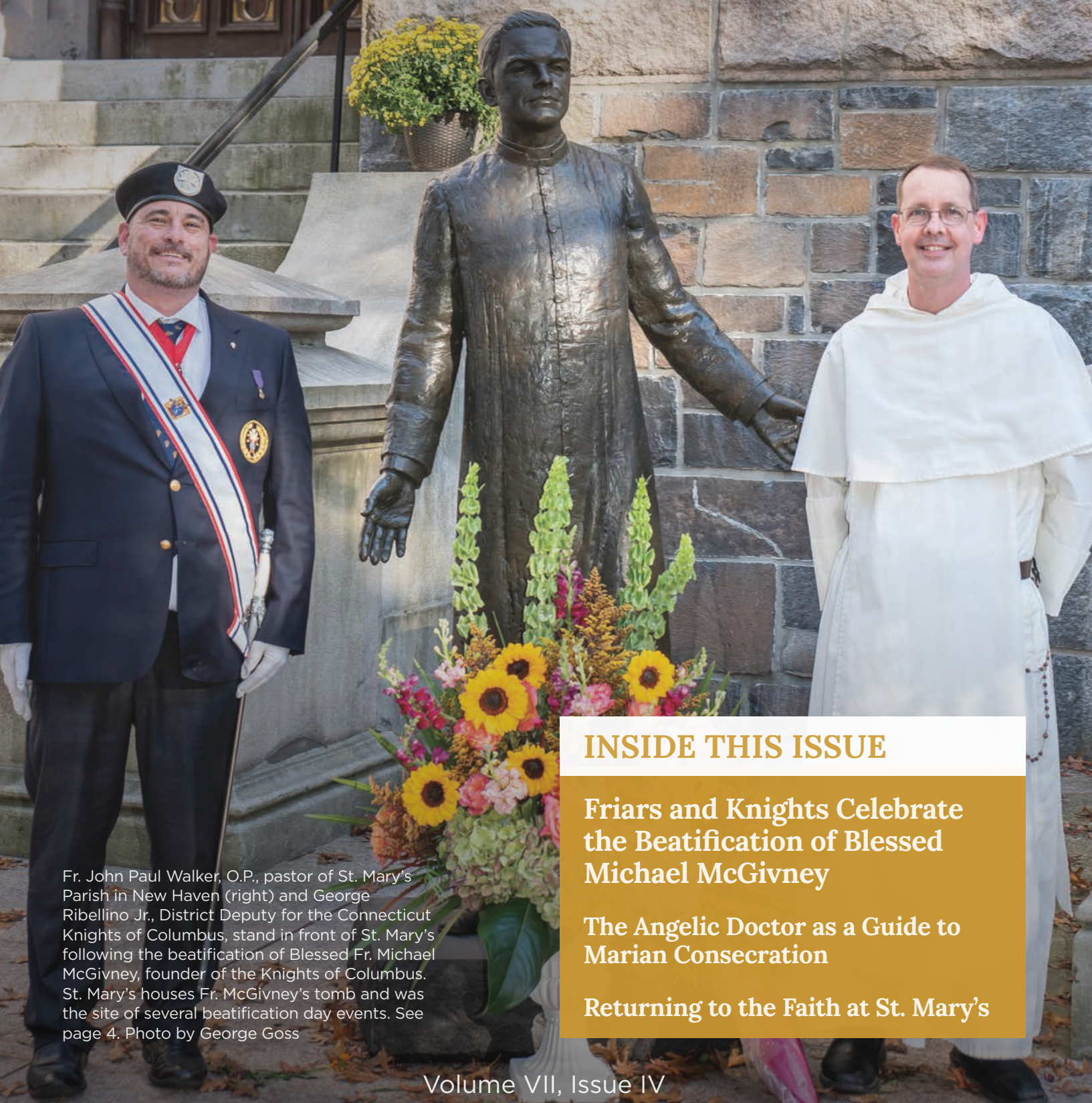


The Newsletter of the Dominican Friars Foundation



BLACKFRIARS




Fr. John Paul Walker, O.P., pastor of St. Mary's Parish in New Haven (right) and George Ribellino Jr., District Deputy for the Connecticut Knights of Columbus, stand in front of St. Mary's following the beatification of Blessed Fr. Michael McGivney, founder of the Knights of Columbus. St. Mary's houses Fr. McGivney's tomb and was the site of several beatification day events. See page 4. Photo by George Goss

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**“Like St. Dominic,
Fr. Michael McGivney was
a true child of our Blessed
Mother, who in every age
raises up an army to battle
the forces of evil.”**

St. Dominic Meets Simon de Montfort

Simon de Montfort (1165-1218), commander in chief of the French Crusades, was a friend and supporter of St. Dominic. Both men were engaged in combating heresy: the Christian knight de Montfort by wielding the sword of battle, St. Dominic by wielding the word of God.

