NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Joseph Riffel, State Deputy
statedeputy@kofcsask.com

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Beatification of Knights of Columbus Founder Celebrated
Father Michael J. McGivney's legacy has made an impact in Saskatchewan

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan – The occasion of a 19th century Connecticut priest taking a step closer to sainthood has great significance for many in the province of Saskatchewan, who came together October 30 for a Knights of Columbus Lecture Series at St. Francis Xavier Parish and online by Zoom.

Members of Knights of Columbus San Lorenzo Ruiz Council 11429 planned the Lecture Series to celebrate the October 31 beatification of Father Michael J. McGivney, who founded the Knights of Columbus in 1882. He was declared "blessed", by the Catholic Church, moving him one step closer to canonization as a saint.

A parish priest from ordination until his death, Father McGivney laboured tirelessly to improve the condition of his 19th-century immigrant community in Connecticut. He founded the Knights of Columbus to provide financial support for widows and orphans and to keep Catholic men and their families close to their faith at a time of widespread anti-Catholic bigotry.

The fledgling K of C soon became a major force in the areas of evangelization, charity, racial integration and the defense of religious freedom. Today there are more than 16,000 K of C councils and 2 million members located in all 50 U.S. states, Canada, Mexico, and the Philippines, as well as in recently established councils in Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, France and South Korea.

> *"For more than a century, Knights of Columbus have followed the formula of faith put forth by Father McGivney. Today, with a model called "Faith in Action", nearly 2 million Knights throughout the world live out the Order's principles of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism with programs such as Food for Families, Coats for Kids, Ultrasound Initiative, Special Olympics, Vocations Support, Global Wheelchair Mission, Habitat for Humanity, Consecration to the Holy Family, days of spiritual reflection and Leave No Neighbor Behind (a special program developed due to the Covid-19 Pandemic). We continue to focus our efforts on love and actions in support of Faith, Life, Family and Community." Joseph Riffel, Saskatchewan State Deputy*

On June 17, 1907, 64 men joined the Order in Regina creating the first Council in Saskatchewan. Today, there are 148 Councils and more than 10,525 members (and growing).

The Knights of Columbus shared the news on May 27, 2020, that Pope Francis had approved the promulgation of a decree recognizing a miracle attributed to the intercession of Father McGivney, paving the way to beatification.

The miracle involved the healing of Michael Schachle, now 5, from a fatal syndrome. The healing of fetal hydrops, a dangerous accumulation of fluids throughout the body of an unborn child, had no medical or scientific explanation. The seemingly hopeless situation was met with prayers for the intercession of Father McGivney by his parents, Daniel and Michelle Schachle of Dickson, Tennessee. An additional miracle attributed to Father McGivney's intercession will be required for canonization.

About Father McGivney
Born of Irish immigrant parents in 1852 in Waterbury, Connecticut, Father McGivney was a central figure in the dramatic growth of the Church in the United States in the late 19th century. Ordained in Baltimore in 1877, he ministered to a heavily Irish-American and immigrant community in Connecticut. At a time of anti-Catholic sentiment, he worked tirelessly to offer practical solutions to their many problems – spiritual and temporal alike. With a group of the leading Catholic men of New Haven, he founded the Knights to provide spiritual support for Catholic men and financial resources for families that had suffered the loss of their breadwinner.

Father McGivney died of pneumonia on August 14, 1890 — two days after his 38th birthday — after falling ill amid a pandemic. Recent scientific evidence indicates that the pandemic — like the current one — may have been caused by a coronavirus.

Known by his contemporaries for his devotion to the faith and his embodiment of the characteristics of the Good Samaritan, Father McGivney remains an important role model for parish priests around the world.

In March 2008, he was declared a venerable servant of God by Pope Benedict XVI, who during his visit to New York's St. Patrick's Cathedral cited the "remarkable accomplishment of that exemplary American priest, the Venerable Michael McGivney, whose vision and zeal led to the establishment of the Knights of Columbus."

Two recent books tell the story of Father McGivney and his legacy: "Parish Priest" (2006), his biography; and the "The Knights of Columbus: An Illustrated History" (2020).

More information is available at www.FatherMcGivney.org

About the Knights of Columbus
The Knights of Columbus is one of the world's leading fraternal and service organizations, with 2 million members in more than 16,000 parish-based councils. During the past year, Knights around the world donated more than 77 million service hours and $187 million for worthy causes in their communities. The organization also offers extensive life insurance services to members and their families, resulting in more than $114 billion of life insurance in force. Knights of Columbus Asset Advisors offers investment services to individuals and institutions in accord with Catholic social teachings. From helping children in need to providing wheelchairs for the disabled, to helping stock food banks, to offering top-rated and affordable insurance products to its members, the Knights of Columbus has supported families and communities for more than 138 years.

In Honor of this very special event, the Knights of Columbus is offering free online membership for 1 year to the Order. Candidates must be male, a Practical Catholic and 18 years of age or older. Go to: www.kofc.org/joinus. Enter the Promo code: MCGIVNEY2020 to receive this offer.