

# Love Thy Neighbor



## This Organization Serves Those In Need

(NAPSA)—Mindful that a changing world presents new ways to carry out its mission, the largest Catholic family fraternal service organization recently responded to a crisis half a world away.

The Knights of Columbus joined with The Wheelchair Foundation and others to provide a total of 5,000 urgently needed wheelchairs to the disabled men, women, and children of Afghanistan. It is likely that without this donation they could not obtain this essential tool for rebuilding their lives. The Knights of Columbus donated 2,000 of the total.

As a result of more than three decades of almost continuous warfare, international aid officials estimate that up to 10 percent of Afghanistan's 22 million people are physically disabled from land mines, shrapnel wounds and illness, and require wheelchairs for mobility.

Commenting on the gift, Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson said: "The participation of the Knights of Columbus in this urgent undertaking once again confirms that, while we are committed to justice, we also believe in mercy and compassion. This gift underscores in a very meaningful way that the American people care about the people of Afghanistan."

Believing strongly that differences of religion, ethnicity and geography should not stand in the way of a response to humanitarian need, this kind of donation is not unusual for this organization.

For example, last year it donated over \$128 million to similar worthy charities serving young and old, representing many nations, creeds, races and ethnic



**In 2002, the Knights of Columbus donated over \$128 million to charities serving people of different creeds, races and ethnic origins.**

origins. In addition, its 1.6 million members volunteered nearly 70 million hours of their time in service activities that benefited the communities where they live.

The Knights of Columbus was founded in 1882 in New Haven, Connecticut when a group of men was called together by their 29-year-old parish priest, Father Michael J. McGivney. The men sought strength in solidarity, and security through unity of purpose and devotion to a holy cause: they vowed to be defenders of their country, their families and their faith.

As the Order has grown, its benevolence has increased. In the past decade, the Knights have raised and donated nearly \$1 billion to numerous charitable causes and volunteered nearly 400 million hours of service.

Members' civic involvement comes in many forms. They take part in campaigns to urge people to vote, community recreation programs, patriotic observances, penal reform programs and cultural activities.

To learn more visit the Web site at [www.kofc.org](http://www.kofc.org).