St. Dominic's Church, Washington, DC
Photo by Fr. Lawrence Lew, O.P.



Letter from the Director *Dear Friends,*

I recently had the opportunity to pray for you at the tomb of Fr. Michael McGivney in our parish of St. Mary's in New Haven, Connecticut. As I did so, a fog lifted from my eyes. 20/20 usually refers to perfect vision, but the lack of clear perception in the year 2020 has been palpable. In a world beset by pandemic, lockdowns, ethnic unrest, and political divisions, it has become harder to see the path of faith and reason.

Providentially, this year has also seen the beatification of a man who carried crosses similar to ours and who can be a guiding light in these times. Blessed Michael McGivney's immigrant parents were discriminated against because of their country of origin and their Catholic religion. His working class parishioners struggled economically. He lost his own life to a pandemic at age 38.

Before he died, Fr. McGivney called together a band of brothers, knights, who would battle the evils of their day. Undaunted by adversity, he persevered because he was filled with zeal from his faith in Christ. Today the Knights of Columbus continue to stand united in charity and truth—and suffer criticism for it, even by US Senators in violation of our Constitution.

The Dominican friars stand with them as their chaplains, pastors, retreat directors, and friends. As you will read in an article by Fr. Patrick Briscoe, O.P., this relationship dates back to Fr. McGivney himself, who befriended the Dominicans who served his

parish, St. Mary's, just after his departure. He was even found wearing the Dominican scapular when he died.

Like St. Dominic, Fr. Michael McGivney was a true child of our Blessed Mother, who in every age raises up an army to battle the forces of evil. Sometimes this battle takes a practical form, as when Blessed McGivney trained his Knights to be better husbands and fathers or care for the families of men who had lost their lives in industrial accidents. As a supporter of the Dominican Friars, you know that it can also take the form of a conflict of ideas that shape the soul of a nation.

Kneeling at Blessed McGivney's tomb, I saw clearly that, although the battle is pitched and the stakes high, our present situation is not unprecedented. I am convinced that Mary is again raising up an army loyal to her divine Son. In union with our growing band of preachers and our friends the Knights, I invite you to join the battle by praying the rosary, considering a Marian consecration (see the new book by Fr. Gregory Pine, O.P., on page 6), and in whatever ways, big or small, providence affords.

Yours in Christ,

Father Gabriel

Father Gabriel Gillen, O.P.
Executive Director
Dominican Friars Foundation



“Blessed Michael McGivney was a friend of the Dominicans, who began to serve St. Mary’s in 1886, two years after Fr. McGivney received a new assignment.”

Fr. Peter Cameron, O.P., participates in a panel discussion on Fr. McGivney at St. Mary’s Church. Photos by George Goss



FRIARS AND KNIGHTS CELEBRATE THE BEATIFICATION OF BLESSED MICHAEL MCGIVNEY

By Fr. Patrick Briscoe, O.P.

Fr. Michael J. McGivney, diocesan priest and founder of the Knights of Columbus, was declared “Blessed” in a Mass celebrated on October 31. Beatification is the penultimate stage before a candidate is formally declared a saint by the Church.

Fr. Gabriel O’Donnell, O.P., vice-postulator for Blessed McGivney’s cause and Director of the McGivney Guild, explains, “Beatification and canonization are acts of the Church that celebrate the goodness and holiness of God as reflected in the lives of those who followed Christ heroically during their earthly life. Beatification is possible because this person came to know and believe in the reality of God’s love for him, while still walking the streets of our towns and cities.”

Blessed Michael McGivney, the son of Irish immigrants, was widely known in his day for his love for the Church and his care

for families in need. As a young parish priest, Blessed McGivney served as parochial vicar at St. Mary’s Church in New Haven, Connecticut, where his remains are now entombed.

