Life

On Jan. 22, hundreds of thousands bore witness to their belief in the sanctity of every human life by participating in the 2015 March for Life in Washington, D.C. The marchers — which included thousands of Knights and their families — were addressed by Supreme Knight Carl Anderson, who joined several speakers in thanking those gathered for their support of the culture of life.

“Thank you for your witness and your stand for life!” Supreme Knight Anderson said. “We face new threats this year — new efforts to legalize doctor-assisted suicide. But we will stand up for all those at the end of life, as we do for those at the beginning of life. We must build a culture of life for all those who are vulnerable or who suffer — their life is a gift! Today, we celebrate the gift of every life.”

As Knights and their families, including college Knights from throughout the country, gathered for the march, many carried council banners and flags. Also scattered among the crowd were thousands of K of C “Defend Life” signs.

During his remarks, Supreme Knight Anderson shared the results of the January 2015 Knights of Columbus-Marist polling. The poll, he said, shows that 84 percent of Americans want significant restrictions on abortion and 60 percent of Americans say abortion is morally wrong.

“Why is public opinion turning toward life?” Supreme Knight Anderson asked. “Because you stand up for life! Because no amount of propaganda can cover up the pain of women who regret their abortion. And because when women know the truth they choose life!”

The supreme knight also spoke about the Knights of Columbus Ultrasound Initiative, through which councils have put more than 500 ultrasound machines into pregnancy resource centers throughout all 50 States during the past five years.



“The number of children these machines save per year is at least 50,000. The cost of each machine is \$30,000. So the cost to save each life is \$300,” the supreme knight said.

“And the value of each of those lives?” he added. “You and I know that every life is priceless.”

Among the other speakers at the March for Life rally were members of congress and Archbishop Joseph Kurtz, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The march was led by Jeanne Monahan Mancini, president of the March for Life Education and Defense Fund, an organization born out of the grassroots movement that gathered on the first anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 Supreme Court decision which legalized abortion in all three trimesters of pregnancy throughout the United States.

The flagship program of the organization is the annual March for Life, which has taken place in Washington, D.C., every January since 1974 in peaceful protest of *Roe v. Wade*.

*Status*, from Page 1

## Step 2: Father McGivney Award

The Father McGivney Award is presented to councils that achieve at least 100 percent of goal in membership (100 percent quota for membership equals 7 percent increase of the council's membership as of July 1, or a minimum of four net members). Double Star Councils, which achieve 200 percent of its membership quota, or the Triple Star Councils, which achieve 300 percent of the quota in membership, also qualify for the Father McGivney Award.

### *Helpful Hints:*

- Review how close your council is to meeting its quota. If the quota has already been met, recruit some additional members in case you have an unexpected drop in membership. Also, schedule a First Degree exemplification for every month between now and the fraternal year's end. Challenge each of your council officers to recruit at least one new member prior to June 30, 2015.
- Hold a Church drive at your parish. Then, during the following week, conduct an open house at your council's meeting place. Afterward, be sure to distribute Form 100s, and follow up with any prospects who do not sign the form at either of your recruiting events.
- Ask each of your council members to recruit one member of his family (either immediate or extended).
- After getting a list of new prospects, schedule a series of First Degree exemplifications (one each month) between now and the fraternal year's end. If you don't have a degree team, utilize the First Degree DVD, available via Officers Online.

## Step 3: Founders' Award

To earn the Founders' Award your council needs to achieve insurance membership quota as of July 1. The quota for councils is a 2.5 percent net increase, which equates to a minimum of three new insurance members. (Note: All membership and insurance transactions must be received, processed, recorded and released at the Supreme Council office by June 30.)

### *Helpful Hints:*

- Review how close your council is to meeting its insurance quota. If it has already been met, ask your insurance agent to confirm that you have enough recruits to cover unexpected drops in insurance membership.
- Invite your agent to speak at each council meeting and to address new Knights immediately after their First Degree exemplification. Also, invite him to write an insurance column for your newsletter and/or on your council website.
- Invite your agent to your social, charitable and recruitment events, and give him the opportunity to talk to members (current and potential) about K of C Insurance. Remember that your agent is busy, so he may not be able to attend every event he's invited to.
- Ask insurance members (both veteran and new) to give a testimonial on their positive experience with K of C Insurance. Have them speak at meetings and open houses, or dedicate space to their stories in your newsletter or on your website.



