

## Knights of Columbus Museum shares history, art and faith

The Knights of Columbus Museum in New Haven features exhibits celebrating the largest Roman Catholic lay organization in the world. Visitors are able to explore religion through art.

The museum, which opened in 1982, showcases the Catholic fraternal organization's achievements with its founding principles of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism. A permanent gallery also honors the Knights of Columbus founder, Venerable Michael McGivney (1852–1890).

In the lobby, visitors see a 400-year-old cross from atop St. Peter's Basilica. This was a gift from St. John Paul II in appreciation for the restoration of the basilica's façade funded by the Knights of Columbus in the 1980s, when John Paul II was the pope. A life-size bronze statue of Father McGivney is also installed. The Papal Gallery showcases the longstanding relationship between the Knights of Columbus and the Vatican with artwork, archival materials, artifacts, commemorative papal medallions, photographs and videos.

"The Knights of Columbus Museum offers a journey through history, art and faith," said Peter Sonski, visitor services manager. "Its core exhibits trace the global organization's 137 years of charitable service and its seasonal exhibit offers unique insights into historical events. The museum is also renowned for its annual Christmas displays."

The 170-foot-long Wall of History is a thematic and chronological presentation of the Knights of Columbus' origins and development. Free-standing kiosks devoted to each of the supreme knights highlight the timeline. One of the most important parts is the Heroes Fund project that provided immediate assistance to families of emergency responders who lost their lives in the rescue and recovery efforts following the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001.

Admission is free at the Knights of Columbus Museum. There is no fee for tours, but groups must book in advance.

The tour is self-guided. Each tour has a maximum of 50 people. ■

Knights of Columbus Museum  
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 Knights of Columbus Museum

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