



# Knights of Columbus®

Our Lady Queen of Martyrs  
Bradenton, Florida 34243

May 2024

## Sculpting Our Founder

An interview with artist Chas Fagan about the creative vision of his new statue of Blessed Michael McGivney

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“When I paint or sculpt a figure, I always feel like I get to know them,” says artist Chas Fagan. “It’s like adding one more person to the long list of your lifelong friends.”

By that measure, Fagan has gotten to know Blessed Michael McGivney well over the last several years. In 2016, the North Carolina-based artist painted what would later become Father McGivney’s official beatification portrait. This past year, he completed a second likeness of the Knights of Columbus founder: a marble statue that has been installed in the Hall of American Saints at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.



Artist Chas Fagan looks up at his statue of Blessed Michael McGivney after its dedication at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on Dec. 8, 2023. (Photo by Paul Haring)

The Knights of Columbus previously commissioned Fagan to sculpt two statues of Pope John Paul II for the Saint John Paul II National Shrine in Washington and to paint the canonization portrait of St. Teresa of Calcutta.

Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly and Father McGivney’s great-grandnephew, John Walshe, unveiled the new statue Dec. 8 at a dedication ceremony presided over by Cardinal Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States. Fagan, who was also present, spoke with *Columbia* about Father McGivney and what he hoped to convey about the parish priest with his work.

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## Message From the Grand Knight

Worthy Brothers,

We are coming to the close of the 'Columbian Year'. As a result, we are two members short of making star council this year. This will be the first time in a long time, in which we have not achieved that goal. We have until the end of June to bring two new members on board. I don't think it's time to panic yet, but it's close!

I need everyone to reach out to as many as you can. I will be the first to fail to make Star Council in years. I've helped each of the last three GK's accomplish this every year and I need your help. Always carry your business cards with you, wear your council shirts as often as possible, ask everyone you see at church. Correct whatever miss conceptions they may have about the Knights. Our accomplishments are many and the fellowship is real at our Council. We are as strong or stronger than at any time in our history at OLQM. We can do this if everyone pitches in. There are more prospective Catholic gentlemen that could become a Knight than there are of us. We just need to reach out to them with our story.

Vivat Jesus

**Pat Thielen**  
Grand Knight  
Our Lady Queen of Martyrs  
Council #13639





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## OLQM Council Officers #13639

<b>Grand Knight:</b> Pat Thielen	
<b>Deputy Grand Knight:</b> Sal Antonicelli	
<b>Financial Secretary:</b> Kevin Oatman, PGK	<b>Chancellor:</b> Steve Dardinski PGK
<b>Warden:</b> Bob Petrelli	<b>Recorder:</b> Joe Destefano PGK, PFN, PDD
<b>Treasurer:</b> Mario Gallo Jr	<b>Advocate:</b> Jack McNeeley PGK
<b>Inside Guard:</b> Franco Gagliardi	<b>Outside Guard:</b> Frank Grosso
<b>Lecturer #1:</b> Don Daly	<b>Lecturer #2:</b> Eddy Zappacosta
<b>Trustee (One Year):</b> John Fry PGK	
<b>Trustee (Two Year):</b> Keith Kehoe	
<b>Trustee (Three Year):</b> Chris Maffettone PGK, FN	
<b>Chaplain:</b> Fr. John Hoang	
<b>District Deputy:</b> Kirk Brown PGK	
<b>Benefits Advisor:</b> Ron Moliterno	

May						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 	4
5	6		8		10	11
 Mother's Day	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22		 State Convention	 State Convention
 State Convention		28	29	30	31	



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## Shrine for the Unborn

The brothers from Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Council #13639 donated a monument to be placed near the Shrine for the Unborn that sits out front of OLQM church. The monument was installed on Tuesday morning, April 23. Fittingly that night, there was a rosary said for the unborn with several members of OLQM council in attendance, along with several parishioners.

The inscription reads *"In Memory of All babies born and unborn I am going to send an angel in front of you, to guard you on the way and bring you to the place that I have prepared"* - Exodus 23:20

The fountain where the Shrine for the Unborn is located, was donated by Knights Assembly #1860, Padre Louis De Soto. Together, the shrine and monument make a great place to pray for those that need prayers most.

Our Lady Queen of Martyrs holds a rosary for the Unborn every fourth Tuesday of the month at 6:30pm. Following the rosary is a pot luck 'dinner'.

The fountain at the Shrine of the Unborn will undergo repainting to



match the monument that was installed. Together, they will complete the area for parishioners to look upon before and after masses as well as when the rosary is said on the fourth Tuesday. The setting for both, sits close to one of OLQM's 'memorial gardens' where many passed parishioners have been laid to rest.

