

Knights Press Beatification for Founder of Fraternity

The Knights of Columbus have undertaken a study of the life and influence of Father Michael J. McGivney, founder of the society, with a view to proposing the priest for beatification by the Church.

The project was undertaken with the blessing of Archbishop John F. Whealon of Hartford, ordinary of the see in which Father McGivney served. In a letter to Virgil C. Dechant, supreme knight of the K of C, Archbishop Whealon stated, "I commend and encourage this research."

As part of the inquiry a recent survey was made among high officials of the K of C on whether the founder has a reputation of holiness in their areas. Such a reputation, officially known as "fama sanctitatis," is one of the criteria used by the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of the Saints in raising an individual to the honor of the altar.

Reporting on initial results of the survey, Dechant stated there is widespread conviction that Father McGivney led a holy life. He pointed out that some individuals have sought the intercession of Father McGivney and believe that their prayers have been answered.

Among those who have made a personal study of Father McGivney and are convinced that he led a holy life is Bishop Charles P. Greco, supreme chaplain of the fraternal group. Father McGivney was "a good priest, a dutiful priest," the bishop said. "He loved the poor; he showed special compassion for widows and orphans; he was zealous in teaching about God and Jesus Christ. All these are distinct marks of holiness."

Bishop Greco noted that Father McGivney was born in 1852, in Waterbury, Conn., of Irish immigrant parents and was the eldest of 13 children, four of whom died in infancy. At age 13 he was called on to help support the family and went to work in a spoon factory. A pious and virtuous youth, he had dreams of following a priestly career, but the family's limited financial means meant limited opportunity, the bishop recounted.

However, his pastor, Father Thomas P. Hendrickson, later bishop of



FATHER MCGIVNEY

Providence, R.I., took an interest in young Michael and arranged for him to go to a preparatory seminary in Canada. He later transferred to Our Lady of Angels Seminary in Niagara, and then to yet another seminary in Canada. The reasons for these repeated transfers is not clear, Bishop Greco said, but it may have been related to the family's limited means, requiring young Michael to go to whatever seminary would accept him for a minimum fee.

The records show that he entered the major seminary in Baltimore in 1873 and that the bishop of Hartford paid for his educational expenses there. The only known report on the seminarian is a note from the rector to his bishop saying that McGivney was a "very good and pious young man, with good and attractive manners and very much address and industry, exceedingly sensitive, even to the point of tears." So the picture of Father McGivney as a seminarian is that he was "pious, well-mannered, hard-working and very compassionate," the bishop observed.

After his ordination by Archbishop James Gibbons in Baltimore in December 1877, the young priest was assigned to St. Mary's Church in New Haven. He established a close

relationship with an undertaker, Michael Curran, and became vividly aware of the tragedy that struck so many families on the loss of the breadwinner, Bishop Greco said. This undoubtedly led him to establish a society that would help deal with the disaster.

Father McGivney's compassion, "reflected that of Christ, his model," the bishop stated. "Father McGivney could not return sons and husbands to the weeping women of his day (as did Jesus), but he was determined to do the next best thing. He would provide them with new sources of support and an extended family which could offer help and solace in their crisis."

The prelate said that one of the most graphic descriptions of Father McGivney was given by a contemporary priest, Father Joseph Gordian Daley, whom he quoted as follows:

"I saw him but once, and yet I remember his pale beautiful face as if I saw it only yesterday. It was a priest's face; and that explains everything. It was a face of wonderful repose. There was nothing harsh in that countenance... Guilt and ambition were as far from him as from heaven. To meet him was at once to trust him. Children actually loved him. And the very old people of the neighborhood whom he hunted up and who got part of his time, even on busy days, called him a positive saint and meant it."

"In the annals of the priesthood of New England no name deserves brighter honor than that of Father Michael J. McGivney."

"His special vocation it was — and a high and respected vocation too — to develop Catholic manhood, to bind into one conspicuous solidarity all the elements that make for strength of character and so, indeed, to bring out that solidity of character — in other words, that Catholicity — prominently in its strength before the world."

"Thanks to his labors, the society of the Knights of Columbus was organized in 1882. Its purpose was to create among Catholic laymen a confraternity

which, while not being a religious society in the strict sense of the word, exacted from its members certain religious qualifications, that is to say, the open profession of the Catholic faith and filial submission to the Church in all matters of doctrine, discipline and morals."

