



The Good of the Order

Knights of Columbus Holy Family Council #11981

Charity • Unity • Fraternity • Patriotism

March 2021

Founders, Pioneers, and the Legacies of March Madness

The Loyola Ramblers are in the Sweet 16!

Sr. Jean and company took on the University of Illinois to score a significant victory and reach the next round this Saturday, March 27.

It is fitting that a college basketball team from Illinois advance during the NCAA March Madness bracket.

Did you know that the term March Madness started with the Illinois High School Athletic Association?

The term surfaced in 1939. March Madness was coined and promoted by Henry V. Porter, the assistant director of the IHSAA.

Mr. Porter had been an Illinois high school basketball coach, who served with the IHSAA for 11 years and then with the National Federation of State High School Associations for 18 years.

H.V. Porter was a founder who made essential contributions to the sport of basketball.

He founded and helped expand the March Madness high school state basketball tournament. He designed the first palm-shaped backboard.

Mr. Porter fought to have a molded basketball made and used instead of the clumsy laced leather one of his day. He published the first high school rule book to standardize the game across the country.

Eventually, the NCAA adopted his March Madness term and applied it to college basketball, becoming a time-honored, much-anticipated event every March.

In 1942, H.V. Porter published a poem, the Basketball Ides of March, in the Illinois Interscholastic newsletter.

Founders are important. They start something, advocate it, build followers and momentum, watch it grow, and leave a legacy that extends beyond their lifetime.

Every time a ball is dribbled, a bank shot is made, and especially during March Madness, the legacy of H.V. Porter comes alive.

On March 29, 1882, the State of Connecticut legislature approved the Knights of Columbus's legal formation and charter. Fr. Michael J. McGivney founded the Knights the previous October 1881.

That was the beginning of March Madness for the Knights of Columbus.



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Fr. McGivney's legacy lives on every day.

The legacy of Fr. Michael McGivney lives on every time, a Catholic Knight of Columbus:

- hands out a tootsie roll;
- sponsors the Newman Club;
- participates in a Right-to-Life march or marches in a Columbus Day parade;
- protects his family with a life insurance policy;
- builds fraternity, achieves unity, serves patriotism or does the good work of charity.

This coming Monday, March 29, starts Holy Week 2021 with Founder's Day – the day we celebrate the legal birth of the Knights of Columbus.

Next week ends with Good Friday, which we remember Finder's Day.

Good Friday is when the Good Shepherd died on the cross so that the lost sheep of humanity would be found and rescued from death. We remember Good Friday as the regal day when the King of Kings gave his life on the cross to find us in Paradise with Him like the Good Thief was found on the cross.

Legacies. H.V. Porter. Fr. Michael J. McGivney. Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd.

We each have a chance for a positive destiny.

Every day, we weave a legacy that we will leave for others. That's what you have to do, my friends and Brother Knights, the sacred duty to march, find and serve others...for you are the Good of the Order.

Submitted by Dave Pipitone, Holy Family KC Council 11891, March 24, 2021



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Additional Reading and Sources

<https://www.ncaa.com/news/basketball-men/article/2021-03-14/march-madness-history-ultimate-guide>

<https://www.kofc.org/en/todays-knights/history/1882-1899.html>

<https://connecticuthistory.org/knights-of-columbus-chartered-today-in-history/>

How the NCAA Obtained the March Madness Trademark

<https://www.ihsa.org/Sports-Activities/March-Madness-Experience/March-Madness-History>

Founder: Henry V. Porter

Read more about H.V. Porter at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/H._V._Porter

<https://www.hoopball.com/hall-of-famers/hv-porter/>

Mr. Porter designed the fan-shaped backboard and advocated a molded rubber basketball for play, to replace the sewn-seam leather ball.

<https://www.ihsa.org/News-Media/Announcements/-march-madness-by-henry-v-porter>
(original essay)

Poem: Basketball Ides of March (published in March 1942)

Basketball Ides Of March

by H.V. Porter

The gym lights beam

like a beacon beam
And a million motors hum
In a good will flight on a Friday night;
For basketball beckons, "Come!"

A sharp-shooting mite is king tonight.
The Madness of March is running.
The winged feet fly, the ball sails high
And field goal hunters are gunning.



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The colors catch as silk suits flash
And race on a shimmering floor.
Repressions die, and partisans vie
In a goal acclaiming roar.
On Championship Trail towards holy grail,
All fans are birds of a feather.
It's fiesta night and care lie light
When the air is full of leather.

Since time began, the instinct of man
Prove cave and current men kin.
On tournament night the sage and wight
Are relatives under the skin.
It's festival time, sans ken or rhyme
But with nation-wide appeal.
In a cyclone of hate, our ship of state
Rides high on an even keel.

With war nerves tense, the final defense
Is the courage, strength and will
In a million lives where freedom thrives
And liberty lingers still.
Now eagles fly and heroes lie
Beneath some foreign arch.
Let their sons tread when hate is dead,
In this happy madness of March!

<https://www.gerbenlaw.com/blog/how-the-ncaa-obtained-the-march-madness-trademark/>