

The Knights of Columbus in Canada

Canada was a country that held special significance for Knights of Columbus founder Father Michael J. McGivney. Even before the Knights existed, Fr. McGivney spent significant time in Canada as a seminarian: first at St. Hyacinthe College in Quebec, and later at St. Mary's College in Montreal.

Just 15 years after the Knights of Columbus was founded in New Haven, Conn., the Knights took root in Canada with the establishment of Montreal Council No. 284 in 1897. Former Mayor of Montreal James Guerin served as the first grand knight, and within 12 years, the Knights had established councils throughout Canada.

In the 114 years since that first council was established in Montreal, the Knights of Columbus in Canada have dedicated themselves to charitable works throughout the country. Among the most notable activities of the Knights in Canada was their establishment of Army Huts, which served as homes away from home for Canadian troops at training bases and behind the lines during World War II.

The Knights helped fund Pope John Paul II's 1984 visit to Canada, supported the Canadian Special Olympics team, and established the \$1 million Bishop de Laval fund, the annual interest on which is given to the Canadian Council of Catholic Bishops. The Order also provided \$1 million to World Youth Day in Toronto in July 2002.

More recently, the Knights of Columbus donated \$1 million to support the 49th International Eucharistic Congress held in Quebec City in the summer of 2008, and supplied volunteers for the event. Canadian Knights helped carry the Ark of the New Covenant, the symbolic centerpiece of the Congress, on its journey through 65 dioceses in Canada.

In 2010 the Knights of Columbus helped finance a documentary on the life of St. André Bessette, the first Canadian-born male saint. *God's Doorkeeper* was produced by Canada's Salt + Light Television. Other Knights-sponsored activities in honor of St. André's canonization included a Brother André Membership Campaign, First Degree exemplifications in his honor, and a special novena in the days leading up to his canonization.

Knights from every province in Canada have donated wheelchairs to the Order's campaign to help disabled people in Mexico, Central and South America, as well as in Haiti. Knights in British Columbia raised funds to send 220 wheelchairs to disabled people in Afghanistan.

Canadian Knights have also been key supporters and participants in Canada's annual March for Life in the national capital of Ottawa each May, as well as in every provincial capital.

Today, the Knights of Columbus is the world's largest Catholic fraternal organization. There are now more than 227,000 Knights in 1,942 councils throughout Canada, and over the past ten years, Canadian Knights have donated more than \$226 million and devoted more than 96 million hours to charitable causes throughout Canada. The Knights also protect more than 200,000 Canadians and their families with more than \$10 billion of life insurance in force.

Canadian Councils and Membership by Province¹

Province	Councils	Members
Alberta	170	17,099
British Columbia	131	10,936
Manitoba	105	7,820
New Brunswick	125	13,482
Newfoundland	65	5,359
Nova Scotia	54	4,866
Ontario	543	56,410
Prince Edward Island	21	1,272
Quebec	569	99,505
Saskatchewan	159	10,609
Canadian totals:	1942	227,358

¹ figures as of February 2011