

ACTIVITY REPORT 2010



SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER
OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA

SOVRANO MILITARE ORDINE OSPEDALIERO
DI SAN GIOVANNI DI GERUSALEMME DI RODI E DI MALTA

ORDRE SOUVERAIN MILITAIRE HOSPITALIER
DE SAINT-JEAN DE JÉRUSALEM DE RHODES ET DE MALTE

SOBERANA ORDEN MILITAR Y HOSPITALARIA
DE SAN JUAN DE JERUSALÉN DE RODAS Y DE MALTA

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Message from the Grand Master



As we face a world where economic distress is a fact of life, the plight of those who suffer – the poor, the sick, the homeless, internally displaced persons, refugees, the disabled, the elderly – becomes ever more acute. We, members of a religious lay Order with a 900-year old tradition of caring for the poor and the sick, are crucially aware of the need to look to our fellow man. This has always been our mission, and it remains our mission and our focus today.

From our founding in Jerusalem, the Order has concentrated on helping those who suffer. And in the twenty-first century, every hour of every day in over 120 countries, Order members, staff and volunteers work in our hospitals, hospices, day care centres and schools. It is a work that never ends, and a vocation that we are proud to carry out. There have been great changes in the world situation and in that of the Order of Malta.

Our beloved Grand Master Fra' Andrew Bertie died in February 2008, leaving us to mourn his passing but also to celebrate his legacy, in the great developments he oversaw in the Order during his twenty years at its helm. We have devoted a section of this publication to his memory and his works.

As his successor, I am resolved to continue along the same path, and to strengthen vocations to a dedicated religious life within the Order, whilst applauding and encouraging our charitable works around the globe.

Over recent months we have organised a number of international conferences, examining how the range of humanitarian and care activities of the Order will proceed in the twenty-first century. We are also verifying that its spiritual life is constantly renewed through its pilgrimages with the sick – especially the May journey to Lourdes, but in all the pilgrimages our members make, some of which are shown in this Report.

I bring to your attention a selection of projects we undertake in the five continents, particularly those in the 'focus' section. They give a very human perspective to some of the things we do: in the Lebanon, the Order runs ten health care centres; in Cameroon, Congo and Kenya, through our relief service, Malteser International, we help AIDS victims, those suffering from tuberculosis, the internally displaced, and the very poor. In Burma/Myanmar our relief service was one of the few outside help providers permitted by the government after Cyclone Nargis hit the country. Recently, we went to the aid of victims of the earthquake in Sumatra and typhoon Ketsana in Vietnam.

In Europe, the Italian Association's medical emergency corps work with the country's Coast Guard to aid the hundreds of immigrants who pack into tiny boats from North Africa to Lampedusa, risking life and limb in search of a better future. We continue to support the local population of another serious earthquake, in the Abruzzo area of Italy and, most recently, the victims of the 2010 earthquakes in Haiti and in Chile.

This publication also includes sections on the activities of the Order's government and the special activities in our Library and Archives in the Grand Magistry. I hope you will find a better understanding of the Order of Malta and its life and works around the world through these pages.

Fra' Matthew Festing

79th Grand Master of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta

Message from the Grand Chancellor and the Grand Hospitaller

The Order is active in 120 countries, where its 59 organisations – Priors, National Associations and other Order organisations, initiate and sustain projects designed to deliver emergency aid, healthcare, training and education for those in greatest need, remaining true to its 900-year tradition of providing care with compassion.

One abiding advantage provided by the Order's sovereign status is the availability of open communication channels between governments and our network of ambassadors. Contacts maintained in this way frequently enable the Order to react rapidly to emerging needs, and to speed the delivery of aid. In addition to full bilateral relationships with 104 countries, the Order maintains official relations at Ambassador level with the European Commission and has Permanent Observer status at the United Nations and strong relationships with many international organisations.

This Activity Report contains a brief – and by no means exhaustive – overview of the work carried out over the past two years by the many thousands of volunteers, members and staff of the Order. It also provides a snapshot of the emergency aid which continues to be provided by Malteser International, the Order's worldwide organisation for emergency relief and rehabilitation. Much of this work continues to redress the effects of earlier disasters, such as the South Asian tsunami of 2004, and to mitigate the impact of long-running civil strife in some of the world's poorest countries. In addition, the Order has responded to new challenges created by severe flooding in India and Sri Lanka, by earthquakes

in Pakistan and Peru, by the devastating Cyclone Nagis which caused the worst natural disaster in the recorded history of Myanmar, by the earthquake in Abruzzo, Italy, and that in Haiti, whose devastation is still being assessed.

While such responses to immediate needs remain an essential and highly visible part of the Order's work, they are supplemented by other much longer-term activities which aim to eradicate, or at least ameliorate, the impact of conditions such as HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria which continue to take such a toll of human lives.

In many ways, it is through its continuing healthcare initiatives in countries and among communities in every corner of the world that the Order is able to make the longest-lasting contribution to the wellbeing of humankind.

This document contains many examples of this work, as well as special sections devoted to our health and education programmes in Lebanon, and our work among Muslim people. Each, in its separate way, is a practical expression of the Order's unquestioning commitment to help the sick and the disadvantaged whoever and wherever they may be.

Sustainability is another important thread running through the Order's provision not only of humanitarian aid – where it is evidenced through initiatives to support self-sufficient livelihoods among those impacted by poverty or natural disasters – but also of healthcare projects. Education of local communities in how to recognise the symptoms of disease, and to protect themselves against it, forms an integral part of many such schemes. In all of these ways, the Order of Malta continues to remain true to the spirit of its founders while responding to the needs of a fast-changing world.

Jean-Pierre Mazery
Grand Chancellor

Albrecht von Boeselager
Grand Hospitaller



momentous events

for the Order 2008-2009



Four momentous recent events touched the Order worldwide: the passing of 78th Grand Master, Fra' Andrew Bertie, in February 2008, mourned for his goodness and spirituality. The following month, Fra' Matthew Festing was elected 79th Grand Master, amid great joy for

renewed leadership in the Order's continuing challenges. Thereafter, the death of the Cardinal Patronus, Pio Laghi, marked the loss of another inspiring example. His successor, Archbishop Paolo Sardi, is warmly welcomed to the Order family.



The passing of Grand Master Fra' Andrew Bertie

Fra' Andrew Bertie, born 15 May 1929, died 7 February 2008, having served as the Order's 78th Grand Master for twenty years.



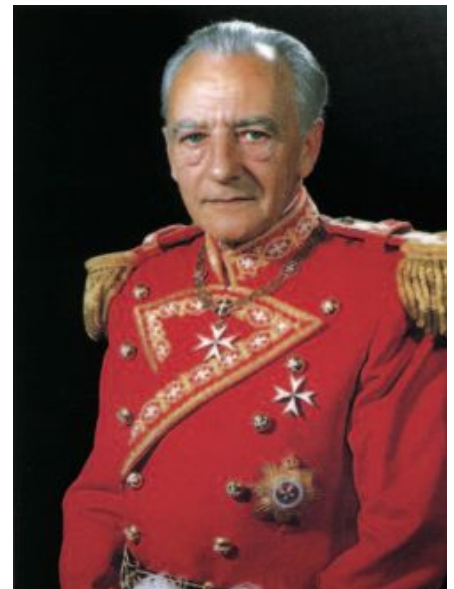
■ The coat of arms of Grand Master Bertie

On 7 February 2008, the 78th Grand Master of the Order of Malta, Fra' Andrew Bertie, died peacefully in Rome. He left a legacy of achievements that stretched back over his leadership of the Order during 20 exceptional years – a legacy noted with devotion by the Order's 12,500 members around the world, and remarked upon with great esteem by Cardinal Pio Laghi, the Order's Cardinal Patronus, who celebrated his Requiem Mass. His Eminence spoke of 'the gratitude, devotion and affection that many of us felt towards him. His sober and consistent approach, his modest and reserved behaviour, his compassion towards the suffering,' and he paid tribute to the Grand Master's wise leadership in modernising and developing the Order's activities around the world, in doubling its ranks of Ambassadors, in increasing the number of National Associations, in overseeing the many international conferences and meetings, all of which promoted the Order's mission of *tuitio fidei* and *obsequium pauperum*.

The State Memorial was celebrated by Cardinal Angelo Sodano one month later and attended by mourners including Heads of State, senior members of the Vatican and the Italian Republic, civil and military authorities, as well as family, friends, members and volunteers, from around the world. The Cardinal recalled Fra' Andrew's kindness as well as his statesman like qualities, demonstrating his sincerity and religious devotion as well as his commitment to his role as the Order's

leader, who 'promoted grand initiatives for the Order in many countries, convinced that now was the time for international solidarity against poverty, hunger and social illnesses.'

Fra' Andrew Bertie, born 15 May 1929, died 7 February 2008. Educated at Ampleforth College, Christ Church Oxford and the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Saw service in the Scots Guards, became a financial journalist in the City of London, then Head of Languages at Worth School, Sussex. Admitted to the Order 1956, solemn vows 1981, served on the Sovereign Council for seven years, elected Grand Master 1988.



■ HMEH Fra' Andrew Bertie



■ During his last meeting with Pope Benedict XVI



■ Requiem Mass is celebrated for Grand Master Bertie, Church of Santa Sabina, Rome, 14 February 2008

Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing

11 March 2008,
the Grand Prior of England,
Fra' Matthew Festing was
elected 79th Grand Master.



■ The coat of arms of Grand Master Festing

The electing body of the Order, the Council Complete of State, convened on 11 March 2008 to elect a successor to Fra' Andrew Bertie.

Fra' Matthew Festing was duly elected for life as the 79th Grand Master of the Order of Malta and swore his Oath before the Cardinal Patronus of the Order, Cardinal Pio Laghi, and the electoral body,

Before his election as only the second Englishman in the Order's 900 years to be elected Grand Master, Fra' Matthew Festing had already made history in his role as the first Grand Prior of England since the Priory's re-establishment in

1993, restored after being in abeyance for 450 years.

A native of Northumberland, Fra' Matthew Festing was also Benedictine educated at Ampleforth College, and read history at St. John's College, Cambridge. He saw service in the Grenadier Guards, and subsequently extended his love of the arts becoming an expert in the seventeenth century through his professional life and adding to his already encyclopaedic knowledge of history and of the history of the Order in particular.

In taking his Oath, the new Grand Master vowed to continue the great works carried out by his predecessor.



■ Conversing with a patient



■ Televised Bible reading



■ With illegal immigrants

Cardinal Pio Laghi

Cardinal Patronus of the Sovereign Order of Malta,
1993 - 2009

His Eminence Cardinal Pio Laghi, who died in Rome on 10 January 2009, had served the Order as Cardinal Patronus for 16 years. 'The Order has lost one of its most eminent members as well as a great moral and spiritual guide,' the Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing, in mourning his passing, declared.

A solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated by the Dean of the College of Cardinals, His Eminence Angelo Sodano, in St. Peter's Basilica, in the presence of Pope Benedict XVI.

Created Cardinal in 1991 and nominated by Pope John Paul II as Cardinal Patronus of the Order in May 1993, Pio Laghi took on the important duties of promoting the spiritual concerns of the Order and its members, and the relationship between the Holy See and the Order of Malta. Most recently, his many commitments included the obsequies following the death of Grand Master Fra' Andrew Bertie and the swearing in of Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing. Members of the Order recall with affection his unfailing presence at the Order's annual pilgrimages to Lourdes and to Loreto. Remembered, too, was his touching participation at the Order's annual international summer camps for the young disabled, and despite failing health, he insisted on being in attendance at the 2008 youth camp in Stift Stams, Austria.

Pio Laghi was born in 1922 in Castiglione, Italy. In 1942 he graduated

in Theology and was ordained in April 1946. Further studies took him to the Pontificia Università Lateranense, where he graduated in Canon Law in 1950. He entered the Holy See in 1952 as a diplomat in the Secretariat of State, and served with distinction in Nicaragua, Washington, Delhi and Jerusalem. From 1974 to 1980 he was Apostolic Nuncio in Argentina, then Apostolic Delegate, and from 1984, pro-Nuncio in Washington. From 1990 to 1999 he was Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education.

In 2001, as Special Envoy to Israel and the Palestinian Authority, the Cardinal consigned a personal message from the Pope which urged the parties to declare a ceasefire and return to dialogue. In 2003, during the Iraq crisis, Pope John Paul II sent him to Washington to advise President George Bush on the position and initiatives taken by the Holy See towards disarmament and peace in the Middle East.



■ Cardinal Pio Laghi

Archbishop Paolo Sardi

pro-Patron of the Sovereign Order of Malta

As his successor, Pope Benedict XVI appointed Archbishop Paolo Sardi pro-Patron of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta in June 2009.

The new Patron is Vice Chamberlain of the Holy Roman Church, and since 1996 Apostolic Nuncio with special responsibilities.

Born in 1934 in Ricaldone, Italy, Archbishop Sardi has, since the pontifi-

cate of John Paul II, coordinated the Vatican office which edits the Pope's texts and addresses.

Ordained a priest on 29 June 1958, after a licentiate in Theology he graduated in Canon Law and Jurisprudence at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan. He taught moral theology in Turin until 1976, when he was called to the Secretariat of State of the Vatican. In 1992 he was appointed Vice Councillor and four years later, Apostolic Nuncio

with special responsibilities.

On 6 January 1997, Pope John Paul II ordained him bishop in the Vatican Basilica and he was nominated Vice Camerlengo (chamberlain) of the Holy Roman Church in 2004.

Archbishop Paolo Sardi has the task of promoting the spiritual interests of the Order of Malta and its members and its relations with the Holy See.

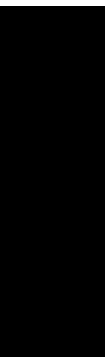


■ Archbishop Paolo Sardi

spirituality in action



The Christian message is at the heart of the Order's mission to help those in need. The spiritual journey of every member is demonstrated in the actions he or she carries out to care for the poor and the sick, and thus, is spirituality in action.



A thousand years of faith

The pilgrimage is the outward sign of the living faith.

All the actions of the Order are a testimony of its Christian faith. The motivation for this care, now almost a thousand years in practice, is the journey towards God. The Grand Commander, who is responsible for the religious life of the Order, emphasises the importance of the formation process for this journey as a pilgrim's progress: the demonstration of this care for the poor and the sick is seen through the many pilgrimages members of the Order make every year:

'To act consistently as Christians and as Knights and Dames of Malta we are committed to being more and more deeply rooted in Christ and in the spirituality of the Order, with training receiving great attention, to guarantee to our centuries-old Christian tradition the future it deserves.

And simply to be charity in the Lord, we can operate as Knights and Dames of the Order. Let us look at an example: if I go into a monastery with a thousand-year old tradition, I am immediately aware of an atmosphere that is decidedly different from that which one finds in a more recent community - thus simply to say that our tradition has given, and gives, life to that which we define as 'the Order'. It is a question of refinement of spirit, which illuminates through its external actions and its internal conviction to serve the most neglected in society - a service which recalls the humility of Christ's action in washing the feet of His disciples: a supreme sign of a love that instructs, that nothing is of its own but that all is shared and communicated, and to which the members of our Order are called to conform, embracing in a way that is exemplary and unique: 'As I have done to you, do unto others in like manner.' It is not an exaggeration to say that he or she who enters, or is already part of our Order, is convinced that responding in this way to a precise vocation by living the Christian faith and caring for the needy, is the hinge of one's own spiritual life and mission in the world.'



■ The Grand Commander, Fra' Gherardo Hercolani Fava Simonetti

Pilgrimage

A pilgrimage is a journey to sacred places inspired by religious devotion. For the Order of Malta, the spirit of pilgrimage dates from its foundation in 1048; its hospital in Jerusalem was set up for this purpose. For centuries the Order has run hostels and first aid posts all over Europe to offer shelter and food to pilgrims. Allied to this is its mission to care for the poor and the sick - Order pilgrimages always include accompanying the sick, a sharing of love and care for those who need help. It is a mission which distinguishes each and every pilgrimage.

Over time, millions of the faithful, the sick, the sceptical, the hopeful, have made their journeys to the Holy Places and to sites of apparitions and miracles, on foot, on horseback, by carriage, car,

train or plane, with unshakeable determination to reach their goal: Jerusalem, Santiago de Compostela, Croagh Patrick, Canterbury, Lourdes, Jasna Gora, Fatima and many more. All hold special significance for the pilgrim, who traditionally suffers hardship on his journey, traditionally wears special clothes and shares his trials with fellow pilgrims and his beliefs in the personal spiritual importance of this undertaking.

