



## **The Knights of Columbus**

The Knights of Columbus is the world's largest Catholic fraternal service organization. Founded by the Venerable Father Michael J. McGivney in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1882, it was named in honor of the mariner Christopher Columbus. Originally serving as a mutual benefit society to low-income immigrant Catholics, it developed into a fraternal benefit society dedicated to providing charitable services, promoting Catholic education and actively defending Catholicism in various nations.

There are more than 1.85 million members in nearly 15,000 councils, with nearly 200 councils on college campuses. Membership is limited to "practical" Catholic men aged 18 or older. Membership consists of four different degrees, each exemplifying a different principle of the Order. The Order is a member of the International Alliance of Catholic Knights.