



Saskatchewan and New Brunswick Knights of Columbus members unite in charity to distribute close to 600 winter coats for children

Through the Knights of Columbus Coats for Kids® program, Knights have distributed more than 1 million coats to children since 2009

TOBIQUE FIRST NATION, N.B., Dec. 5, 2023 – Knights of Columbus members in Saskatchewan and New Brunswick joined forces today in Tobique First Nations, New Brunswick and yesterday in northern Saskatchewan to give the gift of warmth to children just in time for the coldest months of the year. United in charity and faith, councils from both regions gathered in support of *Knights of Columbus Coats for Kids®*, a Knights of Columbus program that has gathered and overseen the distribution of more than 1 million new coats for children throughout Canada and the U.S. since 2009.

“There’s a real need for winter clothing in our communities, just as there is for all kinds of support, and we’re happy to help where we can,” says Graydon Nicholas, a member of the Maliseet First Nation and former Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick and board member of Knights of Columbus, 2015-2018. “We have more than 200,000 Knights across Canada who want to help others and are modelling their lives on Jesus Christ. Charity and faith are what unite us to our neighbours and especially to those in need.”

Nicholas led a group 12 Knights that distributed more than 100 coats to Mah-Sos School in Tobique First Nation, some 180 kilometers north-east of Fredericton. Larry Packet, State Deputy for the Knights of Columbus in Saskatchewan, flew into Fond-du-Lac, Saskatchewan with fellow Knights to deliver close to 500 coats to members of the Dene First Nations of Prince Albert Grand Council.

“There’s great joy in being a Knight because there’s joy in helping others who might have a need that we can assist with,” says Larry Packet, Saskatchewan State Deputy for the Knights of Columbus. “Father Cornelius Ngurukwem from Our Lady of Seven Sorrows invited us to make the long journey so that we could help members of the local First Nations communities and encourage men from his parish to open a Knights of Columbus council. There was no way we’d say no and the support we’ve received from our fellow members across the province has been nothing short of remarkable.”

Last month, the Knights of Columbus celebrated its one millionth coat donation at a similar event in Denver, Colorado. Since the first *Coats for Kids®* fundraiser in 2009, Knights have distributed coats in 49 U.S. states and 10 Canadian provinces — including on Native American and First Nation reserves throughout both countries. Knights of Columbus councils have distributed over 100,000 coats to children in need each year since 2017 and are on pace to distribute 200,000 coats in 2023. Canadian Knights donated more than 25,000 coats in the 2022-2023 fraternal year.

This week's events are part of a Native Solidarity initiative launched by the Knights of Columbus in 2019 to walk more closely in dialogue and charity with Indigenous brothers and sisters.

With more than 1,800 councils spread across Canada, Knights invite members and non-members to consider a donation to its Charities programs, which includes Knights of Columbus Coats for Kids®. 100 percent of donations will support the purchase of coats for children in need. More information is available at kofc.org/coatsforkids and kofc.org/charities.

About the Knights of Columbus

In 1882, Blessed Michael McGivney, a young parish priest in New Haven, Connecticut, founded the Knights of Columbus to serve the needs of a largely immigrant Catholic community. What began as a small fraternal benefit society has since grown into the world's premier lay Catholic men's organization, with more than 2.1 million members in over 16,800 local councils. As members of one of the world's leading international charitable organizations, Knights around the world donated more than 47 million service hours and over \$190 million for worthy causes in their communities in 2023. The Knights of Columbus also offers a range of life insurance products to members and their families and was named by Forbes as one of America's Best Insurance Companies 2024 in the permanent life insurance category. Knights of Columbus Insurance currently has more than \$123 billion* of life insurance in force. In addition, the organization offers investment services in accord with Catholic social teaching through its wholly owned subsidiary, Knights of Columbus Asset Advisors, which holds more than \$28 billion** in assets under management. Based on the founding principles of charity, unity and fraternity, the Knights of Columbus is committed to strengthening Catholic families and parishes, and to practicing faith in action through service to all in need. To learn more or to join the Knights of Columbus, please visit kofc.org/join.

*As of September 30, 2024

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