The Order of Malta pilgrimages are 'steps in the spiritual ascent of the members of the Order. The fruits they produce are measured by the growth in their Christian life and in their commitment to works of charity,' guides the Prelate of the Order, Archbishop Angelo Acerbi. 'The Order of Malta is a religious order and one of its objectives is to promote the sanctification of its members. In the tradition of the Order,

pilgrimage is one of the means for achieving this end. The pilgrim who joins a regional, national or international group leaves his home and makes his way towards a Shrine. There is an exterior movement, marked by the various stages of the journey, and there is also an interior dimension which gives meaning to this "onward march". For a believer it is a life-giving experience which should lead to the formation of a "new heart" and a "new spirit" under the influence of divine grace. Setting out from our home or native land, being closely involved with the sick and suffering, reminds us of the transience of life.'

Members of the Order make pilgrimages every year to venerated shrines around the world for their spiritual guidance. The following pages give some examples.



■ Every year in Lourdes the Order renews its commitment to the faith and care of the sick

Lourdes

The Order's spirituality is evidenced every year in the international pilgrimage to Lourdes.

This most famous of all Marian shrines celebrates the appearance of the Virgin to Bernadette, a 14 year old peasant girl, in a grotto in the mountainous region of Lourdes, in February 1858, who, in exposing a spring in the rocky ground, brought forth pure water which was found to have healing properties. The site has witnessed many miracles

since then and the sick come from all over the world to bathe in the waters of the spring and to find peace of soul. The Order of Malta has for over 50 years made an annual international pilgrimage each May to Lourdes, bringing thousands of sick and wheelchair bound pilgrims. In 2009, the pilgrimage, led by the Grand Master, totalled 7,000 pilgrims from 35 countries.



■ Knights, Dames and Order chaplains in procession



Holy Land:
Jerusalem, Nazareth, Bethlehem,
Sea of Galilee, River Jordan

The most famous of all pilgrimages is to the Holy Land. An international pilgrimage of the Order in October 2007 saw a gathering of 1400 pilgrims, members of the Order from around the world, representing 20 countries. The members of the Sovereign Council, Cardinal Pio Laghi, Cardinal Patronus, and the Prelate of the Order, Archbishop Angelo Acerbi, led the international congregation in prayer over the historic five days, visiting all the Holy Places. In his message to the pilgrims, Grand Master Fra' Andrew Bertie, said. 'Jerusalem, central to our Christian faith, has also a special significance for us here, where Blessed Gerard founded our Order over 900 years ago. It is here that the selfless example shown by him and his community of religious, by their work in the hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, inspired our mission: *tuitio fidei, obsequium pauperum*. And today, again, we are proud to have a hospital in this region, our Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem. Pilgrimages have always been a focus of our Order, offering to all who participate - the handicapped, the pilgrims, the volunteers, the helpers - a spiritual fulfilment like no other.'

Austria:
Mariazell

The Shrine of Our Lady of Mariazell, Styria, is the most visited Marian shrine in Central Europe and a pilgrimage site for 850 years. Founded in 1157 by the Benedictine monks of St. Lambrecht's Abbey, it houses the 12th-century limewood statue of the Virgin Mary in the Gnaden Church (rebuilt 1644-83). Pope Benedict XVI, who visited Mariazell in 2007, told the pilgrims that the site 'symbolises an openness which... transcends physical and national frontiers.' The Austrian Grand Priory makes its pilgrimage there each September with members, volunteers and malades, never numbering less than 300.

Germany:
Altötting, Kevelaer, Telgte

Altötting: every July since 1970, Malteser Hilfsdienst (MHD) has been taking a pilgrimage drawn from all the Bavarian dioceses to the Black Madonna in the 13th century chapel in Altötting, Germany's most significant Marian shrine, where in 1489 a small child, believed drowned, was brought back to life and where numerous miracles have since been credited.

Kevelaer: for over 20 years, the German Association has taken pilgrims from the Cologne dioceses - members, volunteers and the sick - to the shrine where, in 1641, a simple man, Hendrick Busmann, had heard a voice asking him to build a chapel on this spot to Mary, Comforter of the Afflicted (*Consolatrix afflictorum*). This year, over 1,000 Malteser pilgrims made the journey, to pray and to be comforted.

Telgte: a wooden statue of the *mater dolorosa*, a 'pietà', dating from 1370, is housed in the 17th century chapel of St. Clemens which was built to shelter it. Each year, the MHD provides first aid for the pilgrims, who come from the diocese of Münster, on the 45km walk from Osnabrück to Telgte - a procession first ordered by Bishop Galen in 1651 and an annual pilgrimage for the faithful for over 400 years.

Great Britain:
Holywell, Walsingham

Holywell: St Winefride's Well in Wales is the oldest shrine in Britain in continuous use and an official pilgrimage site of the Order of Malta. The town of Holywell takes its name from the St Winefride's Well, a holy well surrounded by a chapel and known since at least the Roman period. It has been pilgrimage site since about 660 when Saint Winefride was beheaded there by Caradog who had attacked her. This year's pilgrimage, run jointly by the British Association and the Order of Malta Volunteers, saw the English pilgrims also joined by members from

the Irish Association.

Walsingham: in north Norfolk has been a place of pilgrimage since medieval times, when travel to Rome or Compostela was virtually impossible. The Knights of St. John have for centuries managed the hostels en route. According to tradition, in 1061 the Virgin Mary appeared three times to the lady of the manor. She felt as if she were transported to the house in Nazareth, where Mary was told that she was to have a son. A wooden replica of the 'Holy House' was built as a shrine to Our Lady of Walsingham, and later incorporated in the chapel of the Augustinian priory. The Order of Malta's British Association has brought sick pilgrims there every September for over 50 years. In 2009, 190 Order pilgrims - members, the Order of Malta Volunteers and the Companions of the Order with 60 malades - made the journey to the shrine.

Ireland:
Knock, Croagh Patrick

Knock is Ireland's National Shrine to Our Lady: in August 1879, Our Lady, St. Joseph and St. John the Evangelist appeared at the south gable of Knock Parish Church, with the apparition witnessed by fifteen people, young and old. From this miraculous apparition Knock has grown to become an internationally recognised Marian Shrine. The Irish Association of the Order organises an annual pilgrimage to Knock on the last Sunday of August and 2009 saw some 1,000 pilgrims - 700 members of the Order's Ambulance Corps together with 250 elderly and disabled guests. Pilgrims and personnel travelled in hired coaches from each of the nine regions of the Ambulance Corps to make this a truly national pilgrimage.

Croagh Patrick is a very special place of pilgrimage in Ireland. It is renowned for its Patrician Pilgrimage in honour of Saint Patrick, Ireland's patron saint. It was on the summit of the mountain that Saint Patrick fasted for forty days in



441 AD and the custom has been faithfully handed down from generation to generation for over 1,500 years. Many people climb the mountain barefoot. The Order of Malta has been providing service to pilgrims on the mountain since 1943. In 2009, 20,000 people participated in the annual pilgrimage at Croagh Patrick.

Italy:
Assisi, Loreto

Assisi: in celebration of Mary's feast day of 8 September, the Order makes an annual pilgrimage to Assisi. This year, led by the Grand Master, the solemn procession proceeded to the Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli, where the Order's pro-patron, Archbishop Paolo Sardi, celebrated Mass, together with the Prelate of the Order, Archbishop Angelo Acerbi, and many Order chaplains. 'The birth of Mary represented a decisive moment in the history of humanity,' Mons.Sardi said in his homily. 'She is a model of sanctity which inspires us.' And in this, the eighth centenary of the Rule of the Franciscan Order, he recalled the shining example of holiness and care for the poor and the weak given by St. Francis.

Loreto: The Holy House of Loreto is one of the most revered Marian shrines in the world. Since medieval times, the Holy House has been believed to be the home in which the Virgin Mary lived, conceived and raised the young Jesus. In 1469 a large basilica was built around the small shrine, and the sacred site attracts 4 million Catholic pilgrims and visitors each year. Over the centuries, the countless pilgrims kneeling inside the basilica around the Holy House, have worn a trough in the hard rock. Every October, the Order makes its own pilgrimage, led by the Grand Master, with members, volunteers and many handicapped.

Mexico:
Guadalupe

August 28, 2009: the annual pilgrimage of the sick, run by the Mexican Association, went to the National

Basilica of Guadalupe, which commemorates the 1531 visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to St. Juan Diego. The pilgrimage included Knights and Dames of the Association, together with over 100 volunteers and handicapped pilgrims, many in wheel chairs. The Archbishop of Mexico City, HE Cardinal Don Norberto Rivera Carrera, celebrated Mass for the congregation.

Poland:
Czestochowa

Every year on a May Sunday the Polish Association of the Order organises a pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa, in the Monastery of Jasna Góra, a place extremely important in the spiritual life of all Poles, which houses the miraculous icon of the Black Madonna, said to have been painted by St. Luke, and safely guarded throughout a troubled history. Pope John Paul said on visiting in 1999: 'This place is so dear to my heart and so dear to each of you, dear brothers and sisters. We are used to coming here and bringing our personal and family problems, as well as the vital issues of the nation ... just as our ancestors did in every century.'

Portugal:
Fátima

The Portuguese Association's annual pilgrimage to Fátima, the site of the most important Marian apparitions in Portugal – when Mary appeared to three shepherd children in 1917 - takes place each May and includes offering support at six points on the routes to the shrine – over a distance of 130 Km. The campaign, organised over many months, includes 150 volunteers (medical, administrative, religious) as well as many members of the Order. Pilgrims come back year after year, grateful for the voluntary work on their behalf; for their part, the volunteers also return annually, in the spirit of service for those in need. At the end of their work, they participate in a Mass of thanksgiving and celebration.

Spain:
Santiago de Compostela

The establishment of Santiago as a pilgrim site is due to the discovery of the tomb of the Apostle James the Great early in the 9th century. A pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela is different from all other pilgrimages: it is the journey itself (the 'camino'), not the arrival, that is most important. Everyone follows his own camino, sets his own pace. 'It is more essential than in any other pilgrimage to arrive slowly, to take time, to reflect,' says Gottfried Kühnelt-Leddihn, who recently organised a pilgrimage there. 'On the final trek to Monte do Gozo, the mount of joy, after your long journey you get the first sight of Santiago. At the impressive Pilgrims' Mass we witnessed the swinging of the huge 'butafumeiro', by six men. An amazing experience which tested our mental and physic limits.' On the occasion of the next Jacobean Holy Year, the Grand Master will lead an international pilgrimage of the Order to Santiago in October 2010. Whenever St James's day (25th July) falls on a Sunday, the cathedral declares a Holy or Jubilee Year.

Photographs:

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Lourdes pilgrimage, 2009

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1. Great Britain: Walsingham
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 3. Holy Land: Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem
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1. Italy: Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli, Assisi
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focus



In all of the Order's activities to help those who suffer, there are personal stories, of courage and of heartbreak, as well as of hard work and dedication. Reported here are some closeup accounts of daily life in difficult situations where the Order's help is needed.



Lebanon

In every clinic, every day,
Christians and Muslims wait,
shoulder to shoulder

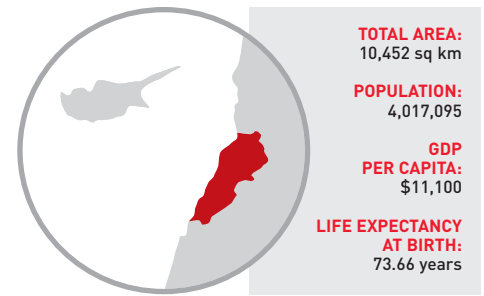
In the hills behind Beirut the majestic cedars of Lebanon bow over this land of richness and turmoil, this historic cradle of Christianity. Today, the country is recovering from war and chaos again, building lives and livelihoods again, from out of the most recent damage. Beirut savours another rebirth. But in the countryside life is hard and the people poor. They need health care and training and work - and hope for their future and the future of their children. The Lebanese Association of the Order of Malta, in

recognising these needs, has for many years now supported the needy and the sick, in the Order's age old tradition of caring for all. In its ten health care centres, spread over the country from the north to the south, to the borders with Syria and with Israel, the same mission is practised, day in, day out, with the same dedication to helping all who call on them for assistance. In every clinic, every day, Christians and Muslims sit shoulder to shoulder as they wait patiently to be attended to by the Order's staff.

The Caravan project

An international project launched by the Lebanese and German Associations of the Order in mid 2009 – the Caravan project - gives young people the opportunity to carry out social work abroad within the Order's programmes. With Caravan, the young participants will have a preparation programme on the Middle East, Christianity and Islam in the region, and the spirituality of the Order's mission to serve the marginalised in society. They will learn Arabic and care for the hand-capped young and the poor. They will then spend six months in the medical centres the Order runs in the Lebanon.

For more information, see www.libanonprojekt.de



Our correspondent went to observe the work of the Order of Malta in the Lebanon

Visits to the Order's projects are planned to span out over a week and cover many miles and many situations across the region. The first is to a small town near Sidon. It operates a medical centre and a mobile unit for outlying areas. With a medical staff of 12 the Centre carries out over 8,500 medical acts per year, treating people from all the surrounding villages, providing medical and dental care, a pharmacy and a laboratory. Both here and in the other Centres we visit, we meet numbers of doctors and dentists who have been trained abroad and who have come home to help their own people.

The Mobile Unit is operated by the Order of Malta, in collaboration with the Iman El Sadr Foundation which provides a health care clinic and a school for 400 girls – one of the few for girls in the region. Mme Rabab el Sadr Cherafeddine, President of the Foundation, has run the centre for the last 25 years, seen many changes and known many sadnesses, including losing 34 members of her own family in the 2006 bombing. Today the Mobile Unit is in the main square of a local village, in front of a memorial to Hezbollah soldiers. The queue of arrivals from ten surrounding villages is long: the Unit's doctor and nurses are literally life-savers. The patients stand quietly in line, smiling shyly at us. Behind them, a sunray spills across the many tomb-

Treatment for the young is high priority in rural regions where healthcare is scarce.



■ The Order has 10 medical centres and 2 mobile clinics operating throughout the country

stones covered with flowers and yellow flags.

Then to the Order of Malta Medical Centre, Yaroun, which looks towards Syria, mountain fold on mountain fold. The Centre sits like a small outpost – now rebuilt after suffering serious damage in the 2006 Israeli bombardments. The Sisters who run it with support from the Order overwhelm us with warmth and hospitality and their dedication to their patients. Dr. Hoda Issa, a psychologist who works with the

variety of medical conditions – particularly, cardiac problems. Sr. Nada notes difficulties in getting sufficient medicines to dispense, especially for the chronically ill, because of the ending of deliveries of free medicines from Europe (which are now distributed at production cost) and the high cost of buying them locally.

We detour to see the reconstructed church of Our Lady of the Assumption in Baraachit, under the care of Fr. Fady Ziadé, a haunting figure, bone thin,

no money. The lack of social welfare infrastructure hampers progress.

The next visit is to the north, to the Bekaa Valley – famous for its climate and the Roman ruins at Baalbek – to the Order's Centre at Kobayat. En route, a flying stopover at the Centre at Khaldieh, where the staff of 33 doctors perform over 40,000 medical acts each year, assisted by 10 paramedics, 6 administrative staff and a proud technician, who has run his efficient laboratory over many years.



■ The Order's Mobile Units bring medical aid to outlying villages where basic health care is not provided

children of the local villages, explains: 'These youngsters have lived through frightening times, and many still suffer trauma.' They reveal their anxieties through their drawings and Dr. Hoda can then diagnose their problems.

The next visit is to inspect the Mobile Unit at Ain Ebel, which treats patients from six surrounding villages, averaging 500 patients per month. There is a

gentle, working alone for the last ten years to support the Christians in his village and the surrounding countryside. His church was heavily damaged in the recent war. With help from the Order around the world it has been completely rebuilt. He is very grateful, but his struggle never ends and there is sadness for the poverty and lack of hope among his flock. They cannot anticipate a better life. They have no education,

Kobayat is a small village which was bombarded during the civil war of 1988. It houses an Order of Malta Medical Centre, which treats an average of 40 patients every morning and is kept very busy, supported by a staff of 6 doctors, 4 paramedics and 4 administrators. Another service is legal advice for immigrants and detainees. The sisters worry about the serious rise in the cost of medicines, and the cost of living.

From here, to Barqa, through mountain villages, some Muslim, some Christian, some mixed. The Centre, also assisted by the Order, gleams brightly, attesting to years of loving care and polishing. It is headed by Sr. Marie-Rachelle, who has commanded it for over twenty years, together with members of her congregation (Soeurs des Saints Coeurs). Their Dispensaire has over 16,000 registered patients from 84 surrounding villages, averages 25,000 medical acts per year, and sees between 25 and 60 patients a day. Most are too poor to afford

is run by Sr. Genevieve, who employs 32 women from the local area. 'There are no women left in the villages around,' she says. 'They are all here! Some are Muslim, some are Christian. They all learn a skill, they are active and they can support their families. We are very happy with this experiment and they are very happy too.' Sr. Marie-Rachelle looks for other business opportunities: we could also sell little bags of lavender abroad, she muses.