The beatification of Michael McGivney was advanced when the Holy See approved the miraculous healing of a now five-year-old boy, Michael Schachle. In utero, “Mikey” was diagnosed with down syndrome and fetal hydrops, a life threatening condition. After receiving the diagnosis, Mikey’s parents began to pray to Fr. McGivney, asking that their son would live.

While on pilgrimage with the Knights of Columbus in Fatima, Portugal, the Schachles attended Mass in the basilica. At that Mass, Mikey’s parents heard Fr. Jonathan Kalisch, O.P., Director of Chaplains of the Knights of Columbus and Prior of St. Mary’s Priory, proclaim the words of Jesus in John’s

Gospel: “Go, your son will live” (John 4:50). They returned home, confident that through Fr. McGivney, their son would live. A subsequent ultrasound revealed that Mikey had been healed.

The beatification weekend was marked with a number of momentous celebrations including a prayer vigil for priests at Blessed McGivney’s tomb, the Mass of Beatification in Hartford’s St. Joseph Cathedral, and a Mass of Thanksgiving at St. Mary’s.

Despite the limitations of the COVID-19 pandemic, the friars at St. Mary’s welcomed pilgrims for a weekend of prayer and celebration. “We know that the second miracle for the canonization of St. John Paul II came on the day of his beatification,” said Fr. Kalisch. “We wanted to create opportunities for prayer, so that the faithful could visit Fr. McGivney’s tomb.” Thousands participated virtually in events at the parish, which included all-night prayer vigils, a candlelit procession with a relic of Blessed McGivney, and a family rosary.

On the evening of the beatification, eighty some young adults gathered in the church for Eucharistic Adoration and to pray at the tomb. Members of the friars’ musical group, the Hillbilly Thomists, led the pilgrims in song. Fr. Kalisch noted the importance of the young adult gathering saying, “Blessed

McGivney drew young people to him; young men looked to him for leadership and inspiration. It’s remarkable that he is the third youngest American to be beatified.” Blessed McGivney, who directed plays and organized athletic leagues for the youth of St. Mary’s, will continue to enkindle the faith in Catholic young people by the example of his life and his intercession.

Blessed Michael McGivney was a friend of the Dominicans, who began to serve St. Mary’s in 1886, two years after Fr. McGivney received a new assignment. Blessed McGivney was devoted to the Holy Rosary and, when his body was interred in St. Mary’s Church in 1982, he was found wearing the white scapular of St. Dominic. His friend, Fr. Arthur Higgins, O.P., preached his funeral Mass, delivering a sermon “with such great feeling” that “many were moved to tears.” Today the Dominican Friars at St. Mary’s are proud to safeguard and promote the legacy of America’s newest blessed.

Pope Saint John Paul II has said, “The world looks to the priest, because it looks to Jesus! No one can see Christ; but everyone sees the priest, and through him they wish to catch a glimpse of the Lord!” Anyone looking for Christ can catch a glimpse of Him in Blessed Michael McGivney.



Fr. John Paul Walker, O.P., pastor of St. Mary’s Parish (left), processes with relics of Blessed McGivney together with Archbishop Mieczyslaw Mokrzycki of Lviv, former secretary to Pope Saint John Paul II.

THE ANGELIC DOCTOR AS A GUIDE TO MARIAN CONSECRATION: AN INTERVIEW WITH FR. GREGORY PINE, O.P.

By Fr. Athanasius Murphy, O.P.



Author Fr. Gregory Pine, O.P., stands in front of the Supreme Court at the March for Life.

Fr. Gregory Pine, O.P., recently served as Assistant Director for the Thomistic Institute and is currently studying for his doctorate at the University of Fribourg (Switzerland). Fr. Gregory is co-host of the podcast *Godsplaining* and recently co-authored *Marian Consecration with Aquinas* with Matt Fradd, published by TAN Books.

What makes up a Marian consecration?

Marian consecration is just a way of giving oneself to Our Lady more intentionally. In baptism, we are given to the Lord and His Mother. With baptism comes an abundance of grace. But, we don't always safeguard and grow this grace as we ought. A Marian consecration is a means of seeking to do just this—to stir up baptismal graces in order to live more devoutly in relationship with the Mother of God and her Son.

Why is St. Thomas Aquinas a helpful source in guiding others in their consecration to Mary?

St. Thomas is a helpful guide because he teaches us how best to think about God and the things of God. St. Thomas never wrote a book on Marian consecration, but his teachings on God, creation, grace, Christ, the Blessed Mother, and the sacraments—when taken together—orient us towards a healthy and holy Marian piety.