The next Rosary for the Unborn will be held Tuesday, May 28 at 6:30pm. Please join us if you are able.



Photo credits: Brother Don J Daly





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## **Sculpting Our Founder**

Continued from cover

**COLUMBIA:** How familiar were you with Blessed Michael McGivney before creating this statue?

**CHAS FAGAN:** I was quite familiar with him already, having painted his portrait in 2016. Yet I feel I met him a long time ago, back in the '80s — not his 1880s, but my 1980s, in New Haven, Connecticut.

As a sophomore at Yale, in New Haven, I had a serious medical incident that kept me trapped in the hospital for over three months. When I was finally allowed to leave, I stepped out the door and just randomly took a left turn down Hillhouse Avenue. I walked down the street, enjoying the nature and birds, a reminder that I was still alive. Then I saw an old church. In that moment, I was probably thinking that a church was a good place to go, so I walked in.

It was empty. I just genuflected and found a spot toward the back. As I'm doing that, I hear a voice. And the voice welcomes me — by name. I look up, and there's a priest up there by the altar, and he walks by. And that's it.

I'm left sitting there, kind of shocked and amazed, but also a little freaked out. I had never been there, yet he knew my name. Then I started thinking, "Well, maybe he found out about my situation or something, because it's a small community in New Haven." In the end, all I do know is what I felt — a sense of absolute welcome. And that experience completely anchored me from then on.

That church on Hillhouse became my home. For the rest of my time at college I went to church there. I grabbed all my buddies and that's where we went on Sundays. And that church is St. Mary's Church, which was Father McGivney's parish. But I only learned that way late in the game — I had no idea at the time.



A closeup of the marble statue shows Father McGivney's profile. (Photo by Paul Haring)

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## **Sculpting Our Founder**

**COLUMBIA: How did you eventually learn about Father McGivney?**

**CHAS FAGAN:** Before I started my first project for the Knights of Columbus, Supreme Knight Carl Anderson gave me Father McGivney's biography to read. You can imagine how I jumped when I realized, fairly early on in that book, "Oh my goodness, St. Mary's — my St. Mary's — was Father McGivney's home!"

So what I never realized as a college kid is that I had received the lasting embrace of Father McGivney and his parish. That is why it means so much to me to work with the Knights of Columbus and to tell the story of Father McGivney, whether it be in paint or clay or bronze or marble. He was a man of dedication and a classic, caring parish priest. More than that, he was a can-doer, a man of action, something we can all aspire to.

A closeup of the marble statue shows Father McGivney's profile. *(Photo by Paul Haring)*

**COLUMBIA: How did you approach the task of depicting Blessed Michael McGivney in marble?**

**CHAS FAGAN:** Father McGivney accomplished a lot in 38 years, and he had a great impact, obviously; you don't do that by being a recluse or being quiet. It takes a special man to do that. That's what I always saw in him and what I really wanted to portray — that ability to get things done.

So having a stiff, heavy, vertical figure standing in stone just wouldn't fit. I really could not imagine creating a piece that was totally static, immobile, with no action to it. I wanted the opposite — I wanted to infuse it with movement, energy. And so he's turning and presenting a book of Scripture etched with "Unity" and "Charity," the Order's great founding principles. He is also leaning forward slightly, as if he's about to take a step, and the action is accented by the lines of his cassock. The confluence of folds reveals motion. The way that cassocks were cut at the time, if you move and twist a little bit, you can get some beautiful curves just in the fall of the drape; you get these great angled slopes of line and shadow. That motion gives the statue energy, so that if you walk around it a little bit, you capture glimpses of the dynamism of Father McGivney's life. That is the vision of what I wanted, and we got it.

At the same time, I was trying to capture his likeness as accurately as I can. With Father McGivney, not that many photos are extant — only a few black-and-white seated portraits. We only have a few views that are solid, where you can see the full shape of his face. So there was a lot of unknown. I just had to guess. And with sculpture, you've got to guess a lot more than you do with a painting. With a painting, you can capture a view of a person and know that you're pretty accurate. In this case, we didn't have a profile image to know the true shape of his nose or even the profile of his head. So I had to make some educated guesses based on the images we do have.

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Continued from page 6

**COLUMBIA:** What was it like to see your statue unveiled at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception?

**CHAS FAGAN:** I was not present to see the statue installed at the basilica. I got snapshots and then official photographs, but I had a hard time recognizing the details of the sculpture. And when I did get there ahead of the ceremony, everything was so sealed and covered up that there was no physical way for me to peek.