Then to the Day Care Centre for the

kitchen staff, and two van drivers who collect in each village and bring their charges down to the Centre for breakfast, coffee, lunch, and a lot of fun. The day starts with Mass or a prayer (30% are Muslim), then there are games, gym - and dancing for the sprightly. They receive medical training, learning how to take care of themselves. All this is overseen by Sr. Alfred-Marie, whose kitchen is another reason everyone wants to come. She sees 54 participants a day - and they all get a terrific lunch! Abdul, who has been



■ The Khaldieh Clinic, Northern Lebanon, with a medical staff of 33 cares for 40,000 patients annually

transport to the Centre, so they hitch hike, she explains.

Sr. Marie-Rachelle, a dynamo rather in the style of Mother Theresa, is a resourceful business woman. A recent inspiration was her agreement with a company in Beirut for her villagers to run a sewing factory for lingerie which is then sent to Beirut and sold in America and Arab countries. The factory

Elderly at Roum, in the mountains near Sidon. Like all the Order Centres, this one, too, is sparkling clean and bright. Its aim is to be a club, not an elderly home, to reintegrate the old as active members of society. They come from 44 nearby mountain villages, where they are isolated, as all the young have left in search of work in Beirut or abroad. There is a team of 16 - doctors, social workers, accountants, volunteers,

coming for the five years since his wife died, flirts with all and sundry, winks at Sr. Alfred-Marie, and is full of praise for this new lease of life the Centre and its staff have given him.

From here, higher into the mountains, to a 'warm home' - so-called for the welcome it extends to all the local villagers - a small establishment in the little village of Ain Majdalein. It offers



■ Dr.Hoda Issa, child psychologist: 'These youngsters knew frightening times.' Traumatized, they reveal their anxieties through their drawings

free breakfast and coffee to the elderly inhabitants and has been so successful that two more have been set up. They serve 60 square kilometres around Roubi, and are run by two groups from Sidon, staff and volunteers who care for an increasingly ageing population (by 2020, 60% of Lebanese will be over 65). 'Most of the elderly are women, 75% are Christian, the rest Muslim. Inflation is running at about 60%; the cost of fuel rose by 60% in the last eighteen months,' says volunteer Tania Haddad. There is no government support for these needy groups.

As the car snakes back down the mountain through Roubi, along its skyline are profiled a huddle of roof tops, the famed cedars of Lebanon, a church spire and the dome of a mosque.

Next stop is Bhanne, north east of Beirut. The Centre has two special concerns supported by the Order – a

balneo-therapy centre for disabled adults and a home for disabled children. At the former is Jean-Marie, a French physiotherapist who, on visiting the Centre some years ago, was so inspired that he sold up everything and has come to live and work here. The focal point is the swimming pool for hydrotherapy, a donation from the Lebanese Association, Ordre de Malte France and the European Union.

Sr. Marie-Genevieve takes us around the well appointed establishment for the young disabled. They are cared for with love and commitment by the sisters and the medical and support staff. The Centre offers as many possibilities for development – mental, physical, and interests such as art, music, computers, languages – as they can manage. The children are full of joy and as we meet them, their faces light up. All except Leila, a diminutive four-year-old with huge raisin eyes and soft curly hair,

who shrinks into a corner. Her special needs teacher explains that she is very sad because she realises her mother doesn't love her. 'She is inconsolable,' he says. Arriving at the age of five, all must leave at 16, making way for others, returning to their poor neighbourhoods, with nothing to do and no hope of employment. Many fall into deep depression. There are no compensatory social services in the country for this age group.

We visit some of the classes and find Issa, three, born without arms, using his feet to lift a bottle of water to drink with great dexterity, amid applause from the visitors. And then Samer, 15, who can work on a computer and proudly completes arithmetical problems online without help. On leaving this setting full of light and love, Sr. Genevieve quotes Antoine de Saint-Exupéry: 'With joy, the more that is given, the more it multiplies!'

And then an afternoon visit to Jal El Dib, a hospital, convent and home for severely disabled children run by the Lebanese Franciscan Sisters of the Cross. Most of the children have been abandoned, often found in alleys or doorways, all needing total, constant care. Their great pleasure is the anticipation of their summer holiday: since 1998, the youth group of the German Association of the Order has run a camp in Lebanon for children such as these, who usually live in homes. The young

care for the local community, mostly Muslim. Eye disease is a major problem – some suffer from the age of four. Elderly poor come for meals twice a week, often making long, difficult journeys. Many have no families, so the sisters and Order volunteers organise celebrations each Christmas and Easter. Christians, and often Muslims, attend. ‘The concern right now’, pharmacist Guitta Abouhaidar explains, ‘is procuring medicines’ – a problem we have seen in all the Centres: the deliveries from

Association’s plans to continue their vital work: ‘Our current project costs are US\$ 2.8 million per annum – and this is before we can consider future developments which we so need to provide.’ One has only to recall the disabled young of Bhannès, leaving their college full of light and activity and love to return to a darkness and boredom that may never be relieved; and to reflect on the dedication of the sisters who live and work in these Centres, of the staff who support them every day, of the



■ ‘The concern now is to procure free medicines.’ Pharmacist Guitta Abouhaidar has distributed them to Order Centres in Lebanon for 13 years

volunteers arrive for the summer and offer their love, time and money. So far, over 300 have come, giving 150 young charges a week’s stay each, with lots of fun and new friends. ‘They look forward to this every year, and talk about it for months beforehand,’ say the sisters.

Last stop is Ain el Remmaneh Medical Centre, on the edge of Beirut, another Order health care programme. 33 staff

Europe are no longer free and the cost of buying them locally is high. For the last 13 years, Mme Guitta has been distributing medicines from here to the Order’s ten Centres in the Lebanon. Now she is worried for future provision and for her patients all over the country.

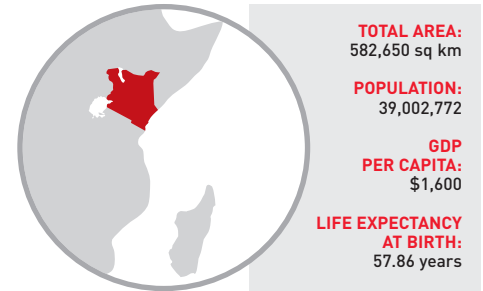
Then, a meeting with the President of the Order’s Lebanese Association, Marwan Sehnaoui, who describes the

Order volunteers and donors, of the love and care shown to all in need, completely impartially, in this region still recovering from its most recent war experiences, its people clinging to life, to hope for the future.

This is the cradle of Christianity. We owe it to all these courageous people to guard it and keep it and care for it.

Kenya

HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis: Africa struggles with challenges that won't go away



In parts of Africa people are still desperately fighting against diseases which seem only a faraway memory to the developed world.



Africans, as well as being blighted by HIV/AIDS, are still dying of tuberculosis and the plague, even though these diseases were theoretically wiped out almost a century ago. Our correspondent went to Kenya and Congo to see for herself.

The Riruta health centre, run by the Order of Malta's relief service in the slums of Nairobi well deserves the Kenyan National Award for the best managed tuberculosis facility (a title it has won for two consecutive years). However, the work in this centre which cares for 600,000 people and which also treats HIV/AIDS patients, goes far beyond technical excellence. It is the people who work there who make the difference - people like Jane, the staff nurse, with her group of volunteer community workers, Margaret, Mary, Lucy and young Moses, who actually live in the slums and are each responsible for the area where they live. The secret of their success? Endless hours of health education and counselling to enable their patients to take responsibility for themselves, to ensure that they realise the necessity of taking their medications regularly, to encourage the neighbourhood to look out for each other, banish the fear that AIDS and TB engender and make the centre a patient-friendly place to go. Riruta is indeed that; everything is clean and tidy, patients' charts are safely locked away, nobody is wearing a face mask or gloves. Even young Juliet, who has been on TB therapy for three weeks and looks very frail but beautiful, like a Masai statuette, is beginning to feel reassured. At last she has begun to reply to Jane's requests and accepts to be weighed! Our reward: a shy smile as we applaud her for a 2 kg. weight gain.

Out of the inferno

After having visited the health 'paradise' which is Riruta, we are plunged into Dante's inferno as we arrive at the Mukuro Nyayo slum, accompanied by Margaret and the Malteser International team. Coordinator for Kenya, Paul Ochieng is a university graduate. He tells me he was born and grew up in a slum and that when his own five children were old enough he took them to see it, so that they would understand the importance of studying and of hard work to make better lives for themselves. The slum is difficult to describe, even when seen on a sunny day under a perfect blue sky. It is a maze of rickety, tiny huts made out of corrugated metal, wood, cardboard, with 'streets' of pressed earth, deeply scored by rivulets of some unidentifiable liquid (possibly water). And then we duck into a hut and meet Scholastica, who is only 33, but looks like an emaciated 80 year old. Her head is covered with sparse wisps of hair, the skin is drawn so tight over her face that it looks like a skull and she is covered with AIDS sores. She quietly tells me that she has been on TB therapy for three months and hopes that she will soon be well enough to start AIDS treatment. She was referred to the Riruta centre by a district hospital and could not at first believe that she would not have to pay for the medications and that the community workers would make sure that she received her supply at home when she was too weak to go to the centre. Her husband works occasionally as a driver and two of her children live with her brother in the country. Her oldest child, a 14 year old boy (and probably the only member of

**The health centres
Malteser International
supports care for 600,000
patients in Nairobi
slums. 'It is the people
who work there who
make the difference.'**

the family not to be HIV positive), goes to school and is the best in his class. When I ask her how she survives on no money she tells me that her neighbours are very helpful.

After Scholastica we meet Magdalene, Christopher, Purity and many others, none of whom is more than 40 years old, all of whom have tuberculosis and AIDS, are poor and could otherwise not afford to pay for their care, because even living

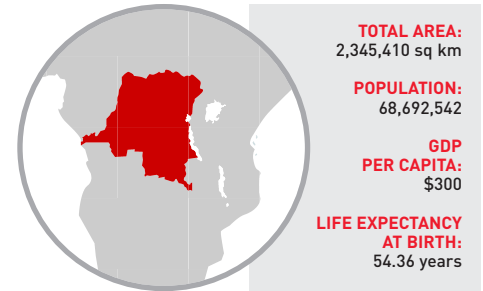
in a slum, Paul tells me, does not come cheap: the average rent is € 10 a month, and that is a fortune to these people.



■ In the slums of Nairobi two million people struggle for survival

Congo

Building a different future



A flying visit to Democratic Republic of Congo leaves a lasting impression: there is much work to be done to help victims of disease and of violence.



■ Disinfecting a village house from the plague

Malteser International has been active in the breathtakingly beautiful region of Ituri and Haut Uélé, near the Northern border with Uganda, since 1966. Initially, activities consisted of assisting the Diocese of Mahagi in the distribution of medicines.

This year they opened two large pharmaceutical warehouses in Mahagi and Ariwara, which supply two medical districts with 2,000,000 inhabitants.

Very soon it became apparent that two major health problems needed to be addressed: the plague (which is endemic in the area) and sexual violence (which had escalated dramatically since the second Congolese war in 1998-2003).

In both cases the problem is communication. As far as sexual violence is concerned, the numbers are still very high: each month there are at least 400 new reported cases. The women now know that if they come to the Buu centre within 72 hours of being raped they will be given post exposure prophylaxis, which minimises the risk of contracting AIDS or sexually transmitted diseases. Also, should they become pregnant as a consequence of being raped, they will receive assistance during their pregnancy. All victims and, if possible, their partners and families are given expert counselling in order to fight the stigma connected with rape, which normally resulted in these women being rejected by their families and villages.

But the Black Death still rages

From Buu we visit the Ndrele Health Centre, which has achieved outstanding success in the treatment of the plague. It seems almost impossible that the 'Black Death' of the Middle Ages, which had at one point killed one third of the European population, could be prevented and treated simply by training and educating the people at risk. Alphonsine, a strong looking middle-aged woman, is one of this breed of survivors. She probably cannot read or write, but when she woke up one morning feeling feverish with a headache and very painful underarm lymph nodes she thought back and remembered having seen some dead rats around her house. So she asked her neighbours to take her to hospital where she received immediate treatment and was discharged within a few days – and without paying a cent, she added with a huge smile!

Before leaving Ndrele we have the opportunity of watching a disinfestation campaign. Two men with special clothing and masks spray all the huts and the surrounding area within a 200 metre radius from Alphonsine's hut. Starting from the outer perimeter they then converge towards Alphonsine's hut to the delight and amusement of the whole village. The downside of this is that unfortunately this procedure is very expensive: the yearly cost is €300,000. When we leave, and inevitably once again we leave part of our hearts with our black brothers and sisters who struggle so bravely against their adversities, we are chased by all the school-children of Ndrele in their blue and

The Ndrele Health Centre has achieved outstanding success in the treatment of the plague. This disease of the Middle Ages, which killed one third of the European population, still threatens.

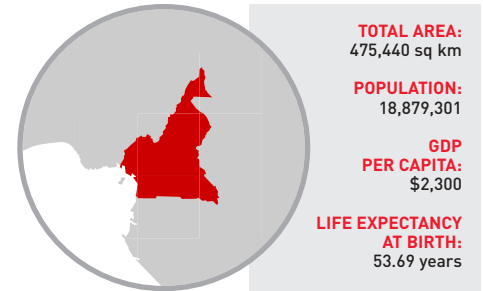
white uniforms, who compete in running barefoot after our car. I shall never forget one little chap who looked the youngest and who was wearing only an unbuttoned shirt and a huge smile on his face! It was a picture of such freedom and joy that it is difficult to imagine for him anything but a happy, healthy future. Let us hope that the work the Order carries out in this stricken land will contribute to the realisation of such a future.



■ In South Kivu, Ituri and Haut-Uélé, Malteser International supports 27 health zones and 380 health centres

Cameroon

Great contrasts, great problems,
tireless care



The Saint Jean de Malte hospital, Njombe.



■ In the midst of a banana plantation, Saint Jean de Malte Hospital

Hospital statistics:

- 140 local staff
- 103 beds
- 24,000 medical examinations a year
- 3,600 admissions a year
- more than 400 deliveries a year.
- Within a radius of 150 km it is also the only facility with 8 incubators.

Cameroon is a land of great contrasts: along the roadside nature looks lush and prosperous and then as you round a bend you suddenly see a shanty settlement with rickety stalls set on muddy soil selling all sorts of cheap wares, often without even the ubiquitous TV aerials or the noisy background music which are so typical of African shanty towns.

Two hours drive from Douala there is a smallish signpost at a crossroads flanked by endless rows of banana plants announcing the biggest contrast of all: 'L'Hôpital Saint Jean de Malte'. It leads to an impeccably well kept garden surrounded by single storey rectangular buildings. On entering, it exudes an atmosphere of quiet efficiency where the kind and competent staff work among patients who wait for their turn in dignified surroundings. Even the children stay close to their parents and are on their best behaviour! The French Director, Gilbert Hann, told me about the hospital: how it was created in 1996 by the Compagnie Fruitière (the banana plantation) to care for their 6,000 workmen and their families as in those days there was no national health system in Cameroon (and there still isn't). In 2000 the hospital passed into the care of the Ordre de Malte France and became the showcase it is today. It has 140 local staff, 103 beds, carries out 24,000 medical examinations, 3,600 admissions and more than 400 deliveries a year. Within a radius of 150 km. it is also the only facility with 8 incubators. The hospital is supported in almost

equal parts by the Order, the Compagnie Fruitière and the local Ministry of Health. Out patients have to pay a fixed sum, but they know that nobody will be turned away even if they do not have the money immediately available.

This was confirmed to me by Jacqueline, a beautiful young mother whose cheerful tiny plaits and colourful dress belie the empty look in her eyes. She is sitting composedly in a room, watching a strangely quiet little boy with his right arm in a sling. A week ago she was woken by a phone call early in the morning telling her that her partner and her two little boys had been involved in a serious car crash, but that everybody was fine. When she got to the hospital she discovered that her partner and eight year old son, Major, were in a coma with multiple fractures and that her five year old had died. She had been amazed that nobody had asked for money before admitting them to the hospital, which would have been the case in all the other Cameroonian hospitals, and to learn that she would not be expected to pay until her family had collected the necessary sum left her speechless. In the meantime her partner had come out of his coma and was being treated for his fractures (she still had not told him about the loss of his son) and little Major was slowly regaining consciousness. Jacqueline proudly showed me all his exercise books, full of 10/10 marks and "excellent" and "well done" comments and as an aside mentioned that she was planning to baptise Major and her youngest baby because it had been God who had saved Major.