To whom would you recommend your book?

I would describe the book as apologetic and mystagogical. By apologetic, I mean that it tries to give reasons for our Marian devotion. By mystagogical, I mean that it tries to propose the mysteries of Mary's life as objects of contemplation. So, the book is addressed to those who have an interest in defending the faith and seeing its intelligibility, on the one hand, and in receiving the faith as nourishment for their interior lives, on the other.

Is it ever too late to start a consecration to Mary?

In one of the first circles of Purgatory that you visit in the *Divine Comedy*—the circle of the late-repentants—Dante and Virgil happen upon the soul of one Buonoconte da Montefeltro. In the course of the encounter, we learn that Buonoconte (who had an otherwise uninspiring spiritual life) was saved from damnation at the very last moment of his life. What made the difference in deciding his fate? He died with the name of Mary on his lips. So, is it too late? Not a chance.



LETTER FROM THE PRIOR PROVINCIAL

Dear Friends,

I would like to tell you about a miraculous birth and a very special gift. I learned about both on the extraordinary weekend of Blessed Michael McGivney's Beatification.

The gift was a Blessed Mother medal and chain. The giver was Michelle Schachle. The recipient was a Catholic doctor. The place the gift was given was the delivery room, the site of the miraculous birth.

Now for the background. The doctor who received the gift eight months earlier told Michelle Schachle that the child she was carrying would never be born. He had a fatal disease that would not allow him to come to term. The doctor advised an abortion in order to protect Michelle from further complications.

Both Michelle and her husband, Dan, refused abortion and began to pray to Fr. Michael McGivney, founder of the Knights of Columbus. Following a pilgrimage to Fatima, Michelle returned to her doctor. The sonogram showed that the fatal disease vanished. She would be able to deliver Mikey after all.

Mikey was born via C-section. In the delivery room, Michelle gave the miraculous medal to her doctor who first counseled abortion. As Michelle tells it, the doctor took off her necklace and put on the Miraculous Medal. She now keeps two ultrasound photos on her desk: the first shows the fatal disease; the second was taken just before Mikey was born.



Michael McGivney Schachle offers a relic of Blessed Michael McGivney to Cardinal Joseph Tobin at the beatification Mass in Hartford. Photo by Dan Kwon, courtesy of the Knights of Columbus

I had the privilege of meeting Mikey in the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Hartford just before Fr. Michael (who Mikey is named after) McGivney's beatification. His miracle birth paved the way for Fr. McGivney to take the next step toward canonization.

At this season, we need to know that miracle births continue to occur, that special gifts transform lives, and that we are called to bring our faith, hope, and love to all who long for Him who is "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Is 9:6)

Very Rev. Kenneth R. Letoile, O.P.

Very Rev. Kenneth R. Letoile, O.P.
Prior Provincial



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DONOR PROFILE

VINCE VENTIMIGLIA

by Br. Martin Davis, O.P.



Colorado native Vince Ventimiglia serves as President of the healthcare consulting firm Leavitt Partners Collaborative Advocates. He is a graduate of Yale and the Georgetown University Law Center and spent 20 years working for the US Senate, federal courts, and the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Vince and his wife raised their five children in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley.

How did the Dominicans play a role in your return to the faith?

I was baptized Catholic but never practiced, much to the dismay of my grandmother. In my freshman year at Yale, something moved me to go to Saint Mary's Church every day during Lent. On one of the first days that I was there,

Fr. John McGuire, O.P., said, "Why are you at the back of the church?" I don't even know that I answered him, but he said "I want you sitting up front in the future, and, if you wouldn't mind lecturing, please do."

In the course of a short time I was actively considering priesthood. It later evolved into helping Fr. McGuire set up a Young Dominicans group. Eventually, I moved away from pursuing the priesthood and a girl in the Young Dominicans became my girlfriend. We later moved to DC and got married.

"I love the dedication to well informed preaching, particularly on college campuses."

What do you appreciate most about the ministry of the Dominicans?

I love the dedication to well informed preaching, particularly on college campuses. From my own experience, and then raising my kids, I see the value in that. I love seeing you guys at the March for Life! We had a very active Pro-Life group through the Young Dominicans on the Yale campus, and that stuck with me. Finally, I love the Hillbilly Thomists; the musical mode of evangelization is underappreciated.

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