

The task of bearing witness to this Good News is not easy. Yet the challenges that Christians face today are, in their own way, no less difficult than those faced by the earliest Irish missionaries. I think of Saint Columbanus, who with his small band of companions brought the light of the Gospel to the lands of Europe in an age of darkness and cultural dissolution. Their extraordinary missionary success was not based on tactical methods or strategic plans, no, but on a humble and liberating docility to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. It was their daily witness of fidelity to Christ and to each other that won hearts yearning for a world of grace and helped give birth to the culture of Europe. That witness remains a perennial source of spiritual and missionary renewal for God's holy and faithful people.

Of course, there will always be people who resist the Good News, who "murmur" at its "hard words". Yet like Saint Columbanus and his companions, who faced icy waters and stormy seas to follow Jesus, may we never be swayed or discouraged by the icy stare of indifference or the stormy winds of hostility.



*Homily of Pope Francis  
at the Mass for the World Meeting of Families  
Dublin 2018*

### The four aims of the Order are: -

- Honour the Faith
- Promote Practical Christianity
- Provide Catholic Lay Leadership
- Prepare members for the Lay Apostolate



## Order of the Knights of St. Columbanus

is organised as follows: -

### Supreme Council

### 12 Provincial Councils

### Primary Councils

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The Northern Area covers the following dioceses

**Armagh, Clogher, Derry,  
Down and Connor,  
Dromore,  
Kilmore and Raphoe**

For further information either scan the QR code or email: -

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THE ORDER OF  
THE KNIGHTS OF  
ST. COLUMBANUS



"Instaurare Omnia in Christo"  
Restore All things in

# Christ





James K. Canon O'Neill  
 Founder of the Order of the Knights of St. Columbanus

Canon James K. O'Neill formed The Order of the Knights of St. Columbanus in Belfast in 1915 as a voluntary organisation of Catholic laymen recognised by the Church as members of the Apostolate. The Order draws its members from all over Ireland and aims are to promote Catholic Ethos.

Canon O'Neill was particularly influenced by the encyclicals "Rerum Novarum" by Pope Leo XIII in 1891 and "E Supremi" issued by Pope Pius X in 1903. He abhorred sectarian strife and believed that Catholic social principles, properly applied, would remedy the social ills and permeate society with the charity of Christ.

- To address the fiscal challenges faced by families, he established 'St Anthony's Bread for the Poor' and founded the 'Penny Bank' in St Patrick's Parish, a forerunner of the current Credit Union system
- In the pursuit of better working conditions for mothers and children, he founded a Crèche for the children of working mothers under the care of the Bon Secours sisters
- Conscious of the need for education, he advocated the importance of both vocational and academic education to empower young people
- To encourage the spread of Catholic literature and intellectual development of the faith, he was responsible for the establishment of the Catholic Truth Society
- In his capacity as Spiritual Director for SVP, he identified the need for the advancement of the lay apostolate which eventually grew into the foundation of the Order of the Knights of St Columbanus in 1915

## + MORE RECENT PROJECTS +

The Order of the Knights of St. Columbanus are heavily involved with many Catholic projects & initiatives throughout the island of Ireland for example the Brú Columbanus hostel in Cork, the Christmas Day Dinner since 1924, the Credit Union, and the Saint John Paul II Awards.

Below are some highlights of our projects.



### BRÚ COLUMBANUS

The Order set up Brú Columbanus in 2005 as an independent charity to provide "home from home" accommodation for relatives of seriously ill patients in any of the Cork Hospitals and the Hospice.



### PRO-LIFE SUPPORT

The Order has shown its support for unborn children both in taking part in demonstrations and also providing an ultrasound scanner to Stanton Healthcare



### CHRISTMAS DAY DINNERS

The Knights have provided Christmas Dinners for the poor and homeless of Dublin City since 1924. In 2022 the Order provided 300 sit down and 4,000 takeaway meals along with "goodie bags"



### CATHOLIC EDUCATION

CK19 QUB hosted a number of speakers who spoke on a range of topics including "Defending your faith in the Public Square", "Evangelising Your Friends", SVP and Blessed Carlo Acutis.



### YOUTH CAMP

Brothers in CK2 organized a one-day camp for young people with short talks about Catholic Catechism, with topics ranging from the Bible, Do's and Don'ts during Masses to 10 Commandments.



### YOUNG PEOPLE AWARDS

CK14 Omagh has made a number of presentations to young people who have lived up to the ideals of their Catholic Faith



### OPENING OF THE ORATORY

To support the Catholic ethos in schools, the Order provided financial and other support to St John the Baptist College in Portadown to establish an Oratory in the school



### PUBLIC SPEAKING

Every year the Order organizes a Public Speaking Competition for second level students entitled "Young People Find Language for Their Faith"