**“We cure the children,
but it is God
who heals them”**

Anna who at 39 is a single mother with six children (the youngest is a year old) further confirmed this. She was in hospital with her eldest, unmarried, daughter who had had an emergency breach delivery. She was waiting to collect the necessary 150,000 CFA (approx. €200) to pay the hospital and then she would go back home with one more mouth to feed from her meagre income. She proudly told me that she sells the food she prepares at home

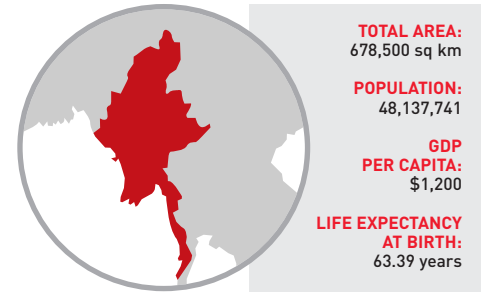
from a small market stall – about 40 portions a day. The paediatrician, Medical Coordinator Dr. Manga, is the dean of the hospital medics and an enthusiastic supporter of all the changes that have been made since 2000. His dream is to have new incubators and more staff: sometimes there are only two nurses to look after 40 children. His motto is: we cure the children, but it is God who heals them.



■ The Hospital, the only facility in a 150km radius with incubators, delivers 400 babies a year

Burma/Myanmar

How one charity got to cyclone victims first



Malteser International was able to deliver food and medicine in Burma/Myanmar despite the political difficulties.



■ Food distribution chain

[Reproduced with the kind permission of The Catholic Herald, London. First published 13 June 2008.]

Heavily pregnant, in tears the whole time, a Burmese aid worker for Malteser International insists on accompanying the first relief convoy from Rangoon back to her hometown Labutta, a city at the heart of the Irrawaddy Delta region. Only nine days earlier the cyclone caught her family and hundreds of thousands of Burmese living in the Irrawaddy Delta region by surprise. The young mother-to-be has lost 50 family members including her parents, siblings and grandparents, who died trying to save themselves in a warehouse. They were clinging to the walls when the building was blown away and the tidal waves consumed them. They were swept away by floods which have devastated the region, leaving some 78,000 people dead, 56,000 missing and over two million in need of food, water, medicine and shelter, according to United Nations estimates. Hurricane Katrina, which wrought havoc in the United States in 2005, claimed fewer than 2,000 lives. One of our aid worker's relatives survived the onslaught and came to Rangoon for help. Thanks to her job, she could secure a car with medical supplies for her surviving family member who returned to Labutta to give those bodies that could be found a decent funeral. In the meantime, she and her husband have placed their house in Labutta at the disposal of internally displaced persons. Despite her heartbreak and her loss she is able to soldier on, and continues her work for Malteser International. Others have not been so lucky.

Last week American navy ships left the vicinity, having been unable to deliver the relief supplies with which they were laden. Foreign aid agencies have been struggling to get into the country to deliver basic supplies, medicine and sanitation. And a month after the cyclone struck, supplies are still not getting to villages in the affected regions and foreign aid workers are being forced to wait for permission to leave Rangoon for the Irrawaddy Delta. Despite international pressure and offers of aid, the military regime which has ruled the country since 1976 has obstructed many of the efforts to help its people. The Burmese government has promised the United Nations Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon that it would speed up the bureaucracy which is keeping foreign aid workers out of the Irrawaddy Delta, but agencies still report delays. The junta has insisted that its response to the natural disaster has been prompt, but UN reports say that only a quarter of the people in need have received food and water while another 200,000 are struggling to survive. There have been reports of malaria outbreaks, and much of the work that will have to be done is sanitation and disease control.

In the midst of all this political back and forth Malteser International, the charitable arm of the Order of Malta, has been on the ground since before the cyclone hit. It has been one of the few international aid agencies which has operated in Burma since 2001 and has subsequently circumvented the ban on foreign aid workers in the region by using some 45 trained Burmese staff

Thousands swept away by devastating floods following Cyclone Nargis, leaving 78,000 people dead, 56,000 missing, over two million in need of food, water, medicine and shelter.



■ Basic necessities distributed in the immediate aftermath of the cyclone



■ Setting up water tanks

members. By May 11 it had managed to send the first aid convoy into the Irrawaddy Delta with well trained helpers, medical supplies and food. Birke Herzbruch, Malteser International's Burma coordinator, says that the organisation's long-term presence in the country has helped win the trust of the population on the ground and the trust of the government. Its offices are based in Rangoon, Burma's former capital and also the scene of much destruction. Acting first in Rangoon, the organisation provided first aid and medical treatment and safe drinking water for 40,000 people in the poorer townships at the city's outskirts. Labutta's population has swelled to five times its normal size since the cyclone struck, despite the high number of fatalities. Over 100,000 displaced people have made their way there and have been housed in 53 camps. Malteser



■ Effects of the devastating cyclone Nargis



■ Emergency team review the day's tasks

International has sent doctors, nurses and engineers out to help. Two weeks ago it was able to airlift two water treatment plants into the region, which will keep 25,000 people alive with safe drinking water every day. The organisation has two emergency health stations in camps housing 12,000 people. In the long term, they hope to continue the

work in the region, help out in camps and eventually help people return to their villages or provide alternatives. Miss Herzbruch admits that they have had restricted access, despite a good working relationship with the government. "Initially we sent some people out without permission and were politely asked to please return to Rangoon.

But now we have permission and we have people going down next Tuesday, a manager and a medical coordinator. At the moment we are working only with the staff which is in Myanmar. We need more staff. We are in the emergency phase, but we have been very fortunate to have an understanding with the government in terms of a logistical capacity and that we have well-educated national staff who have been able to be present in Labutta." The Irrawaddy Delta is Burma's main rice growing region. Cyclone Nargis has devastated not only the houses and the infrastructure, but has also destroyed the rice crops and fishing grounds. The United Nations predicts that relief efforts will have to last for at least a year so that the population in the delta region does not starve. In the meantime Malteser International continues to work tirelessly, doing the best it can under the circumstances. When our pregnant Burmese aid worker gives birth in July, her child will carry something of her parents' genetic makeup in it; it is a source of hope for her and her husband.

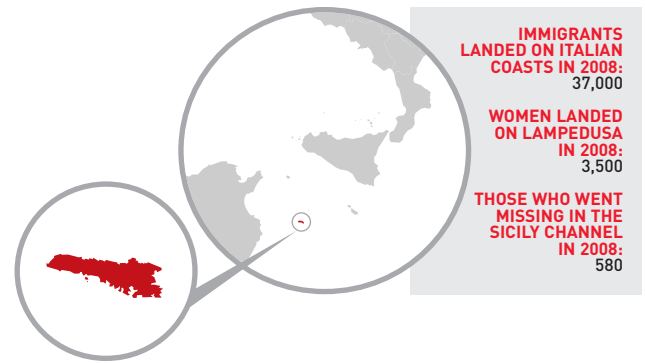
Anna Arco



■ Top priority: safe drinking water

Lampedusa

Where north and south meet



The Order's Italian Emergency Corps in aid to immigrant boat people.



■ Lampedusa port: Grand Master with Coast Guard

Italian Emergency Corps

The Italian Emergency Corps - CISOM - has almost 2,800 volunteers (medical personnel, paramedics and first-aiders) in North, Center and South Italy. Founded in 1970, their focus has always been emergency aid to those afflicted by natural disasters. In 2007, the President of the Order's Italian Association, Fausto Solaro del Borgo, being responsible for the Emergency Corps, signed an agreement with the Commandant General of the Coast Guard, Admiral Luciano Dassatti. First day of activity: 27 April 2008. First location: Lampedusa.

What hits you the most is their young eyes filled with fear. Eyes that have looked death in the face, before them, in the sea, at night, in a rubber dinghy. After five days at sea, unable to move, without food or water, 25 souls crammed in a boat no longer than five metres.

It is just midnight when the motor launch CP 407 Lolini of the Italian Coast Guard arrives in the port of Lampedusa, doctors and nurses of the Order of Malta Italian Emergency Corps aboard. Four hours earlier they have intercepted the boat of these clandestine immigrants attempting to reach Lampedusa, a tiny island between Sicily and Africa. A world of frontiers – the place where north and south meet. The island's 6,000 inhabitants have witnessed the arrival, between January and October 2008, of over 23,000 immigrants. They are Nigerians, Egyptians, Eritreans, and people from the Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Somalia, the Sudan. It is impossible to be sure how many have survived this horrific journey – but many bodies have been found in the sea.

In the port, Fra' Matthew Festing, Grand Master of the Order of Malta, awaits the arrival of this latest boat. He has come to meet the immigrants, the civic authorities and the armed forces, men and women of the Order of Malta Italian Emergency Corps. He greets them all, complimenting them on this most difficult work which they carry out with such devotion. "These are the real heroes," says Vice Admiral Vincenzo

Melone, presenting his men. "I am honoured to meet you", replies the Grand Master, who asks them to stand easy while he thanks them for their exceptional service.

Between April and October 2008, the volunteer doctors, nurses and paramedics of the Corps embarked on the Coast Guard's boats at Lampedusa, giving medical assistance at sea to more than 2,500 immigrants in desperate condition.

Dozens of children, including the newborn, have been assisted as well as numerous pregnant women, in many dramatic cases at serious risk of giving birth on board. The most frequent problems have been dehydration and malnutrition, chemical burns, sunstroke, injuries from falls and cuts and grazes of varying seriousness, as well as many cases of scabies.

The 25 new arrivals are exhausted, suffering from exposure, hands and feet saturated with the water, sump oil and urine swilling around in the bottom of the boat. Many cannot stand. Two need to be put immediately into an ambulance. But they are alive. They have been lucky: a fishing boat spotted them and called the Coast Guard. Dr. Varisano, an Order of Malta volunteer, attends them at once, putting up a drip for one, stitching a deep gash for another, while the boat rocks in a Force Four gale. After disembarking they are taken to the First Aid Centre on the island, where they are checked, fed, photographed, their fingerprints taken. Outside, there

The 25 new arrivals are exhausted, suffering from exposure, hands and feet saturated with the water... But they are alive.

is a long queue for the telephone to reassure those at home. The Grand Master stops to speak with the immigrants and learn their stories. He asks every single one, and every one replies. The moment is intense; many are tearful. They speak of their journeys full of hope, started many months before. The way has been full of difficulties – moving from place to place, sometimes in error, almost always

without money, sometimes hitch hiking, or going on foot, across deserts, to escape from hunger, war, hardship.

He has words for each, of comfort, of solidarity. When he leaves, he is farewelled with a sustained applause. Eyes full of suffering, but of gratitude, too.



■ Boat people get emergency aid from the Order's medical team: a night like many others in the Mediterranean

Belgium

Project La Fontaine shelters the homeless

Care for homeless people is a growing problem, even in Europe. The Order has a special tradition of helping the most marginalised in society.

“Everyone who comes to La Fontaine has lived a drama,” Martine Jonet, Hospitaller of the Belgian Association summarises what she has found in 13 years running this organisation of the Order in Brussels. “People of every nationality, race or age, united by the common tragedy of being forced to live on the streets.” La Fontaine offers the homeless the possibility of a shower, a haircut, a medical check if needed, use of the washing machines, or new clothes when necessary. But above all, they seek the comfort of the ‘Babelkot’ – the room

where they can go to have some soup or a cup of coffee and exchange a few words with other like souls, or with the Order’s volunteer staffers. “In the babble of languages we try to listen to everyone, seeking to give help or advice for the most simple or the most complex problems,” continues the Hospitaller. One of the greatest problems for homeless people is isolation, which can be utterly destroying.

And in the Babelkot on a rainy February day, the Grand Master of the Order, Fra’ Matthew Festing, comes to see the centre’s activities for himself. On an official visit to Brussels, where he met with leaders of the European Union and the European Parliament, he did not want to miss the opportunity of this important visit to La Fontaine. Having toured the centre, he stops to speak with guests and volunteers alike. To the latter, the Grand Master has a special message: “To help the most needy, the most marginalised in society is part of the Order’s mission. To help these people find again their self-esteem, to try to give them hope in the future, contribute to their returning to the social fabric, as you are doing – this is truly a valuable work.”

The President of the Belgian Association, Baudoin de Merode, together with Martine Jonet and Antoine d’Hoop, Director of the Centre, reveal the statistics: an average of 47 guests per day, for a total of 18,000 presences annually. The homeless are cared for by two employees and over 60 volunteers who work in daily groups of 10. “Some



■ Grand Master in conversation with a La Fontaine guest

One of the greatest problems for homeless people is isolation, which can be utterly destroying.

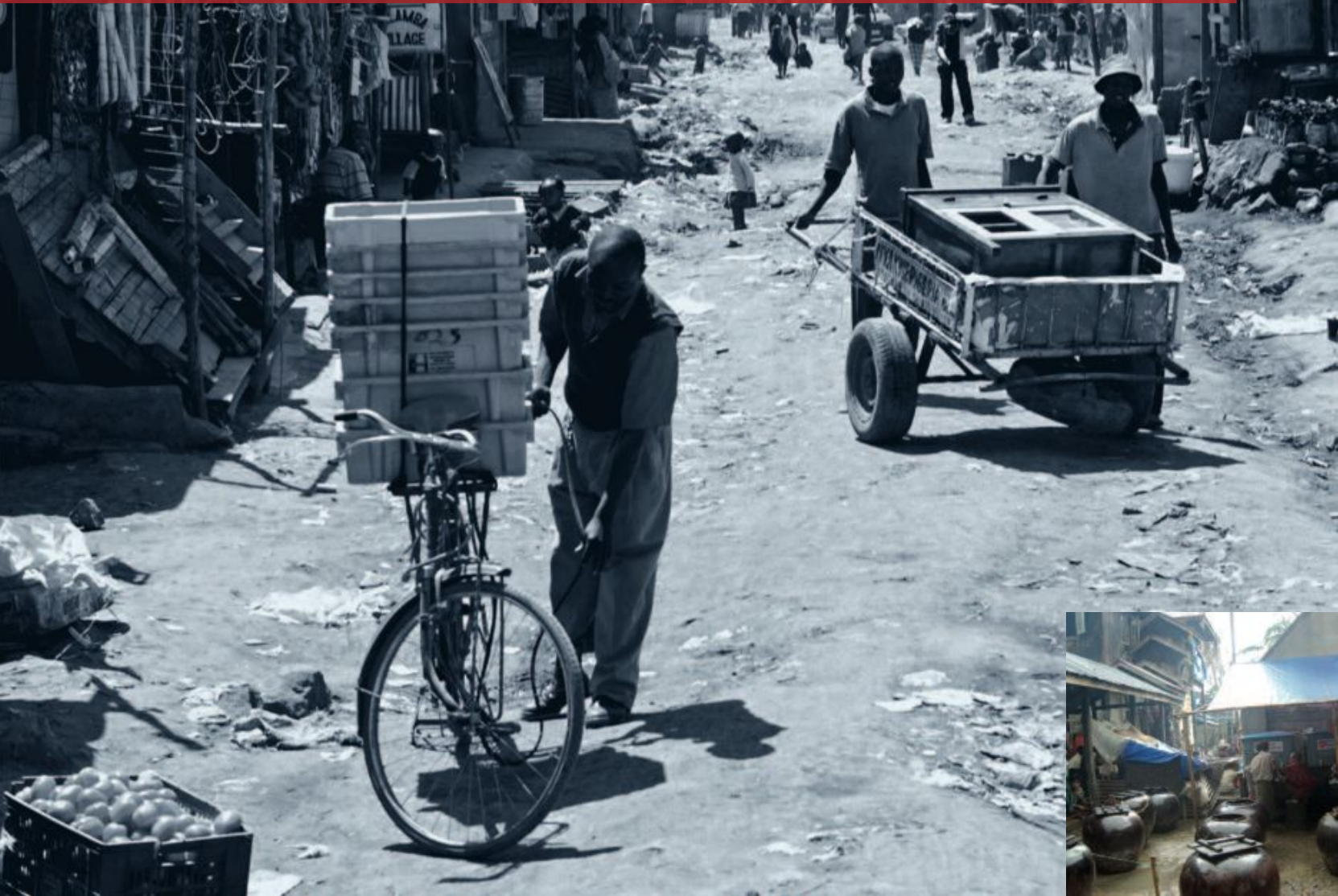
of our volunteers have been with us since our inauguration day 13 years ago, giving continuous service. It is a work that really enters your blood, you feel absolutely compelled to help your fellow man," affirms de Merode.

The Belgian Association of the Order has run a similar centre in Liège for 10 years and has plans to open another in Ghent.



■ Volunteers of the Belgian Association organise laundry – a much appreciated service for those living in the streets

worldwide medical, health and social welfare activities



The Order's work stretches from north to south and across the world. It provides first aid and first aid training, basic health care, vaccination programmes, care for terminally ill patients, for AIDS victims

and for those suffering from disease, hunger, homelessness.

It is the mission of its members to care for those in need – as important today as it was 900 years ago, as these regional reports testify.



Order's Projects are underway in 120 countries

Annual Order International Summer Camp for disabled youth – held in 2007 in Switzerland, 2008 in Austria, in Spain 2009. Over 450 participants from 20 countries join it every year.



