



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

COUNCIL #1913 MONTHLY INSTRUCTION

History

WHAT IS THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS?

- World's largest Catholic, fraternal, family, service organization
- Based upon charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism
- Founded on February 6, 1882, in New Haven, CT, as a fraternal benefit society.
- Charter was granted by the Connecticut State Assembly March 29, 1882. This date is celebrated as Founder's Day each year.
- Over 1.9 million members around the world.
- United States, Canada, the Philippines, Mexico, Poland, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Panama, the Bahamas, the Virgin Islands, Cuba, Guatemala, Guam, Saipan, Lithuania, Ukraine, South Korea, France, Lithuania.
- In 2018, \$185.7 million and 76.7 million service hours in charity
At \$25.43/hr (Independent Sector), service hours come to \$1.9 billion.

HISTORY

- One of many fraternal benefit societies in late-19th century
- Hostility towards Catholic immigrants and dangerous working conditions
- Organized by 29-year-old assistant pastor of St. Mary's Church, Fr. Michael J. McGivney
- Unite men of Catholic faith and provide for the families of deceased members
- Established as a lay organization; not secret (only ceremonials were secret, why?)

NOTABLE K OF C HISTORY

- 1885 Fraternity added to founding principles
- 1890 Fr. McGivney dies
- 1897 First council in Canada in Montreal
- 1900 Patriotism add to founding principles
- 1920's Campaigned against Ku Klux Klan and racial prejudice in USA and religious persecution in Mexico
- 1923 Worked to overturn a law in Oregon prohibiting children under 16 from attending private schools. Successful with the Supreme Court declaring the law unconstitutional

NOTABLE K OF C HISTORY

- 1900 First Fourth Degree exemplification
- 1910 First college council at Notre Dame, Council 1477
- WWI K of C erects "huts" throughout US and Europe to provide Allied servicemen religious services, supplies and recreation. The motto was, "Everyone welcome. Everything free."
- WWII Order establishes \$1 million trust fund for the children of members who died or became disabled in the war.
- 1953 The words "under God" are added by law to the pledge of allegiance by Dwight Eisenhower

NOTABLE K OF C HISTORY

- 1978 Beginning of long relationship with Pope John Paul II. Supreme Knight Virgil C. Dechant was instrumental in forming and growing this relationship.
- 1982 Order establishes funds to help finance studies for priests and seminarians.
- 2009 Order launches Ultrasound Initiative
- 2014 Order launches Building the Domestic Church program
- 2015 Order begins campaign to assist Christians in Middle East
- 2016: Ukraine, the Order's newest territory, has nearly 600 members in 13 councils, and the Order has also taken root in France and Lithuania.

NOTABLE K OF C HISTORY

- 2017: The Knights of Columbus contributed almost \$2 million to various aid programs in the Middle East that have received little to no funding from the U.S. government or international community since ISIS began its genocidal campaign against the region's religious minorities in 2014. Town of Karamles.
- 2020 Immediate Past Supreme Knight Virgil C. Dechant dies. He was a native Kansan from La Crosse.



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Vivat Jesus.