Bishop Greco stated that in addition to his deep compassion, Father McGivney had one other characteristic that made him a reflection of his divine model. "Like Jesus he was also a man whose zeal consumed him," the bishop said. Father McGivney served as the first secretary of the Knights of Columbus and was chiefly responsible for building it on a sound basis. With his promotion from assistant pastor at St. Mary's in New Haven to pastor of St. Thomas Church in Thomaston, Conn., he relinquished his position as supreme secretary and was given that of supreme chaplain. However his heavy pastoral work, his continued involvement with the work of the fraternal group and particularly his numerous trips to promote the order beyond the confines of New Haven, Conn., took their toll on his health, the bishop stated. He was struck with pneumonia in January 1890. He traveled to New York on two occasions for treatment but died on Aug. 14 of that year, two days after his 38th birthday. He was buried on Old St. Joseph's Cemetery in Waterbury after one of the most impressive funeral processions ever seen in that city.

Bishop Greco related that it was not traditional at that time to make special efforts to preserve the remains of the deceased. "Yet some of his contemporaries manifestly felt that Father McGivney was an unusual

man and perhaps some special arrangements should be undertaken," the prelate said. "Anyway, a rather elaborate brick vault was constructed and after the coffin was lowered, the vault was sealed with a stone slate. When the remains were exhumed on Dec. 8, 1981, they were found to be remarkably well preserved."

The vestments on his body were quite recognizable. The crucifix of the rosary which had been placed in his hands for burial was recovered. The soles and heels of his shoes were still intact. The skeleton was intact and the name plate on the casket clearly identified him as Father Michael J. McGivney."

"We educate the whole person."

ST. BONIFACE SCHOOL
15 Whalin Street, off Gregory
Grades K through 8

For Registration Information, Call
271-6370

Or Visit the School Office
Open Daily 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

"There is no success in life without character."

"There is no character without God."

ASHLEY'S

Enjoy Yourself
Senior Citizens!
You Deserve
A Break!



THE SHERATON is offering a
10% DISCOUNT on breakfast, lunch and
dinner, serving from 6 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.
any time, any menu.

(Offer not good on specials, holiday promotions
or dinner books)

There are always daily luncheon and
nightly dinner specials and a delicious
Friday Fish Fry Special including fish,
cole slaw, fries, rolls, beverage and
dessert for only \$4.25

HAVE FUN! RELAX!

SEE YOU AT THE SHERATON!

Sheraton Inn-
Rochester Airport  COMPLETE
BANQUET FACILITIES
ALSO AVAILABLE
FOR 15-225 PEOPLE

SHERATON HOTELS & INNS, WORLDWIDE
1100 BROOKS AVENUE
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14625-4000

SINCE 1850 **Fish 'N'**
Palmer Seafood
Super Summer Seafood Specials



FRESH CLAMS \$25.99
Bag of 10 Dozen only

Tender, sweet, littleneck clams for
steaming, Clams Casino, and clams on the
half-shell. Call ahead to reserve your order.
We also carry a complete line of clam bake
supplies.

**Fresh Deep-Sea
Whitefish Fillets**

\$1.99
only 1 lb.

Mild tasting fillets delivered fresh daily. CHECK OUR FREE
BROCHURE OF SEAFOOD BARBEQUE RECIPES FOR
SUGGESTED OUTDOOR COOKING INSTRUCTIONS.

**Fresh
Genuine Sole Fillet**

\$3.49
only 3 lb.

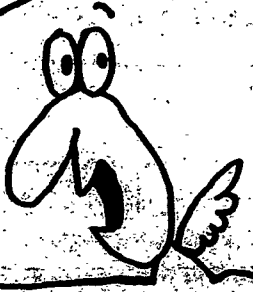
Boneless, snow-white fillets. Excellent baked, broiled, or
sauteed.

All Offers Good Through Saturday, August 7, 1982

PERINTON HILLS MALL • Route 31 & 250 • 223-5900
WESTMAR PLAZA • Inside Bells Mkt., 2150 Buffalo Rd., Gates • 247-3252
DOWNTOWN • 141 State Street, opposite Andrews • 546-6180
GENESEE REGIONAL MARKET • 900 Jefferson Road • 424-3210

Gabriel

IF
YOU DON'T
WANT ANYONE
TO KNOW IT
DON'T
DO
IT!



k over-
track
title
prayers
t
)

RNAL
. Clark

ello
per
icci

man
for

4, 1982

(35-580)
one week
after
Catholic
rates
in \$20.
St.
16) 454
e-mail
MASTER
Coursier
tochester