Oakland, California: Order health clinic set up in Christ the Light Cathedral Centre to treat the uninsured. The staff - volunteers doctors, nurses and auxiliaries - give free assistance to anyone who comes.

California, Oakland



Switzerland

Spain

North America

A wide range of social programmes underpins the Order's activities in the United States, Canada and Mexico. Social and community work is high profile, with a developing project in prison ministry and reconstruction projects after Hurricane Katrina. Throughout the year, ongoing activities include home visits to the sick house-bound, transport for the elderly, shelter houses for single mothers and women who have suffered domestic violence, drug programmes for young people and community projects.

Haiti



Support for the Hôpital Sacré Coeur in rural Haiti; volunteer medical teams come on a regular basis. Emergency relief measures and reconstruction after the 2010 earthquake.

South America

Present in 26 countries in the region, assistance after natural catastrophes, which have left disease and destruction in their wake is an important activity. The Order's emergency aid services provide first aid, temporary shelter and food for victims. On a regular care basis, there are hospices for orphans, for the poor elderly, treatment for sufferers of leprosy, diabetes, cancer. Also underway: programmes for street children, for HIV positive mothers and infants, for the homeless, and for handicapped children in rural areas as well as soup kitchens for the poor in urban areas.

El Alto, Bolivia



Support for a Dialysis Centre and construction of centre for terminal cancer patients in El Alto, Bolivia. Cooperation on the Altiplano Chuno Project (potato growing to reduce hunger and poverty of native communities).



Earthquake in Abruzzo, Italy: with thousands left homeless, the Order's Italian Relief Corps set up tents for 1000 and provided 2000 meals and health assistance daily in the immediate aftermath.



The Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem, the only maternity hospital and the only neonatal intensive care unit in the region. Each year over 3,000 babies are born here.



Blessed Gerard Hospice cares for HIV-AIDS positive mothers and infants in Mandeni, part of Zululand, South Africa, where 88% of the population carry the disease.



Since 1993 Malteser International has a health project for 33,000 Karen and Burmese refugees in two camps at the Thai-Myanmar border, providing health care and training the refugees to become health staff in the camps.



Order works in support of the drug and alcohol (non-medical) detoxification unit, Gorman House, in Sydney, Australia. This inner city facility cares for some of Sydney's most marginalised people - over 1,500 admissions annually.

Africa

With activities in over 30 countries, the Order's projects here concentrate on care for HIV positive mothers and infants, on treatment for malaria, tuberculosis, on providing clean water facilities and health and psycho-sociological care to women victims of violence. The Order runs health centres and dispensaries in many rural areas, treats leprosy sufferers and trains them in income-generating activities, and cares for internally displaced persons fleeing famine or civic conflict.

Europe

Problems of displaced persons, immigrants, the handicapped, the homeless, palliative care, the elderly sick and the young with drug addiction dominate programmes in Europe. The Order also provides training programmes for first-aiders, health education training, medical and social care services in remote rural areas and underprivileged inner city environments, runs hospitals, old people's homes, transport for the disabled, meals on wheels services, rehabilitation and day care centres, including special centres for Alzheimer's sufferers and a number of first-aid and emergency corps who provide support after natural or civic disasters.

Asia / Middle East

In Asia the Order cares for leprosy sufferers, treats eye cataracts, supports orphan children, cares for refugees, provides emergency aid after natural disasters and civil conflicts. In the Middle East, health centres, dispensaries and mobile units in rural areas are high on the list of activities; the Order also runs a maternity hospital in Bethlehem.

Australia

Palliative care is a specialism, language schools for immigrant children, home visits to the elderly, care for the poor, support for addicts and the homeless, help for handicapped children and orphans.

Europe

In **Albania**, the growing number of volunteers in the Malteser Ndishmon ne Shqiperi (MNSH) continues to expand their range of social, medical and emergency relief operations – particularly among impoverished communities in the north of the country.

Initiatives such as summer camps and school visits are helping to reduce street begging among Roma children, while the volunteers also provide educational and vocational training for girls and women from poor families. Transport and home visits are also provided for older people and for those of all ages who have been abandoned by their families, either through disability or poverty.

A rapid intervention team of nurses and paramedics, established in 2006, has been in action several times – most recently to help evacuate people injured in an explosion at a munitions depot near Tirana.

MNSH's main project, however, continues to be the provision of medical services to more than 5,000 people living in extreme poverty in the remote mountainous area of northern Albania where the collapse of socialism left them with no doctors, no pharmacies, no ambulance service and no money to buy medicines.

Volunteers from the Order are now providing health education training as well as regular medical visits and emergency transport to hospitals. In 2007 alone, more than 2,800 people were helped in this way.



■ International Summer Camp for Disabled Youth, now in its 26th year

In response to a request from the Albanian Ministry of Education, first-aid courses have been introduced for students at a number of schools in the Shkoder and Lezhe areas. This follows the delivery of similar courses to members of the police and fire services in several northern towns.

As a result of this work, and several other ongoing projects, MNSH has established itself as a significant provider of health and social services to vulnerable groups in Albania.

The **Austrian Grand Priory's hospitaller division – Malteser Hospitaldienst Austria (MHDA)** celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2007. The Grand Chancellor, many members of the

Sovereign Council and the Austrian Federal President and the President of Hungary attended the anniversary event. The service has 380 regular volunteers, 1100 part-time volunteers, and 60 medical doctors offering temporary services.

In 2007 MHDA provided medical services during the Pope's three-day visit to Austria as the leading first aid organisation. MHDA organised also a pilgrimage with handicapped to Mariazell during the visit of His Holiness, where 120 helpers accomplished more than 2,000 hours of dedicated work. In the Jubilee year 2008 130 helpers and 180 handicapped were on the Order's train to Lourdes.

2008 saw Austria host the Order's annual International Summer Camp for disabled youth, held in Stams, Tyrol, attracting funding from the European Union's 'Youth in Action' programme; 500 young people from 20 countries attended. A total of 96,000 hours of voluntary service was provided by the Grand Priory and its organisations in 2007 – a contribution which continued to grow throughout 2008.

First aid at events: in June 2008 the MHDA provided first aid cover for the European Football Championships in Vienna, Salzburg and Innsbruck, amounting to 386 Order volunteers over the 23 days, doing 21,000 hours of duty (average 906 hrs / day), plus 141 German Malteserhilfsdienst (MHD) members.

2008-2009: Current projects include the running of a residential home, Haus Malta, for elderly and sick people, ownership of an elementary school in Mailberg, and the provision of nursing services and support for people diagnosed with HIV and AIDS.

Abroad: In 2007 and 2008 Grand Priory volunteers collected and distributed medicines worth € 4.3 million to Afghanistan, Romania, Moldavia, Iraq, Iran and Lebanon, and donated urgently-needed clothing, bicycles, sewing machines and household equipment to children's and old people's homes in Romania and Moldavia.

In **Belarus** the Order established diplomatic relations in 1996 and since then has given considerable aid to alleviate the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, including arranging annual trips abroad for treatment for 40 children from Chernobyl. Malta Belgium International organised training courses for Belarus doctors in paediatric nephrology and facial surgery, as well as seminars in paediatric nephrology by a Belgian University Professor.

The Embassy has worked with Malta Belgium International to distribute medicines and medical supplies to

children's homes, schools and hospitals in four regions (Gomel, Mogilev, Vitebsk and Grodno) and to donate much needed medical equipment. Additionally, in 2009 shipments of clothes from Slovakia have helped the poor in parishes in Minsk.

The Order's work in **Belgium** includes caring for some 18,000 homeless people each year at its 'La Fontaine' centres in Brussels and Liege. In 2009, the houses took care of 17,400 homeless = 12,000 showers, 12,100 laundry, 5,700 visits to the infirmary. 130 Order volunteers ('Malte Assistance') gave them support and care, focusing on the hundreds of homeless and providing basic help, a medical checkup, haircut, clean laundry, a shower.

Volunteers also provide palliative care for patients, including those suffering from multiple sclerosis, at two centres, the Albert I and Queen Elizabeth Institute and the Saint-Luc University clinic.

From 2009: team members of Malte Assistance offer the Brevet European First Aid Certificate (BEPS) and specialised courses for the carers of people with disabilities or long-term illnesses. Ongoing activities include

training for volunteers to assist in care for the sick and disabled; pilgrimages to Lourdes and to Banneux with the handicapped; spring and autumn weekends for special needs children and their families and young Malte Assistance volunteers.

Abroad: the Association supports three missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo and gives financial aid to the Holy Family Hospital, Bethlehem.

Much-needed medical equipment, food and clothing have been donated by Order's Embassy in **Bulgaria** since its establishment in 2005.

Six echograph machines for the early detection of cancer symptoms have so far been given to separate hospitals, while many consignments of food and clothing have been delivered to care homes for elderly people, with toys, clothing and educational equipment provided for young orphans.

The Embassy has also provided an ambulance for the King Ferdinand Hospital for Pulmonary Diseases in Iskretz and a number of cardiac defibrillators have also been donated to hospitals.



■ French President Nicolas Sarkozy visits the Order's Alzheimer's Centre in Nice



■ Day care centre in Rome

Since its foundation in May 2002, the Order's humanitarian and charitable aid organisation in the **Czech Republic**, Maltezska Pomoc (Malteser Aid), through the Grand Priory of Bohemia, has expanded its provision of social care services to cover 12 major cities, with 320 permanent volunteers, 200 occasional. It seeks to help those who would otherwise fall through the gaps in care provision. Maltezska Pomoc (Maltese Aid) has centres in 10 Czech cities to provide social services to the needy. Its wide-ranging programme of projects is directed at those who are injured, housebound, lonely, elderly, or affected by natural disasters. Care covers day care and clubs for seniors; supply of medicaments to the needy; home visits and household help for the elderly and infirm; inpatient hospital / nursing home care. In addition, the organisation's 520 volunteers also run camps for children from deprived families.

For all of these needy people, Maltezska Pomoc provides not only friendly and compassionate human contact but also access to medical care and donations of basic food and clothing, as well as free transport to special schools, care centres and hospitals. It has set up social activation services for seniors and the disabled - in Prague, Hradec Kralove, Karlovy Vary, Melnik, Brno, Olomoue, Uherske Hradiste, Ceska Lipa; aid for Alzheimer's and dementia patients; integration work; transport for

the disabled; personal assistance (Middle Bohemia region-Melnik) to develop self-sufficiency if aged or ill; and transport of children with disabilities (Middel Bohemia-Melnik) to special facilities, schools, social welfare institutions.

A separate group of 74 volunteers, including 10 doctors, provides first-aid services at large public events. In 2007, for example, the unit was in action at the Czech International Air Festival as well as at a number of rock festivals, sports events and pilgrimages. In 2008 the first aid unit helped 650 patients at 30 events. Also in 2008, new services covered personal assistance to the elderly; a correspondence with prisoners without family links (Olomouc, Brno) and at the international Meeting of Wheelchair Users, Velehrad, wheelchair users were escorted by 80 Maltese Aid volunteers.

In **France**, the Order's French Association, through its hospitaller service - the Association des Oeuvres Hospitalieres Francaises de l'Ordre de Malte (OHFOM), usually known as Ordre de Malte France - has four highly active national programmes for healthcare, social care, medical service and training. Its overseas medical, care and humanitarian activities are also broad-ranging both in type and geographical cover - with hospitals in 16 countries, dispensaries and healthcare centres in another 11 countries, and medical care

provided in 10 countries for people suffering from leprosy or AIDS.

In France itself, Ordre de Malte France runs 13 centres providing help, medical care and meals to homeless people, while two houseboats on the River Seine act as shelters and job centres for many homeless in Paris. In 2008, the Fleuron St. Jean saw 960 different passengers, totalling 16,000 overnight stays, with 10 aid workers and 150 volunteers; the Fleuron St. Michel has been operating since September 2008.

In France, the organisation has 11 hospitals/institutions for rehabilitation, the treatment of physical handicaps, autism, mental handicaps and Alzheimer patients (500 beds).

Volunteers also help to care for asylum seekers by offering not only moral support, but also medical supplies and access to education for children.

Meanwhile, Ordre de Malte France's medical supplies programme provided a lifeline to 18 developing countries by collecting and distributing medicines and medical equipment. In 2008 alone this service delivered 54 tonnes of medicines, as well as 18 tonnes of medical supplies, 51 tonnes of nutritional foods and 18,000 pairs of spectacles.

In 2008, 430 first aiders operated in 1,340 assistance stands (including services for the Papal visit and the Lourdes International Pilgrimage).

With 1,300 employees and 16,000 volunteers - 5,000 of whom are full time - Ordre de Malte France also plays a significant role in first-aid provision and training around the country. Almost one in three of the country's ambulance personnel are trained in one of the Association's four schools (Paris, Brest, Toulon, Bordeaux). In 2008 they awarded 330 ambulance driver diplomas and 199 certificates of ambulance medical auxiliaries. In their 32 First Aid schools, a workplace first-aid training service as well as a 'train the trainers' programme

is offered. In 2008, 1,800 first aiders were trained in 207 sessions, with 31 in training for first aid rescue at work.

The many management, support and training actions abroad are carried out in francophone African countries, as well as in Palestine, Syria, the Lebanon, Iraq, Cambodia and India, Brazil.

Working with the terminally ill has been a tradition spanning several decades for the **German Association**, whose German Malteser Family has divided its areas of activity into civil protection and social services. In 2008, there were 35,700 active volunteers, 12,139 professionals and 978,000 supporting members for a broad range of activities countrywide as well as abroad. The activities across the year amounted to 7.4 million hours of voluntary work at 700 locations. The German Association runs 10 hospitals, 22 residential homes for the elderly, 26 residential homes for youth work and drug addiction treatment and 8 houses for asylum seekers. In 2008, a total of 2,282 hospice workers helped to care for almost 7,000 terminally ill people. The Association provides permanent services for people in mourning at 13 locations in Germany,

and plans to introduce hospices for young people and children, as well as a palliative care service which will enable more terminally ill to be looked after in their own homes.

This will echo the continuing work of the Malteser Hilfsdienst (MHD), the Association's emergency corps, in creating security for elderly people who live at home on their own. Founded in 1953, the corps has developed exponentially and today MHD aid covers support for the elderly at home, ambulatory care, mobile social services, meal delivery services, home emergency call service, supervised living, transportation and a repatriation service.

Over 170 visiting and accompanying services with more than 1,900 volunteers cared for 17,628 elderly, sick, suffering and disabled people, totalling 225,000 voluntary hours of work.

Another branch of the Association provides specialised social and educational advice to more than 20 institutions across Germany. First-aid training is also widely provided.

Malteser hospitals offer specialised

clinics for naturopathy, residential homes for the elderly, hospices and palliative care services, and ambulance care services. Around 6,000 employees look after 100,000 patients each year in over 30 institutions. Also part of Malteser Germany is Malteser Werke. Since 1989, it has developed core competences in the fields of youth work, schooling, social services, family, migration and health care. Malteser Werke offers social and educational advice in 34 institutions across Germany.

Malteser Medical Facilities for Migrants (MMM) saw a great influx in 2008 among those without resident status or health insurance, providing preliminary medical check-ups or emergency care. Present in 11 major cities, over 20,000 patients have been helped and over 700 pregnancies delivered since 2001.

The Association's foreign aid organisation, meanwhile, has an active presence in 26 countries, in particular in Central and Eastern Europe.

In **Great Britain**, the Order – as one of two partners in the Orders of St John Care Trust (OSJCT) – has been playing an increasingly important role in supporting the Department of Health in providing end-of-life care for elderly people in their own homes.

Initiatives include 'My Home Life', a collaborative programme aimed at improving the quality of life for those who are living, dying, visiting and working in care homes for older people. All OSJCT homes now actively embrace the ethos of 'My Home Life'.

Through its participation in OSJCT, the Order's British Association is involved in the care of 3,300 residents in care homes for the elderly and has ambitious plans to increase this.

More than £24million has already been invested in the building of six new homes over the past four years, and six more are planned for 2010 at a cost of a further £135million. The Isis Care and



■ The Prince of Wales greets a resident at an Order home for the elderly in England



■ Aid in natural disasters is a task trained Order teams perform

Retirement Centre opened in Oxford in 2007 with 60 nursing care beds, 20 residential care beds and 20 extra care apartments. This was followed in 2008 by the opening of a new home in Malmesbury, Wiltshire, with 40 nursing care beds and 40 residential care beds as well as 28 two-bedroom extra-care apartments.

The Association's work in palliative care was further enhanced by the opening of new consulting rooms at the Hospital of St John and St Elizabeth in London, as well as a new Day Services Centre in the adjoining St John's Hospice (the only independent hospice in central London, it treats terminally ill patients free of charge, on a day care basis, and covers

eight London boroughs).

A strong, inspiring young group - the Order of Malta Volunteers (OMV) (ages between 17 and 29) - concentrates on accompanying the sick to Lourdes and on weekend breaks for the handicapped throughout the year, and organises its own fundraising for these projects. The OMV will host the International Summer Camp for disabled youth in 2010.

