



Brother Knights,

Today, we join all Catholics and people of faith around the world as we mourn the death of our Holy Father Pope Francis.

Pope Francis was a powerful witness to charity and fraternity, challenging us to reach out to the margins of society and serve those who are too often forgotten.

He was also a friend to the Knights of Columbus and a champion of our mission. On many occasions, the Holy Father expressed his gratitude for all that the Knights do. He continually encouraged our charitable work and our efforts to promote the dignity of human life in the face of what he often called a “throwaway culture.” He expressed his support, too, for our efforts to challenge each other to become better husbands and better fathers, and to embrace our responsibility to be active participants in the Church’s mission of evangelization.

I have been blessed to meet with the Holy Father on several occasions, most recently in December, when I updated him on our charitable work, our support for vocations, the growth of our faith formation initiative for Catholic men, *Cor*, and our devotion to the Sacred Heart. In all our meetings, I was always moved by his faith and encouragement and counted it as a great blessing to be able to represent you and our Order to the Vicar of Christ.

Pope Francis was also the Pontiff who approved a miracle attributed to the intercession of our Founder, opening the door to Father McGivney’s beatification on October 31, 2020.

Both Pope Francis and Blessed Michael McGivney shared a passion for those on the margins and challenged those around them to stand up and to serve.

As we mourn the loss of Pope Francis and continue our prayers for him and the Church, we renew our commitment to follow his example to serve those most in need.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him.

*Vivat Jesus!*

Patrick E. Kelly  
Supreme Knight