

## 2023 BLESSED MICHAEL MCGIVNEY AWARD

The Florida State Council Chaplain of the Year recipient has been a priest for 44 years and the Chaplain of his Council for 4 years. This Parochial Vicar teaches sound Catholic doctrine from the pulpit, always referencing the Holy Scriptures and their context, and is a respected leader of the Parish RCIA classes. His teaching is heartfelt. He inspires others to love Jesus more and become better Catholics.

His Masses are always full, as people flock to hear his homilies. He is an Emmaus Retreats. His counseling and compassion have led many to change their lives to become more holy. He often hears confessions late into the evening. He demonstrates the highest integrity and does not exploit his position of authority. In small prayer groups he listens attentively and carefully when others are sharing. He lets people talk without judging, and willingly shares his own insights. He is a loving and caring shepherd, especially when his parishioners are at their most vulnerable and in their times of greatest need. He visits the sick in their homes at all hours, at the hospital, and at hospice. He supports Catholic education and is the Chairman of the Board for the local High School. He volunteers at his Council charitable fundraisers and is often one of the biggest donors. In spite of his exceptionally busy calendar as Parochial Vicar, with his full Mass schedule and weekly Reconciliation schedule he makes time to attend all our meeting and Council events and his presence energizes our members. he provides information to us about our Parish and our community, and presents opportunities for our brother knights to strengthen their faith.

He emphasizes the need to spend time with the Lord in silence at Holy Hour and at Adoration. He shares his time and wisdom as a spiritual advisor to us as individuals and to the Council as a whole. He gives of his time and presence as the Celebrant of Council Officer Installation Masses, Memorial Masses, Mass for the Feast of Blessed Michael McGivney, and at the Funeral Masses of deceased brother knights. His homilies are always personalized, and beautiful. He joins in to help at fundraisers when he can, and lifts everyone's spirits around him. The Council's District Deputy has often commented on how fortunate the Council is to have such an active, present, and supportive Chaplain, and wished his other councils could be so blessed. He has done all this in spite of ill health. His Brother Knights are grateful for him and are blessed by his leadership and support. He is a selfless, humble, holy shepherd, who is admired and respected by all who encounter him. His Council feels truly blessed to have him as its Worthy Chaplain. He is loved by all members of the Council.

It is my pleasure to present the Florida State Council First Annual Blessed Michael McGivney Award for 2023 to Reverend Father John E. McCracken, St Vincent DePaul Catholic Church, Our Lady of Mt Carmel Council 13300, William Wirtz, Grand Knight, Wildwood, Florida