The recently formed Companions of the Order of Malta is an auxiliary organisation focused in three areas: care homes, hospices, and the British Association's Foreign Aid Service (FAS), which fundraises for Order projects abroad: mother-to-baby HIV transmission in

Mexico, Blessed Gerard orphanage and clinic in Mandeni, South Africa, Holy Family Hospital, Bethlehem; CIOMAL leprosy programmes; meals-on-wheels project in Romania; Russia (St Petersburg); and Malteser International's emergency relief work in Democratic Republic of Congo, in combatting HIV and TB in slums of Nairobi, Kenya, in Burma after cyclone Nargis. In 2008 over £150,000 was raised for these projects.

The **Hungarian** Maltese Charity Service (Magyar Maltai Szeretetszolgálat) was founded in 1989. Known as MMSZ, it is the relief organisation of the Sovereign Order of Malta, and an autonomous legal entity in the Hungarian legal

system. It is the country's largest provider of social care. Its three foci are traditional charitable activities, with 142 voluntary groups (collection and distribution of donations, mostly in kind); running social and healthcare institutions; development and implementation of special programmes and social policy strategies.

Traditional activities: Annual distribution of donations of around € 2 m. In 2008 this meant help for 159,000 needy. With a supermarket chain, the MMSZ collected 140 tons of food. In the same year they helped nearly 200 social, healthcare and education institutions. MMSZ's 12,000 volunteers gave over 600,000 hours in 2007-2008.

Institutional care: MMSZ runs 8 homes for the elderly, 6 day-time centres, 7 home support services. For the homeless, care includes: 10 residential facilities, 13 day-time centres, 4 street work services. For the disabled: 35 support services, 3 homes, 5 day-time centres, 3 services for sign language interpretation. Family welfare and child protection: 5 homes, 19 family help services, 13 playgrounds, a foster parent network. Care for addicts and community services. Plus 4 soup kitchens, 3 farm caretaker services, 13 prison ministry services. Healthcare includes an ambulance service, rentals for medical appliances, a mobile clinic, mobile pulmonary screening station, healthcare centres, medical practices, a vocational school for nursing training, a nursing home, a hospital. Around 6,500 needy persons are cared for by MMSZ daily.

Special programmes: Prevention by Playing to break the link between teenage boredom and criminality; a Host Village programme of social integration and multi-purpose aid for Roma and homeless families; a Housing and Social Integration programme to promote the integration of Roma quarters in towns; and Employment for the Homeless a laundry in Budapest, run by ten homeless people, hired and trained for the purpose.

The MMSZ Rescue Team for victims of natural disasters has provided flood support in Hungary and other countries of the Carpathian Basin and in South-East Asia. Its medical group has worked in Pakistan and on the island of Java. Medical aid supplies went to Lebanon, to the Order's Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem and to Ramallah hospital.

In 2009 the MMSZ, celebrating its 20th anniversary, sees its next targets as more support for the needy, reinforcing and expanding the donor base and creating strategic partnerships.

The **Order of Malta Ireland** has continued to provide an extensive range of community services throughout 2007, 2008 and 2009. These have included day care and supper clubs for older people, the provision of holidays for people with disabilities and respite holidays for carers at the Order of Malta Centre in Lisnaskea, Northern Ireland, as well as participation in the Order's annual International Camp for Young Disabled People.

First-aid remained a strong focus throughout 2007, 2008 and 2008 - both in the workplace training courses provided by Order of Malta Training Services, and through the provision of

first-aid services at major public events by the Order of Malta Ambulance Corps. The Order of Malta Cadets, meanwhile, continue to organise youth development programmes and sporting activities for young people throughout the island of Ireland.

The 80-person day care centre in Drogheda remains the Order's largest single project in Ireland. It provides a range of activities and programmes individually tailored to the needs of people with a range of intellectual, physical and sensory disabilities.

Thanks to the intervention of the 18 full-time staff, many of the centre's clients have been able to move into mainstream employment. Others have continued to take part in literacy and numeracy classes as well as in sports including golf, archery and swimming, and in developing life skills such as cooking, washing and organic gardening.

In 2007, 250,000 volunteer hours were given to the Ambulance Corps. In 2008 this figure was surpassed. In 2009 new Advanced Leadership courses for young cadets have been launched. The Irish Order of Malta Ambulance Corps is the first organisation in the voluntary sector to have accreditation to teach a first aid



■ Order of Malta soup kitchens for the elderly poor function in Central and Eastern Europe

standard that leads to a professional emergency care qualification. Order of Malta Ireland also continues its humanitarian and medical work overseas, including two projects in Islamic countries – the rebuilding of a village medical and social centre in Lebanon, and the provision of Irish medical professionals to work with and help to train staff at the Holy Family Hospital, Bethlehem.

In **Italy** the Order is active through its three Grand Pories and its Association. The Order's **Italian Association** (ACISMOM) runs a 220 bed hospital in Rome with a neuro-rehabilitation unit for cerebral trauma patients; 11 centres for diagnosis and treatment of diabetes (45,000 patients per annum); a Relief Corps (CISOM) of 2,000 volunteers for Civil Protection services; and a Military Medical Corps which cooperates with the Italian Armed Forces. In a cooperation agreement with the Italian Coast Guard, CISOM provides emergency services to illegal immigrants - currently on Lampedusa (see article page 42).

The Relief Corps and the Military Medical Corps were among the first on the ground when an earthquake measuring 6.3 on the Richter scale hit the Abruzzo region, leaving over 300

dead, more than 1,400 injured, 64,000 homeless. Their services continue for many months as the rehabilitation phase, in both psychological and reconstruction terms is long.

CISOM has been hosting 700 people, providing them with meals, health care and spiritual succour, assisted by volunteers from the Austrian and German Associations.

Following the earthquake that devastated the Abruzzo region, the **Grand Priory of Lombardy and Venice** participated in the aid operations for the victims and provided food for distribution in the camps run by the Italian First Aid Corps of the Order (CISOM). The Priory's Delegations have continued their support in the care centres which are still working in the area.

The **Grand Priory of Naples** provides support accommodation for parents of chronically ill children needing regular treatment in Naples, a project established since 2007.

Hundreds of destitute people, 90% Italian plus a minority of foreigners, are assisted every year in the ten community centres and four family guidance units that the **Grand Priory of Rome** opened over twenty years ago and

which the members of the Order of Malta and volunteers run in various parishes in Rome. There are the elderly who consult the volunteer lawyers about their disability pension; parents of children with mental disorders who request psychological assistance; the unemployed seeking help to pay electricity and gas bills and kindergarten fees; single mothers collecting their parcels of nappies and baby food.

Further afield, the Italian Association provides help in rehabilitation of sufferers at Abu Zabal Leprosy Hospital near Cairo, Egypt and a day clinic for eye treatment in Shabra district. The Italian Association also coordinates fundraising for a secondary school for girls in the Rumbek diocese of Sudan.

In **Latvia**, an assistance project in the City of Soest is centred on the donating, collecting and distributing of medical equipment and basic necessities. In 2007 and 2008 this amounted to 50 tons. Current plans include a project for a childrens home in Aglona, to support street children from the area.

In **Lithuania** the Order's Auxiliary Service (MOPT), which was established in 1991, plays an important role in the country's social services provision.



■ The Order's 30 ambulance corps operate in emergency situations in Europe and Africa



■ Pope Benedict XVI visits the Order's San Giovanni Battista hospital in Rome

Operating on a national level, it works in more than 20 institutions to distribute food, clothing and medicine to elderly people, children and those with handicaps. It provides meals on wheels, soup kitchens, supports social and medical institutions, and has created and supports youth groups.

2008 saw MOPT with 32 branches in 22 cities, 430 volunteers and a youth organisation of 400 members in 20 cities. There is a focus on children, with day care centres in four major cities, providing meals, teaching and the possibility to play games. They also join Lithuanian radio and television personalities in an annual nationwide initiative under which hot meals are distributed to homeless and needy people in the country's six largest cities during the three days before Christmas.

Although mainly volunteers provide the services of MOPT, the professional head office in Vilnius and five regional offices make MOPT an ideal provider of social services for companies seeking to

engage or extend in social sponsorship in Lithuania. Services include volunteer training, public relations, fundraising.

Patients receiving chemotherapy and radiotherapy at the Sir Paul Boffa Hospital in Valletta, **Malta**, are being helped to feel less stressed and more at ease thanks to daily visits by volunteers from the island's Friends of the Order of Malta organisation. The volunteers also provide a refreshment trolley service at the hospital, with an average of 400 meals per week. On the Island of Gozo, the sick and elderly are visited on a regular basis, and basic necessities are provided.

Abroad, the Association distributes medicines and clothing to Ethiopia and donates to the Dioceses of Malindi and Garissa (run by Maltese bishops), in Northern Kenya. Meanwhile, two members of the Maltese Association, Stephen and Jacqueline Vassallo, continue to run a medical clinic they established eight years ago in the village of Azulco, Guatemala. The couple

– a retired medical doctor and his wife – travel to the country and spend two months each year holding clinics in 16 neighbouring villages and hamlets. Since 2000, they have provided a vitally needed medical service to people who would otherwise have no access to a doctor and no money to pay for medicines.

In 2008 Association services included regular visits to detention centres for migrants, providing clothing and basic necessities. The service has been extended in 2009.

In the **Netherlands**, the Order's Association runs an annual summer camp for adults who have physical disabilities. With their needs often overlooked by other organisations, they spend a week in beautiful surroundings and with the company of 15 volunteers.

Annual camps are also organised for children in two age groups, each providing a week's activities led by older students.

Volunteers from the Association are involved in the management and operation of the Hospice of St John, which is the first centre in the Netherlands to provide palliative care on a 24-hour basis. In 2008, a total of 84 guests received care at the hospice, where members of the professional staff are assisted by a group of more than 80 trained volunteers.

The **Polish** Association continues to run Eastern Europe's largest care centre for disabled children and their parents. Opened in Krakow in 2006, the centre aims to provide specialised care and support for up to 250 families with children who have special needs. The following year saw the opening of a pre-school for children with handicaps, as well as a medical centre to provide facilities for early intervention. These new facilities supplement the day-care centre which the Association has been running in Krakow for many years and which caters for more than 130 children from broken and alcohol-addicted families.

As well as its care for children, other support services range from care for the elderly, to patients suffering from dementia or Alzheimer's disease, as well as domestic emergency response services, meals on wheels, home visits and household help, and social integration events.

Medical aid is provided at the Specialist Maltese Centre in Poznan, which carried out more than 2,000 mammography and ultrasound examinations as well as 1,400 densitometric examinations in 2006, with increases in 2007 and 2008. Between 1993 and 2008, 74,330 patients were treated in the oncology clinic whose current medical team includes 32 physicians, all volunteers, and 26 auxiliaries. The Maltese Aid Centre in Puszczykowo provides day care and task therapy for people with mental disabilities, while a further 30 people with moderate and severe mental difficulties attend a task therapy workshop.

The Association also runs two centres



■ School pickup point: Order transport for disabled children

in Katowice which provide care for drug addicts and homeless children, as well as a 30-bed hospital in North East Poland where a specialised medical team cares for patients in a persistent vegetative state.

All volunteers in the Maltese Medical Service (MMS), which provides medical support at large public events, receive first aid training. In 2007, 1,860 volunteers in 34 branches of the MMS attended 626 events and gave first aid and medical treatment to 19,864 people. In 2008, 120,000 volunteer hours were clocked up, 114 first aid courses were run, 2,000 first aiders were trained and 7.5 tons of aid for the needy were distributed. In August 2008 the 12th Eurocamp was held at Zakrzow, near Krakow, for 60 Maltese Youth who came from Albania, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Serbia to discuss and practise first aid and life saving techniques. Also in 2008 the 4th Summer Camp for Disabled Children took place in Szczyrzyc, with over 50 participants.

In 2006, Advisory Centres for the disabled, aided by a small group of volunteers, were established in six cities, to provide income-generating skills. By 2008, the small group had

already grown to 90 volunteers.

Outside its own national boundaries the Polish Association provides humanitarian aid to people in Ukraine (which included a special medical mission to remote areas of the country and supply of basic medicines), Lithuania, Latvia, Belarus and Kazakhstan and Georgia (see above). Its Maltese Pharmacy also continues to provide free medication to those in need.

Volunteers from the **Portuguese** Association are active in providing social support for people living in four care homes, as well as medical help, medicines and equipment for people with disabilities. Patient care and support is also given at the Oporto Oncology Hospital.

The Obras Hospitalárias Portuguesas da Ordem de Malta has two branches: the first, a unit of volunteer doctors, nurses and logistic personnel who provide assistance for the pilgrims who walk to the Christian shrines, and the poor from Portugese-speaking countries, the second is teams of volunteers who work in institutions, care homes and prisons.

In 2008 the Association supported care homes in five cities, with the addition of

two in Northern Portugal, and a home for orphans at Povoá de Varzim. Prison ministry also grew, with 70 inmates assisted in two prisons, at Caxias and Carregueira.

The Association is also active abroad in supporting medical and humanitarian projects in Portuguese-speaking countries. Volunteers are also regular visitors to Guinea-Bissau, where they work with needy children in local primary schools.

The Order's Relief Service in **Romania** has more than 1,200 volunteers providing a wide variety of medical and humanitarian aid to those in need in 26 locations. Recent activities include the construction of a multifunctional youth centre and the building of six houses and seven water wells following severe flooding in the Tulcea region.

Work continues in providing support for homeless people including social centres, winter crisis centres and day centres. Medical activities include dental and pharmacy services, as well as the provision of first-aid courses and an ambulance service staffed by trained volunteers.

The Relief Service also cares for abandoned children and organises play programmes as part of its work in helping to integrate disadvantaged children with the wider society.

People with disabilities are also supported through services ranging from free transport to the provision of day-care and residential homes, while the elderly are offered services including meals on wheels, household help and outpatient care.

In **Russia**, the work of the Order is focused on medical and care provision for underprivileged sectors of the population. There are a number of day care centres as well as home visits, a meals on wheels service and household help for elderly people. A soup kitchen operates in St. Petersburg. Transport and places in care homes are provided

for people with disabilities, and medical services include the supply of medicines as well as support for hospital patients.

The **Scandinavian** Association now has members in Sweden, Finland and Norway. Activities include visits to elderly people in residential care homes and weekly visits to the terminally ill in hospices.

Abroad, the Association is supporting refugees outside Sarajevo and fundraising to support needy children in Tallinn, Estonia.

Medical and social care provided by the Order's Relief Corps in **Serbia** extends across all age groups and includes home visits as well as the provision of specialised care centres and residential homes. There is a transport scheme for disabled people, a nursery school for children with special needs, and a soup kitchen for homeless people. Other services are for outpatient care, medical care provided by doctors, supplying of medicaments, home visits and household help for the disabled, social integration events, a day/night nursing facility, assisted senior living, a domestic emergency response service, aid for Alzheimer's and dementia patients, meals on wheels. Specialist

training has also been organised for two Serbian doctors at the University of Pisa.

In **Slovakia** the Volunteer Corps carries out welfare work including help for needy people at eight aid centres, the provision of soup kitchens for homeless people and, most recently, donations of medical equipment to the Kezmarok hospital and of defibrillators to the Roma community in Olejnkovo and to the hospital in Trenčín.

The Order has been providing care and aid in **Spain** since 1108, and the Spanish Association now maintains that tradition through a number of programmes aimed at helping those in need at all stages in their lives.

Elderly people are cared for at a number of rest homes in Madrid, where the Association also provides soup kitchens for homeless people. Young people with disabilities are catered for at an annual Summer Camp, and the Spanish Association is host for the Order's 2009 International Summer Camp in Segovia.

Members of the Association's volunteer corps provide a wide variety of programmes in Madrid, Cataluña, Valencia and Baleares with the focus on



■ Student and volunteer share a joke. Orphanages are a focus in Eastern Europe



■ In Germany Malteser is one of the largest providers of emergency first aid

helping older people, those who are homeless or displaced from their homes in other countries, as well as young people affected by Down's syndrome.

The Spanish Association also works in collaboration with a number of other aid organisations, examples including funding international training courses with Fontilles Leprosy in Alicante, working with Nuevo Futuro to care for children lacking a normal family environment, as well as the food supplies bank, ADEVIDA, in Palma de Mallorca and Seville, and with the National Blind Organisation (ONCE) in Pamplona.

International activities include work in Equatorial Guinea, where the Association has covered the maintenance and improvement of the Leprosy Clinic at Mikomeseng, as well as contributions to the building and maintenance of a day health care centre for mental pathologies in Bata. Another recent example is the construction and equipping of a kidney disease health centre in Bolivia, where the Spanish Association worked in conjunction with the Bolivian Association of the Order as well as the AECl and the Kidney Disease Foundation.

