

OUR STORY - FOUNDED BY A PRIEST TO PROTECT CATHOLIC FAMILIES



The Knights of Columbus insurance story begins in the winter of 1882 in the basement of St. Mary's Church in New Haven, Conn.

It was there that our Venerable founder, Father Michael J. McGivney, gathered the men of his parish together to create a solution to a recurring problem.

Many Catholics — most of whom were immigrants — were working and living in unfavorable conditions. And many, tragically, were dying young, leaving behind widows and orphans with insufficient financial resources.

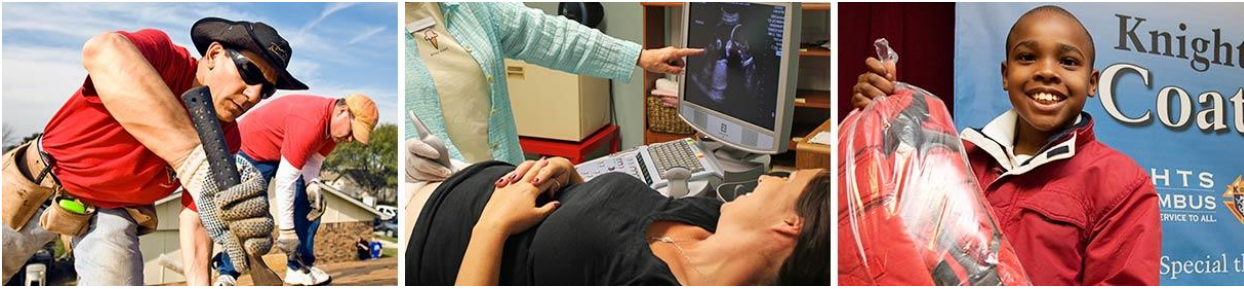
It was a cold reality that had confronted Father McGivney all too often — not only in the lives of his parishioners — but in his own. As a seminarian, he was forced to leave school and return home to aid his family when his father died unexpectedly.

Though this story of financial ruin for Catholic families was common, Father McGivney was convinced that there was a way to change the ending. He knew that if the Catholic men in his parish came together in mutual aid, widows and orphans could receive the support they needed.

He also knew that if Catholic men banded together, united by charity and unity, they could strengthen their faith, their families, and their communities.

So, he established the Knights of Columbus, and with it, a “pass-the-hat” insurance system to protect the Catholic families in his parish. Over time, that system has evolved, and today we stay true to our founding mission through our multi-billion dollar, top-rated insurance program. Members in the United States and Canada have exclusive access to our insurance program and products, including life insurance, retirement annuities, long-term care insurance, and disability income insurance.

Our charitable giving and fraternal service have continued to grow too. Nearly 2 million men in over a dozen countries across the globe are proud to call themselves Knights. Last year alone, these men and their families donated more than \$185 million to charity and performed more than 75 million hours of service.



What We Do

From the moment of our founding in 1882, charity has been the first principle of the Knights of Columbus. We are Catholic men of faith and men of charitable action.

2017 was a record-setting year for Knights of Columbus charitable work with an unprecedented \$185.6 million in donations and 75.6 million hours of service provided worldwide. The monetary value of K of C's service hours is valued at \$1.9 billion based on an estimate by Independent Sector, a network for nonprofit foundations that values a 2017 volunteer hour at \$24.69. The K of C's 2017 survey of charitable giving also showed that monetary donations increased \$8 million from 2016 (+4.5 percent) and service hours grew by 527,550 (+0.7 percent). Year-over-year annual growth in both categories has been consistent over the past two decades.

Our charitable activities encompass an almost infinite variety of local, national and international projects. Our own unique charities include the **Christian Refugee Relief Fund**, **Disaster Relief**, **Ultrasound Initiative**, and **Coats for Kids**. We also partner with international charities including **Special Olympics**, the **Global Wheelchair Mission** and **Habitat for Humanity**.

Through our **Building the Domestic Church initiative**, Knights and their families have greater opportunities to participate in a variety of activities that deepen their faith, promote the New Evangelization, and strengthen our parishes.

"We are answering Pope Francis' call to go to the peripheries," Supreme Knight Carl Anderson said. "We can reach half way around the globe to help those in need and we can reach to our neighbor next door. And we do that every day. That makes us witnesses to the faith."

If you'd like to be a part of an international organization of nearly 2 million Catholic men whose principal work involves helping others in need, we'd like to meet you and invite you to **join us**.