# Protect Your Family With Knights of Columbus Insurance

## Why We Offer Insurance

**B**efore you think about how you and your family would use life insurance, how your council members can benefit from our insurance program, or what products and options you would need, there's a more basic question that needs to be answered: Why do the Knights of Columbus care about life insurance? The answer is simple: Providing financial protection for Catholic families has been at the core of our mission since the beginning.

### Two Problems, One Solution

The drive to offer financial protection for Catholic families comes from our venerable founder, Father Michael J. McGivney.

In the summer of 1873, as a young seminarian in Canada, he was forced to leave theological studies and return home to aid his family after the sudden death of his father, Patrick. "He was reeling," it says in his biography *Parish Priest*. "He packed his belongings, knowing that he would never return to Sainte-Marie, and went home."

"Money for tuition was no longer available," the authors continue. "Even if the McGivney family could survive without Michael's financial support, it was not clear that he could survive without help from them — or someone." Michael was able to continue his studies only after receiving a scholarship from the then-Diocese of Hartford.

Less than a decade later, as an associate pastor at St. Mary's Church in New Haven, Conn., Father McGivney was faced with an all-too-similar situation.

One of his parishioners, Edward Downes Jr., was forced to quit the seminary after his father died unexpectedly. He returned home to New Haven to support his mother and 12 siblings.

In those days, the court had the right to assign children to public institutions if it had reason to believe that their families could not properly care for and support them. Unless they were represented by a financially secure guardian in court, the teenage Downes boys would be removed from their family.

On Feb. 6, 1882 — the very same day as the first meeting for what would become the Knights of Columbus — Father McGivney appeared in court to stand as guardian for Edward's brother Alfred. The court accepted, yet Father McGivney was frustrated by the recurring nightmare of financial hardship.

"Even though he was only a young man," *Parish Priest* says of Father McGivney, "he was filled with a lifetime of anger and frustration at the sense of doom that settled over nearly every family that lost its wage earner. ... On the afternoon of February 6, he was more determined than ever that what had happened to the Downes family need not happen to anyone else."

### The Mission Begins – And Continues

In that spirit, Father McGivney set off with "entrepreneurial zeal" to found the Knights of Columbus. In his own words, Father McGivney wanted the organization to "to unite the men of our Faith throughout the Diocese of Hartford, that we may thereby gain strength to aid each other in time of sickness, to provide for decent burial, and to render pecuniary assistance to the families of the deceased members."

He knew what life was like without that assistance. The initial system of "life insurance" designed by Father McGivney was a simple one, a pass-the-hat system through which each member could help support his brother Knights.

As the organization grew council by council, state by state, and country by country, so too did the insurance program. The pass-the-hat system was transformed into one of the largest and most highly rated life insurance programs in North America.

The Knights of Columbus has passed many milestones and received many accolades along the way: \$97 billion of life insurance in force, 39 consecutive A++ (Superior) ratings for financial strength from A.M. Best, 14 consecutive years of sales growth, and designation as a 2014 "World's Most Ethical Company," but all that is secondary.

What matters most is that we continue to fulfill Father McGivney's mission of offering and providing financial protection for Catholic families.

2015 is not 1882. Times are different. Laws are different. Economies are different. But even for those families who may have slightly more than next-to-nothing, insurance protection can be the difference between getting by and getting evicted. In its role as the premier Catholic life insurer, the Knights of Columbus continues to provide a valuable and noble service.

### *That's why we offer life insurance.*

It's not for the \$8 billion in annual sales volume, or the \$97 billion in force, or the 1.8 million policies on the books. It's not the amount that counts, but the impact of those dollars.

It's the homes saved, the college tuitions provided, the Catholic funerals paid for and the families shielded that create the legacy of protection that would make Father McGivney proud.

It's those things that are the hallmark of the Knights of Columbus Insurance program.

This March, as we observe Founder's Day, and remember Father McGivney's legacy and the mission he set forth for our great Order, take the time to reach out to your dedicated Knights of Columbus field agent — who is himself a brother Knight — and see what we might be able to offer to you and your family.

Find him by visiting [kofc.org/findagent](http://kofc.org/findagent) or by calling 1-800-345-5632.

# Knightline

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.

1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510-3326

**ETHICAL BUSINESS.**



Find an agent at [kofc.org](http://kofc.org)  
or 1-800-345-5632

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