In **Switzerland**, volunteers from the Swiss Hospitaller Service – now numbering over 900 – continue their broad spread of work within hospitals and medical centres, as well as in residential homes for elderly and handicapped people, and also among sick young and the homeless.

In 2007 the Order's annual International



■ Ukraine children's home

Summer Camp for Children with handicaps was held in Champéry and attended by more than 500 people. The 'Point d'Eau' clinic in Lausanne continues to care for the homeless and the poor, providing medical checkups, laundry, dentist, psychological support, working in partnership with the Order of St. Jean.

Support for the needy has been also extended overseas, with a total of 980 tonnes of medicines, medical equipment, food and clothing sent to ten countries in Eastern Europe, Africa and the Middle East in 2008.

Clothes and food aid are provided by the Order's volunteers in **Ukraine**, who also run a meals on wheels service for elderly people who are housebound, and soup kitchens in locations in the west of the country for those who have no home at all. In 2008 180 meals per day were prepared. Other social services for the needy include day care centres and outpatient support; transport for the disabled; assistance and visiting service for mentally handicapped children in institutions; the establishment of a Handicapped Rehabilitation Club where 30 patients are collected from their homes and taken to concerts, sports events and church summer camps.

Americas

The medical work carried out by the **Argentinian Association** includes care for HIV-positive mothers and their infants at two hospitals, with more than 1,000 mothers treated during 2007 and a further 1,000 in 2008.

The Association has donated medical and practical equipment to the intensive care unit for the neonatal intensive care ward at the Hospital de Niños de San Justo.

Palliative care is also provided for cancer patients in their own homes, with more than 600 being supported so far since 2001.

Support for pilgrimages is another activity, with one recent example being a pilgrimage to the Basilica of Nuestra Señora de Luján which included many terminally-ill patients from the Order's Centre for Palliative Care.

Meanwhile CIOMAL, the International Committee of the Order of Malta against Leprosy, continues its drive to eradicate leprosy which has now entered its third phase, run in collaboration with the Universidad de Salvador, Hospital Muñiz and Hospital Maldomero Sommer.

As part of the AMAPEL (Ayuda Maltesa Para Eliminar la Lepra) project, the partners are supporting the National Leprosy Programme by following-up patients to ensure that their treatment and care is maintained. Refresher courses are also delivered to hospital internships in various towns and cities



■ Food and medical equipment is distributed after natural catastrophes

to facilitate the first stage of medical training in leprosy treatment.

In **Belize**, the USA Federal Association has supported a health care clinic, supplying mobile communications equipment and systems to facilitate communications between the clinic and the mobile unit operating in remote villages.

The Order continues to work in **Bolivia**, one of the poorest and least-developed countries in Latin America, not only through its own Association which carries out a number of humanitarian and fund-raising activities, but also with the support of other Order Associations.

The Bolivian Association recently opened a new Centre for Medical



■ In Bolivia, the Order's Association supports the El Alto dialysis centre

Investigation and Prevention of Diabetes, in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, with the support of the Spanish Association. In La Paz, two important projects are the support for a dialysis centre and the construction of a centre for terminally-ill cancer patients in El Alto (La Paz), currently under development.

Between 2005 and 2008, the Canadian Association acted as administrators of a project which has sustainably reduced poverty and hunger for 3600 people in farming communities through a scheme for developing trade in a locally-produced air-dried bitter potato known as Chuño. The project was organised by the Canadian International Development Association CIDA/ACDI with two Bolivian partners, AGRUCO and COSUDE.

In **Brazil**, the Order's Association of Sao Paulo and Southern Brazil has estab-

lished medical referral centres in five states, and has been asked by the government to build, or help in the rebuilding of, a total of 15 similar centres and nine states. Each will have medical, technical and ambulatory equipment as well as surgery facilities.

Other activities include an outpatients' clinic providing free prescription medicines to the poor and needy in Sao Paulo, a day care facility for children up to the age of seven, and the Centro de Juventude where disadvantaged children can receive free medical and dental care.

Meanwhile the leprosy control programme run by CIOMAL in the Picos, Piaui and Fiorano areas has helped to reduce significantly the number of new cases, particularly among the under-15 age group.

Caring for the more vulnerable members of the community forms the focus of the **Canadian Association's** work. In Montreal, for example, volunteers help to care for 1000 elderly people in six residential homes and assist pilgrims all year round at St. Joseph's Oratory and Notre Dame du Cap, while in Quebec they run a project to help severely handicapped children.

A day clinic and a shelter for the homeless are already up and running in Ottawa, with a home for elderly people and a local Catholic high school recently added to plans for ongoing projects.

Donations have been made in Toronto to a shelter for the homeless "Out of the Cold" and for the operation of a soup kitchen, "St. Francis Table," both run by St Michael's Hospital in Toronto, where members of the Order support people with handicaps as well as the elderly and chronically ill and their carers. Additionally, the Association is providing eye clinics in Vancouver for those who fall through the cracks in the city's social services provision and for whom this service is vital and are currently establishing a project in a poor parish to help an ageing immigrant population to obtain better access to social services.

Abroad, the Association supports projects in Bolivia and Honduras.

In **Chile**, after seven years of effort, the Chilean Association has finalised the restoration of the St John the Baptist church in Santiago and organises Masses, retreats and vespers. After renovating and equipping the respiratory departments of five public hospitals and assuring the transport of its patients, this year the Fundación Auxilio Maltés will build a Centre for the Re-education of needy children with lung problems, and a Day Care Centre for 30 elderly persons. Following the February 2010 earthquake, teams from Malteser International, the Chilean Association and "Auxilio Maltés" have combined forces to provide emergency relief to victims.

In **Colombia**, the Order has added two further floors to its health centre in Barrio Palermo Sur, where it serves a population of 20,000 people in a poor area of Bogota. Elsewhere in the city, members of the Colombian Association continue to run a project which provides psychological support and occupational therapy to children with educational or family difficulties.

Meanwhile, the Order's legal consultancy provided help to 345 Colombian families during 2007 and continued its support work in 2008, while medicines donated by AmeriCares were distributed to more than 40 institutions in 2008.

In addition to offering voluntary help to hospitals, clinics and residential homes for elderly people, the Association also runs a number of mobile medical units which send needy patients for treatment in Bogota.

The Order opened a new embassy in **Cuba** at the beginning of 2008 to afford a focal point for the expanding social and cultural activities in the country. The purpose is to build on the work of the Cuban Association which includes the assistance provided through 40 'comedores populares' or adult day care centres which operate within the various institutions of the Church throughout the island.

Hurricane Ike struck Cuba in September 2008, leaving chaos in its wake, in the east especially, where heavy flooding and rains caused severe damage not only to 500,000 houses, but also to the infrastructure - electricity, roads, railways and agriculture. The Order's Embassy immediately acted in assessing the damage, then consulting with the Bishop of Pinar and organising a large container of food and basic necessities to go to the needy in the dioceses of Pinar del Rio. Volunteers prepared over 1,300 packages with food, clothes and soap for distribution in the city of Las Pozas, with a further consignment of bedding and medicines to the badly damaged Hospital in San Cristobal. The Cuban Association sent

over US\$ 60,000 in hurricane relief. In 2009, in cooperation with the bishops of Pinar, the Embassy has projected the rebuilding of the first houses, with the programme expected to continue over many months.

The state-run hospital for people suffering from leprosy is also supported by the Order, both through nursing care and through the provision of basic foods and vitamins for the 100 patients the hospital is caring for.

The **Cuban Association** is also active in the United States where it focuses much of its activities on undocumented immigrants in Miami, Florida. In San Juan Bosco parish its volunteers operate a feeding hall that assists over 75 indigent families. The Association also offers children's vaccinations, blood pressure and sugar level screening, and other primary care efforts at San Juan Bosco Parish and other locations in the Miami area. The Association also organises medical missions which in the past have gone throughout the Caribbean but have



■ Donation of medical equipment is one of the activities in South America



■ Volunteer medical team from Miami treats patients in a rural clinic, Dominican Republic

recently centred on the Dominican Republic.

The healthcare programme provided by the Order's Association in the **Dominican Republic** continued to provide high quality healthcare services at two mother and child clinics – one on the outskirts of the capital, Santo Domingo, and the other in Monte Plata, a sparsely-populated rural area in the centre of the country. Both offer a wide range of antenatal and postnatal services, as well as HIV counselling, home visits, and training for healthcare professionals and health education for the general population. The Monte Plata Clinic plays a significant additional role as the main medical centre for the entire province, with mothers travelling for up to four hours to receive attention.

Services include pediatric services, dental care, lab tests, pharmacy, gynaecology care, detection of cervical, uterine and breast cancer, sonograms, vaccinations, monitoring of child growth

and development and nutritional evaluation, general medicine, psychology, technical support, coordination with other sector institutions, training of health care professionals, community members and health education for the general population.

The Cuban Association has undertaken medical missions in the Dominican Republic in 2002, 2007 and 2009, with medical support at Manuel J. Centurion Hospital, Licey al Medio, where on each visit a team saw 1,540 patients in 3 days, bringing six months' supply of medicines and other pharmaceutical products to a value of \$140,000; they also provided support for the needy in the town of Juncalito. In addition, the Association sent teams in response to the hurricanes in the area, in both 2007 and 2008.

In the rural communities of the Dominican Republic, outside Consuelo, the USA Federal Association's Project Lifeline team has treated more than

20,000 patients since 2004, with more than half of the visits for children. The doctors estimate that hundreds of these children have never been examined by a physician. Over \$400,000 medicines have been donated, including more than 110,000 anti-parasite treatments provided to children and 18 "Health Promoters" have been trained, to educate women on health, hygiene, and nutrition.

In **El Salvador** the local Association operates 9 support clinics to help the poor and the needy, and also runs a programme of importing and distributing medicines and medical equipment. The Cuban Association supports the university hospital in El Salvador for training of nurses and paramedics and donates medical machines.

In 2008 the **Guatemalan** Association distributed medicines, clothing and health kits to 2.5 million people with low economic means. After severe floods, it sent a medical team, two mobile clinics, clothing and shoes to aid efforts in Camotán and Jocotán. Together with partners, the Association sponsors projects for the underprivileged: One Day Mobile Clinics work across nine regions, offering cancer tests to women; the Changing Lives programme brings poor patients and their families to hospitals in Guatemala City; the Order's ten clinics and pharmacies assist over 15,000 people annually; the Order's Food For Education Programme, coordinated with the US Department of Agriculture and a number of NGOs, distributes food to over 30,000 families monthly (in accepting the rations they must send their children to school and take skills training programmes – most popular is dressmaking) and provides hot meals to 121 schools daily. The Association also regularly distributes medicines, medical kits, furnishing and clothing to 28 hospitals across the country. Donations sent from abroad are distributed by the Order's Embassy to the needy, working with the Association.

For over 15 years the Order of Malta has provided care for the needy in **Haiti**,

through its work and support in the Hôpital Sacré Coeur, Milot (73-bed general hospital in the north, 57,000 outpatients yearly). The Order also supports the Haitian Health Foundation (a preventive and curative health and development programme in the city of Jérémie, the poorest area of the country; support to over 100 rural mountain villages); and Hope for Haiti (project with 37 schools for 12,000 children, medical distribution to 60 healthcare facilities, mobile medical teams, clean water).

As the January 2010 earthquake news broke, the Order's worldwide relief service, Malteser International, at once prepared medical teams to assist, as did the Order's Ambassador to Haiti, the Order Associations in the Dominican Republic, in the United States and the other Associations in the region. The Sacré Coeur hospital, which was not damaged, began to receive and treat the first seriously injured.

The Order's international teams from Europe and the Americas included doctors, medical auxiliaries, critical care staff and Creole-speaking nurses. After initial aid in Port-au-Prince, the Order focused on Leogane, a town of 200,000 near the quake epicentre, almost totally destroyed and receiving little outside help. First concerns: medical aid, minor surgery, psychological care, clean water facilities, food and shelter for victims. Fear of disease and epidemics was always present. Already by day four, over 2,000 patients had been treated at the Order's Leogane health camp.

The Order's teams will remain for months, giving medical aid, setting up hygiene and health care campaigns, helping reconstruct lives, homes and livelihoods of this devastated people. An office in Miami, the Haiti Relief Center, is staffed by volunteers providing information to donors and volunteers. To ensure continuing aid, Order organisations met in March 2010 in Miami to draw up a Haiti Master Plan of the Order of Malta.

The work of the **Honduras Association** includes providing logistical support to medical teams which make regular visits to rural towns in the southern part of the country, where they serve more than 10,000 people each year.

The Association also distributes donations of medicines and medical equipment every year to 10 of the largest hospitals in Honduras, as well as to some 300 smaller clinics and hospitals, working with AmeriCares and Food for the Poor – in the last few years distributions amounted to a value of US\$45 million.

All of this is in addition to a three-year programme of distributing powdered milk - 960 metric tons of milk - and other nutritional foodstuffs to a variety of beneficiaries throughout the country.

The Cuban Association's medical missions in Honduras support the parish of Choluteca. And the American Association supports Friendship House - two homes for street children, caring for 130 abandoned boys and girls aged 2-18 who otherwise would have been left on the streets and in the garbage dumps looking for food.

The wide-ranging help provided by the **Mexican Association** includes support and care for children, families and elderly people in Mexico City.

A programme to 'Save a Child from AIDS' was launched in 2007 and helped more than 300 HIV-positive mothers to deliver healthy babies. In 2008, this figure was again reached. It supplements the 'Help me to Grow' nutritional programme which has provided essential nutrition for more than 4,000 young Mexican children over the past four years.

Other activities include providing eye surgery and care for needy people who are visually impaired and an educational programme designed to encourage the use of low-cost soy in home cooking.

The Order projects include the San Juan Bosco boarding school for 367 children, Iztapalapa, Mexico City; a retirement home in Mexico City for the elderly handicapped; the Clinic S.Maria de Guadalupe, Netzahuacoyotl, Mexico City, which carries out 300 medical consultations per month; Centros Asistenciales Zentapatl y Cacalote, poor area of Mexico City which helps 300 families with food, medical and dental care, and job training.



■ The Order's medical teams helped hundreds of survivors in the very first days after the earthquake in Haiti, January 2010



■ The Order's three American associations organised working bees to reconstruct homes in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina

During 2007: distribution of medicines provided by AmeriCares involved 3,000 Order volunteers and helped 185,000 families in 721 communities. After the November 2007 floods in Tabasco and Chiapas, the Mexican Association provided medical teams, volunteers, food and clothing - and funds to build a small tortilla factory to supply 5,000 locals. In 2008: 580 farmers were assisted in the very poor area of San Nicolás Buenos Aires Puebla and in poor areas of Mexico City, underprivileged young were trained as artisans, selling articles in two cooperatives.

Nicaragua: the Order was able to supply emergency medicines (US\$3 million) to victims of Hurricane Felix, which struck the region in September 2007 and in conjunction with Americares, the Order's Embassy distributes medicines and medical supplies on a regular basis to small clinics around the country.

The **Panamanian** Association in 2008 widely distributed medicines to more than 80 hospitals, health care centres, orphanages, homes for the elderly, schools, prisons and similar institutions across the country. It also supports two

schools in poor areas of Panama City, with assistance to handicapped children at the schools, provision of scholastic aids and recently, restructuring of some of the buildings. The Association launched a first-aid clinic at the Basilica of San Juan Bosco, Panama City, in 2009, where the very poor have no access to any health care; it also sponsors and helps fund the Social Centre in the Basilica, located in one of the poorest areas of Panama City.

Paraguay: The Order's volunteer organisation offers First Aid lessons, emergency help and medical and dental health services to the local population. It gives medical assistance in Loma Grande and Jesús to patients with congenital malformations.

The **Peruvian** Association has established a programme to assist the indigent population in the Department of Puna (altitude over 4,000 meters), where has distributed over seven tons of food and clothing in the region where children and the elderly die every year from exposure to the cold. The Association continues its work of reconstructing the villages of Cedros de Villa

and Nuevo Huacará, devastated by the earthquake of 2007. To date, a total of 92 houses have been reconstructed as well as a park and a refectory for children. 2009: the 'Our Lady of Filermo' infirmary started operations. The Association operates the Divino Niño Orden de Malta clinic in southern Lima, and Valle Amauta in the west. Malteser Peru operates the San Juan Bautista refectory where 50 children are fed daily and young adults are trained to become bakers.

The **Uruguayan** Association has established a programme of dental health-care in an under-developed rural area of the country. A voluntary orthodontist makes weekly visits to provide children from low-income families with treatment as well as advice on the prevention of dental problems. There are plans to extend this service with the addition of a mobile unit.

Volunteers also continue to help to people with leprosy, to provide homes for poverty-stricken elderly women and to run a night shelter for the homeless and the destitute.

In the **United States of America**, the Order is active through its three Associations: the American Association, the Federal Association and the Western Association.