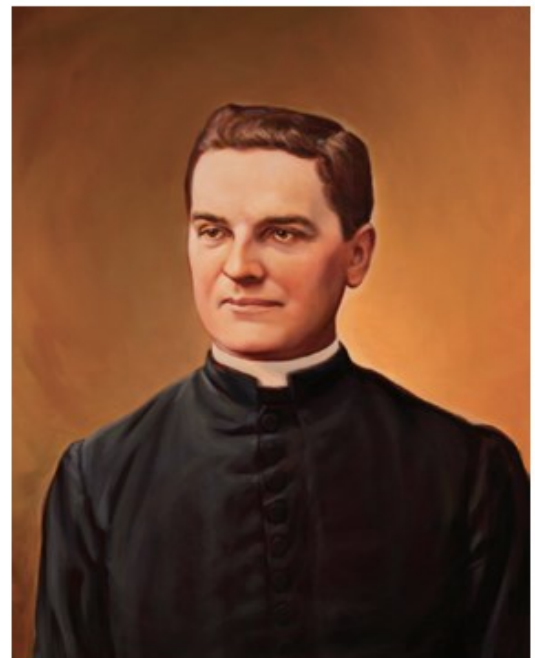
So at this particular unveiling, it meant that I was a guy waiting in anticipation just like everyone else to see what it looked like — to see how the marble's final surface treatment had come out, to see how the statue looked under the lighting. Lighting will change everything. But I loved how it looked and the way it fit with the architecture. It really worked out beautifully.

It's always wonderful to see and hear people's reactions too. I think the most moving part for me was when John Walshe pulled me aside and said he had a hard time looking at the sculpture. This was very curious, and I wanted to know more. The reason, he said, was that he saw his family in the sculpture's face — all the family faces were in there. I thought, "Well, that's good. We hit the target." That was wonderful.

### Prayer for the Canonization of Blessed Michael McGivney

*Founder of the Knights of Columbus*

God, our Father, protector of the poor and defender of the widow and orphan, you called your priest, Blessed Michael McGivney, to be an apostle of Christian family life and to lead the young to the generous service of their neighbor. Through the example of his life and virtue, may we follow your Son, Jesus Christ, more closely, fulfilling his commandment of charity and building up his Body which is the Church. Let the inspiration of your servant prompt us to greater confidence in your love so that we may continue his work of caring for the needy and the outcast. We humbly ask that you glorify Blessed Michael McGivney on earth according to the design of your holy will. Through his intercession, grant the favor I now present (*here make your request*). Through Christ our Lord. Amen.





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## Spring Training Appreciation Dinner

Spring Training was a busy time of year! All in all, Council #13639 worked hard during the season at our concession stand serving the baseball fans as they came to cheer on their teams!

Great fun was had by both workers and patrons!

Sixteen games totaled the season. Hundreds of Maryland crab cake and blackened Mahi sandwiches were sold along with a vast assortment of goodies on our menu!

Our leaders, Chris and Maureen Maffettone captained the ship and kept everything (and everyone) in order to make this one of the best seasons to date!

The appreciation dinner, a thank you for all the hard work done by our crew was held on April 27 at Der Dutchman in Sarasota. Thirty-five in attendance that night where Chris announced our earnings for the season. A whopping total of \$14,563.58!! Bigger take than last year with one LESS game and two rainouts! Rain or shine, baseball fans love to eat and drink!!!



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## Spring Training Appreciation Dinner

During the season, there were some obstacles to overcome, including conflicting work schedules, as well as, other responsibilities and obligations, not to mention spring training falling in line with the Lenten season!

Juggling baseball games, Lenten Fish Fry every Friday and divvying up resources to cover other functions was not an easy task! With that being said, our leaders, Chris and Maureen, did an excellent job in conjunction with Grand Knight, Pat Thielen, to make sure all bases were covered.

We are looking forward to doing this again next season, hoping to beat this years total and continue to support our various charities.

Now our task is to decide what to do with the funds we collected and what charities will reap the benefits of all our hard work.

Chris and Maureen graciously thanked everyone that participated this season.

If you're reading this and have some extra time next season, please think about participating. As someone who has worked a game or two, it is a lot of work, but it's also a LOT of FUN! We do have a good time and a lot of laughs. All for a great cause and great fellowship. The season usually starts mid February and runs through most of March. Signups will begin in late December / early January. When the time comes, look at your schedules. Joining the team for one game will make a great difference.

Until next year!

God Bless



Photo credits: Brother Don J Daly



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## **Good of the Order Prayer Requests**

Peter Tortolano  
Paul O'Brien  
O'Brien Family

Bob Petrelli  
Joe Piekos  
Dolores Piekos

## **May Birthdays**

Kirk Brown DD,PGK  
Don Daly  
Michael Dougherty  
Skip Edwards  
Mario Gallo  
Lawrence Grathwohl

Frank Grosso  
Timothy Malloy  
George Richardson  
Bill Smyk  
Peter Tortolano  
Andrew Wittman