



Knights of Columbus



Our Lady of White Lake Council 12985
5149 Dowling, Montague, Michigan 49437



*I pledge allegiance to the flag
Of the United States of America and
To the Republic for which it stands,
one nation under God, indivisible,
with liberty and justice for all*



How the words "UNDER GOD" came to be added to the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States originated on Columbus Day, 1892. It contained no reference to Almighty God, until in New York on April 22, 1951, the Board of Directors of the Knights of Columbus adopted a resolution to amend the Pledge of Allegiance as recited at the opening of each of the meetings of the 800 Fourth Degree Assemblies of the Knights of Columbus by the addition of the words "under God" after the words "one nation". The adoption of this resolve by the Supreme Board of Directors had the effect of an immediate initiation of this practice throughout the aforesaid Fourth Degree Assembly meetings.

At their annual State Meetings, held in April and May of 1952, the State Councils of Florida, South Dakota, New York and Michigan adopted resolutions recommending that the Pledge of Allegiance to be so amended and that Congress be petitioned to have such amendment made effective.

On August 21st, 1952, the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus at its annual meeting adopted a resolution urging the change be made general and copies of this resolution were sent to the President, the Vice President (as Presiding Officer of the Senate) and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, The National Fraternal Congress meeting in Boston on September 24th, 1952, adopted a similar resolution upon the recommendation of its President, Supreme Knight Luke E. Hart. Several State Fraternal Congresses acted likewise almost immediately thereafter.

At its annual meeting the following year, on August 20th, 1953, the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus repeated its resolution to make this amendment to the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag general and to send copies of the resolve to the President, Vice President, Speaker of the House, and each member of both Houses of Congress. From this latter action, many favorable replies were received, and a total of seventeen resolutions were introduced in the House of Representatives to so amend the Pledge of Allegiance as set forth in the Public Law relating to the use of the Flag. The resolution introduced by Congressman Louis C. Rabault of Michigan was adopted by both Houses of Congress, and it was signed by President Eisenhower on Flag Day, June 14th, 1954, thereby making it official the amendment conceived,

sponsored, and put into practice by the Knights of Columbus more than three years before.

In a message to Supreme Knight Luke E. Hart at the meeting of the Supreme Council in Louisville, August 17th, 1954, President Eisenhower, in recognition of the Knights of Columbus in originating and sponsoring the amendment to the Pledge of Allegiance said;

“We are particularly thankful to you for your part in the movement to have the words “under God” added to our Pledge of Allegiance. These words will remind Americans that despite our great physical strength we must remain humble. They will help us to keep constantly in our minds and hearts the spiritual and moral principles which alone give dignity to man, and upon which our way of life is founded. For contribution which your organization has made to this cause, we must be genuinely grateful”.

In August 1954, the Illinois America Legion Convention adopted a resolution whereby recognition was given to the Knights of Columbus as having initiated, sponsored and brought about the amendment to the Pledge of Allegiance; and on October 8th, 1954 the National Executive Committee of the American Legion gave its approval to that resolution.