

# Hibernian Charity

*True Christian Charity Projects of the Ancient Order of Hibernians  
"Reaching Out and Making a Difference"*





## A Message from the President

Dia dhuit mo chara!

Greetings my friend, and thank you for taking the time to learn more about the mission of the Hibernian Charity. We are a 501(c)3 tax-exempt, charitable organization formed for the purpose of assisting the Ancient Order of Hibernians in America carry out their motto of Friendship, Unity and Charity.

In spite of the many hardships faced when they first arrived as immigrants in this country, helping those less fortunate has long been a hallmark of the Irish. Hibernians have been working to honor that Irish spirit since the group was formed in New York City over 180 years ago. Today, Hibernians are proud to assist their communities through various programs funded by the Hibernian Charity.



Our mission is to help relieve homelessness and hunger, honor those heroes who fought to protect our country, and to preserve and promote Irish culture in America. We are humbled to be able to serve and would be honored if you would join us in helping to fulfill our mission.

I hope you will consider supporting the Hibernian Charity. With your help, we can make a difference!

Slainte,

Joseph C. Casler

## Mission

The Mission of the Hibernian Charity is to support the Constitutional Purpose of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in America as they seek to, enhance, and protect our faith, history, and culture and aid our Brothers when in distress.

The Hibernian Charity a 501(c)3 charitable, non-profit created to work with the AOH in America to better accomplish the works of the Order. Through the Charity we are able to solicit tax-deductable donations from foundations, corporations, and individuals allowing us to fulfill the promises written in Preamble of the Constitution of our Order, more efficiently.



## Hibernian Hunger Project



The Irish understand hunger and homelessness in a way that few other people ever will. No other people suffered from the terrors of hunger and poverty more than the Irish in the 1800's. An Gorta Mor, or "The Great Hunger" in Irish, contributed to the mass migration of millions of Ireland's people to the United States. Our ancestors fled their homes because staying meant certain death. Projects commemorating An Gorta Mor, working to encourage the alleviation of poverty and hunger in America, and later throughout the world, is a natural cause for the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

Initiated in Philadelphia in the 1990's and taken up by the National Board three years ago, the Hibernian Hunger Project has been a cornerstone of the Hibernian Charity's mission. The project continues to grow, with many local AOH division, county, and state boards supporting this initiative. The Hibernian Charity will award \$10,000 in grants to AOH Hunger Projects in lower jurisdictions to commemorate An Gorta Mor and efforts to relieve hunger throughout the year.



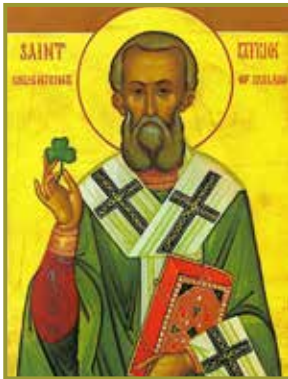
# Education and Irish Heritage

**The Irish Way Program**, is a unique cultural and educational program designed for American High School Students. During the summer, students are given the opportunity to travel to Ireland for a three week stay.

**The Study Abroad College Scholarship Program** was established to encourage the children and grandchildren of AOH members to seriously consider pursuing education in Ireland whether it be for a semester or a full year at colleges in Ireland.

The program, which is multifaceted, encompasses three components: Education; the Irish Experience; and Irish Touring. It was founded on the belief that fostering an appreciation of other cultures is an important part of an individual's development. The program provides an opportunity for young people to explore the rich heritage and tradition of Ireland while also experiencing the country's distinct culture. In support of this program, the National Board of the AOH sponsors a \$500 Scholarship to help pay for expenses incurred.

In support of this program, the National Board of the AOH awards two annual \$1,000 Scholarships. The recipients of these scholarships must attend an accredited college or university in the US, and be accepted at an accredited college/university in Ireland, that is recognized by the institution that he or she attends. Should not enough applications for the Scholarship be realized, then \$500 Scholarships for Semester Abroad Programs or \$1,000/500 Masters Degree in Irish Studies Abroad Scholarships would be considered and granted when appropriate.



## Project St. Patrick

In the Penal Days, our ancestors stood guard to protect the Roman Catholic clergy as they celebrated the holy sacrifice of the Mass for the disenfranchised Irish. In the days of Nativist bigotry, our immigrant forebears stood guard around Catholic churches to safeguard our clergy from the anti-Catholic "Know Nothings."

As they were needed then, we are needed now!

The number of applicants to the religious life is decreasing each year due largely to the cost of education and sustaining novitiates. We are being called again to the old tradition. It is our turn to emulate those courageous Irish men and women who kept the faith alive for us, and keep it alive for our children and grandchildren. You can prove that the ancient spirit is still alive in you by supporting Project St. Patrick.

Hibernians have remained steadfast in their mission to protect and support priests from the penal days in Ireland to the present. The goal of Project St. Patrick is to fund grants for religious and seminarians, and support these men and women who have chosen to devote their lives to God.

Project St. Patrick is a joint Catholic action program of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians which was started in 1995.

Project St. Patrick Memorial cards are also an excellent way to support this program. When a member, family or friend passes away a PSP Memorial Card is presented to the family and a donation is sent into the Hibernian Charity.





## Veterans Affairs

The Irish in America have a storied warrior past, many of which became citizens through service in the United States military. The “Wild Geese,” helped to shape this great nation and every conflict has an Irish-American story. From Commodore John Barry, “Father of the American Navy;” to Civil War General Thomas Meagher, commander of the “Fighting 69th;” to the “Fighting Sullivan Brothers” of WWII; and Lt. Mike Murphy, recipient of the Medal of Honor (posthumously) in Afghanistan; our Veterans Affairs outreach is a way for the Ancient Order of Hibernians to continue supporting our “Wild Geese” and their families when our servicemen and women’s mission is complete.

Thanks to the work of our members in Virginia, the AOH is also working in both the U.S. and in Ireland to honor those who served during the Vietnam war. In Ireland plans are underway to erect memorials in County Clare to remember those Irishmen who served in South East Asia. In the U.S. a 501(c)3 is being established to support the memorial project in Clare.

In Valley Forge, Pennsylvania the AOH has had a presence at the Freedom Foundation’s Medal of Honor Grove since 1985. The Grove, split into 53 individual one acre plots, honor the past and present Medal of Honor recipients by preserving the names of those selfless servants for future generations.

Each plot corresponds to each state in the Union, including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. In 1985 the AOH received permission to erect a 53rd obelisk to honor those immigrant heroes - many of which are from Ireland - who did not yet have a home state in the U.S.

The Grove was badly neglected through the 1990’s and 2000’s so in 2010 the AOH and a Pennsylvania State Senator worked together to clean up and repair the park. Today, because of our leadership, the Grove has been restored to its sacred state and is better managed.



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