The **American Association** has an active programme of prison ministry in 18 areas, including bible study groups in maximum security prisons and tutoring children of prisoners in the South Bronx. In New Jersey, members minister to 6,800 Catholic prisoners throughout the state prison systems, including providing Bibles and Prayer Books. The Association has organised development programmes for recently-released prisoners, such as the creation of a database of employers in the New Jersey area who are willing to hire ex-convicts. Volunteers also work with a Juvenile Detention Center with incarcerated children aged 12 to 18 who have been placed in the Center by the Courts. In some cases, they simply do not have

a home or parents who will take care of them. The Association's Malta Human Services Foundation gave US\$959,000 in grants to 49 ministries in 2007 – including \$415,000 to 10 international programmes. In 2008 grants reached a million dollars.

Abroad, the American Association is involved in support in Haiti and Honduras (see above).

The **Federal Association** has an extensive programme of help for needy people in 18 cities, including soup kitchens, night shelters and the provision of clothing for homeless people in Baltimore, Charlotte, Houston, Jacksonville, Kansas City and New Orleans.

Volunteers also provide social and medical help for the Hispanic community in Atlanta, and visits to hospital patients and care-home residents in several cities. The Malta House of Care, which provides free primary care to the poor and uninsured in Hartford, is another of the Association's activities.

In Central America the Federal Association is active in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and runs Project Lifeline in Guatemala.

In 2008, members of the **Western Association** and volunteers devoted over 60,000 hours of hands-on service to care programmes in nine major metropolitan areas, including Los Angeles, Oakland, Phoenix, San Francisco, San Jose and Seattle. The Western Association also contributed over \$2,000,000 to operate its two clinics and four Parish Nurse Programmes and to assist 60 local charities in which members serve, and six international charities.

The Western Association operates two medical clinics, in Los Angeles and in Oakland. The Order of Malta Oakland Clinic opened in October 2008 in the grounds of the city's new Cathedral of Christ the Light. The clinics provide free medical services in cities where

thousands of adults and children have no access to medical care. Staffed by volunteer doctors and nurses, the only condition is that the patient has no medical insurance.

The Order operates four Parish Nurse Programmes in which nurses, accompanied by members of the Order, bring communion and provide medical information to the housebound. Twice a month, members prepare and serve sit-down meals to over 200 homeless men, women and children at the St. Francis Center in Los Angeles. In Orange County, the Taller San Jose project empowers undereducated, unskilled, and unemployed youth to move out of poverty and on to self-reliance and a productive adulthood.

Every February, in seven dioceses, the Order sponsors a Mass including the administration of the Sacrament of the Sick, in response to the Pope's call for a World Day of the Sick. Through this Day, the Order carries the spirit of Lourdes into its own neighborhoods.

The Order's Association in **Venezuela** runs a home for elderly people who are poor, sick or abandoned by their families. Elsewhere in the country, a day-care training and medical centre in a very poor area of Santa Cruz was inaugurated in 2008 in conjunction with the Centro Medico di Trinidad.



■ Twenty years of missions in the Amazonian forest: aboard the Order's medical barge Padre Raul Matte treats leprosy and the diseases of poverty

Africa

On the continent of Africa the Order works in 38 countries, treating every day the victims of illness – AIDS, tuberculosis, leprosy, sleeping sickness. As well as providing medical equipment and medicines, water, food and clothing to those in need, it also offers healthcare and psycho-social care to women who are victims of violence, to refugees from civil conflicts or natural disasters.

In **Benin**, the Ordre de Malte France runs a 76-bed hospital in Djougou which cares for a local population of 300,000 people and undertakes more than 437 surgical procedures and delivers around 445 babies each year.

A vaccination programme against meningitis in **Burkina Faso** has helped to protect more than five million people, while a dispensary at Ouagadougou recently completed more than 7,700 consultations. The Order also helps to support a national AIDS programme, supplies and distributes medicines to 35 health centres, supports a dozen dispensaries. At the end of 2008 an emergency aid centre was established at Bobo-Dioulasso, as well as three care centres to treat albino children, who are marginalised by their society. First aid groups have been trained for over ten years and number 30 young volunteers each year. There is also training for ambulance drivers, and 2008 registered 1654 callouts.

The Ordre de Malte France continues to support two orphanages and health centres in **Burundi**.



■ The Order provides essential healthcare in Nairobi Remand Prison, the largest in Kenya

In **Cameroon**, a 10-bed department in the Order's hospital in Mokolo is providing therapy, rehabilitation and housing for people with leprosy, whilst a large AIDS clinic continues its work in the hospital, including providing care for HIV positive mothers and their infants. And in Njombe its general hospital continues its care (see article page 36).

In **Chad** the Order runs five health programmes, including a health centre for the local population in Amtoukomi and another in Walia. The centre in Djamea completes 45,000 consultations and 4,500 laboratory tests every year.

Our medical and care work in the **Comoros Islands** includes supporting a leprosy centre, a central dispensary in Moroni and two rural dispensaries.

The Order's Embassy in Kinshasa, **(Democratic Republic of) Congo** operates many actions to help this country's poor and sick. It continues to supply food and medicines to the country's hospices and hospitals as part of a medical aid programme which also includes a health education service and visits by medical missions to isolated health centres. It supplies food and medicines to two homes for street children – houses of 'Peace and Rest' – most of whom have been rejected by their families for all kinds of illness (HIV) or fetishist reasons, many having just to be accompanied to their passing. The Embassy helps financially and administratively with 15 medical missions a year which service hospitals and health centres. It also supports the Comité d'Aide aux Pauvres, Hôpital Général de Kinshasa, which takes care



■ The Order's medical aid includes child vaccination programmes

of the poorest of the poor, patients without material or financial means, many homeless, several just abandoned in front of the hospital. Also supported with food and medicines is the Pediatrics Foundation of Kimbondo, a 150-bed paediatric hospital which takes care of abandoned children, or those whose families are unable to finance the needed medical treatment.

Malta Belgium International, a foundation of the Belgian Association of the Order, is also active in DR Congo. It recently completed a rehabilitation department at the King Baudoin Hospital, Kinshasa, supports ongoing complementary works, and finances its management board representative. 2008-2009: A continuing renovation project for a number of health centres - two hospitals and six dispensaries - on Lake Kivu, will provide patient rehabilitation in this key State Health Zone.

Ordre de Malte France supports 7 diocesan health centres, supplying them

with medical equipment and drugs, for a yearly value of 713.000 €. Since 2006, with the financial support of the European Commission (Refugees Fund), the French Association and the Order's Embassy cooperate with the Congolese National Agency for Migration and Foreigners in assisting repatriated emigrants from Europe to find a new location, a new job or to create a small business. By early 2009: 25 repatriations and 17 micro-projects for a total value of 80.000 € had been effected.

The wide-ranging medical aid provided by Malteser International in DR Congo includes support for more than 350 health centres, the provision of medical and psychosocial care for abused women, assistance for trauma patients, as well as the rehabilitation of many of the country's health facilities and public infrastructure.

The Order has provided a minibus as well as washing machines, sterilisers, medicines and medical equipment to

the leprosy treatment centre at Abu Zabal in **Egypt**, in 2007 and 2008 it received special support from the Order's French and Italian Associations: 750 residents are cared for on a daily basis, most of whom have been rejected by their families and are condemned to live apart from society. Plans for a Family day care centre in Shoubra El-Sahel, Cairo, coordinated between the Order's Embassy, the Egyptian government and UNDP are well underway, with sections completing in 2010.

In **Guinea** Ordre de Malte France is involved in projects to prevent the spread of leprosy and TB.

A feasibility study by the Order's Italian Association for the government of **Equatorial Guinea** recommends establishing a hospital, an integrated system of day care centres, and training of medical and paramedical personnel. It is the starting point in specifying a hospital infrastructure, socio-health



■ Order medical teams in Congo treat malaria and AIDS patients and victims of sexual violence; they also supply food, medicines and psychological support

care structures and training for a wide-ranging urban and rural health care network. In Beta the Spanish Association runs a day-care centre for people who are mentally ill and covers the maintenance and repairs of the only leprosy clinic and leper colony in the country.

The Order's Embassy in **Gabon** distributed medicines from France to local dispensaries and clinics – in Port Gentil and Libreville Lalala, and a financial grant to the leprosarium of Ebeigne is now on an annual basis.

Volunteers from the Portuguese Association are also regular visitors to **Guinea-Bissau**, where they work with needy children in local primary schools.

On the **Ivory Coast**, the Ordre de Malte France runs a 37-bed general health

centre in Komborodougou, a 24-bed health centre in Koni, and a day-care health centre in Niangon as well as three smaller health centres.

Between them these centres provide surgical and medical care for a population of many thousands of people, as well as specialised pre-natal, paediatric and dental care facilities.

Work to aid the poor in the slums of Nairobi, **Kenya**, is a special, ongoing project (see article page 32). A joint programme of the Principality of Monaco and the Order of Malta identifies cases of children with deformed or damaged hearts, who are in need of an operation not available in Kenya. The operation is then carried out at the Centre Cardio-Thoracique de Monaco.

In 2007 the Ordre de Malte France

established its second centre in **Mali** for the training of ambulance drivers and first-aiders, following this in 2008 with the opening of a dispensary and laboratory near the Niger border. The Order's medical work also includes supporting seven health centres.

In **Mauritania** the Ordre de Malte France continues to run a rehabilitation scheme for people suffering from leprosy.

Ordre de Malte France has received many donations since 2001 for the support of the cancer hospital at Victoria de Candoss in **Mauritius**. The money has helped to provide ambulances and 30 hospital beds as well as supplies of medicines and other equipment.

The Order has been active in **Morocco** since the mid 1990s. A Health Agreement signed with the Minister of Health and Ordre de Malte France led to the carrying out of 1,500 cataract operations in 2008 alone. The medical work includes supporting seven centres in isolated communities for the diagnosis and therapy of diabetes, as well as the financing of a cataract surgical campaign. Training programmes for ambulance technicians and first-aid trainers have recently been introduced.

In 2008 and 2009, the Order's Embassy to **Mozambique** provided financial support for a new campaign to help people with AIDS as well as help in an AIDS clinic, especially to care for orphans with AIDS, at the Mission of Mememo, Marracuene, in Mozambique.

The Order recently donated supplies and equipment to establish a sewing school in **Namibia** for women whose husbands have died from AIDS.

Medicines are being distributed to the hospital at Niamey in **Niger**, where a leprosy centre has also been established at Maradi.

Support for an oral hygiene clinic in **São Tome and Principe** included the donation of ambulances and medical

supplies to be used in a programme of dental treatment and health care.

Money and medicines have been provided by Ordre de Malte France to support leprosy research and treatment programmes in **Senegal** at ILAD (Institut de Léprologie Appliquée de Dakar) which has 42 beds -22 medicine, 20 surgical and budget of 360,000 Euro of which 80% comes from Ordre de Malte France. The Order also runs the Socio-Medical Centre on the island of Gorée, which in 2007 recorded 1,956 consultations and 25 births. Until 2008, Ordre de Malte France had sent many tons of medicines and medical equipment to Senegal free of charges but now these may only be distributed at production cost. Solutions are currently being studied.

A minibus has been donated to the Victoria Hospital in **Seychelles**, as well as equipment for the handicapped and parcels of Christmas toys to five orphanages.

The Order continues to run the Blessed Gerard AIDS hospital and orphanage at Mandeni in **South Africa**, in a region where up to 88% of the population test positive for HIV/AIDS. The work of this care complex never ceases: it houses a hospice which provides home based care, day care and inpatient care for those suffering from the disease, and trains the public in home-based care; a clinic, where malnourished infants are examined and treated and their parents or carers learn proper baby care; and a pre-primary-school and crèche for underprivileged children. The centre also offers to look after and give a home to sick, neglected, abused, malnourished, abandoned and orphaned children, and provides bursaries to poor pupils and students from the local community.

In **Sudan** and **Darfur** the Order provides vaccinations, pre- and post-natal education, malaria prevention, rehabilitation and support to local health centres. An example: in El Fasher, Darfur, basic healthcare covers vaccina-

tions and malaria prevention in five centres. In 2008, Malteser International's Darfur nutrition campaigns benefitted 22,000 women and children, with 5,875 children weighed, put in feeding programmes if serious, and mothers given nutrition lessons. Aid to remote villages: infants' polio immunisation, child growth monitoring, care for pregnant women, aid workers trained in maternal/neonatal care. With little data on mother/child mortality rates, carers are asked to report cases to Malteser International.

The Order's Italian Association coordinates fundraising for a girls' secondary school in Rumbek and operates the Archangelo Ali clinic. In Yei, the Order provides care for 800,000, runs controls for TB and HIV/AIDS, runs fixed and mobile health centres, and works on sleeping sickness prevention.

In **Togo**, Ordre de Malte France supports the 12-bed hospital at Elavagnon by providing medicines and medical equipment.



■ Mother and child care is an Order priority in Africa: queuing up at an Order primary care centre

Middle East

In **Iran** we provided emergency medical supplies and sent an eight-man rescue team to help care for the victims of the Bam earthquake, which we followed up in subsequent years with reconstruction projects.

In **Iraq** we had carried out considerable rehabilitation and medical work, particularly in the Baghdad area and in Northern Iraq. Despite the deterioration in the security situation, our work in two health centres in Baghdad continues.

In **Lebanon**, the Order of Malta's Association runs 16 health and social centres throughout the country and in 2008 alone assisted 85,000 patients, with over 250,000 medical services. Two mobile units of the Order made 11,500 medical interventions. More than 1,700 elderly people were looked after in the three day care centres for elderly people and 95 handicapped children were treated daily in the Centre Hospitalier de Bhannes.



■ Bethlehem Hospital

In collaboration with the Shiite organisation's Imam Moussa el Sadr Foundation, the Order runs the Health Centre of Siddikine (carrying out more than 7,000 medical acts per year) and one of the two mobile clinics the Order operates in the country.

Our activities in **Syria** include a mother and child protection project at Bab

Touma and the Home of Peace for Children in Salieh, Damascus. We also run a centre for the protection of young girls in the town of Aleppo, where our other activities include the provision of start-up kits for Iraqi refugee families and the supply of school material to Iraqi and Syrian children.

Bethlehem: Holy Family Hospital celebrates 20 years

The Holy Family Hospital's 20 years offering care for mothers and infants in Bethlehem was celebrated in the presence of the Hospital's Board and the Order's Grand Hospitaller, Albrecht Boeselager. The hospital has become the primary maternity hospital and referral centre, with the only neonatal department in this area of the Palestinian territories for many years, with mothers coming long distances, mainly from the Hebron area south of Bethlehem, but more recently from villages east of Jerusalem, due to the construction of the wall. More than 3,000 babies are born in the hospital each year, with total deliveries since 1990 at 48,000. In this area of conflict and political upheaval, the Hospital welcomes all, in the traditions of the Order of Malta - regardless of religion, race or means. Patients are asked to pay what they can afford: many can afford nothing, in an area where there is 70% unemployment. Annual running costs are currently over US\$3 million, with the hospital financed by the Associations of the Order of Malta, private donors and regular fundraising campaigns. Ongoing expansion plans include five additional neonatal intensive care beds, three neonatal isolation beds, four extra delivery rooms and three adult intensive care beds. The hospital's dedicated team is made up of 140 highly qualified personnel and it is with pride that Dr. Robert Tabash notes that "20 members of staff at Holy Family Hospital have been with us since the beginning. A sense of belonging to the family is reflected in everyday work."

Asia - Pacific

The **Australian Association** has continued to extend its voluntary services in palliative care for the sick in the states of Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales.

During 2007 the Association worked as a partner in Eastern Palliative Care to handle a total of 1,565 referrals from many sources including 43 hospitals. In Melbourne, the now well known Friday night school for refugee children continues its work to orientate non-English speaking children into the local environment, customs and language. In Queensland, volunteers from the Order played a pivotal role in establishing the Palliative Care Hospice and Home Care Service, and helped to provide a wide range of materials and equipment for the care and comfort of the frail-aged, the sick and the dying.

In New South Wales, meanwhile, a committee was established to identify potential gaps in the delivery of palliative care services which could be filled by the Order. Since 2006, the Order has raised more than AU\$800,000 to support the work of the drug and alcohol unit at St Vincent's Hospital in Sydney. Known as Gorman House, the unit cares for some of Sydney's most marginalised people and has over 1,500 admissions annually. Members and volunteers run weekly social activities, including barbecues for patients and the recent popular innovation of the Gorman House Singers, a choir made up of patients and other homeless people.



■ World Youth Day, Sydney, 2008

South Australia: volunteers work in a soup kitchen for the poor in Hutt Street Centre in Adelaide whilst in Western Australia, support for indigenous health and cancer care is ongoing.

Other fundraising activities, supplemented by grants from the Australian Government (AusAID), have provided AU\$500,000 to support the rebuilding of war-damaged health clinics in Lebanon, and AU\$550,000 to help victims of Cyclone Nargis in Burma/Myanmar. The fundraising was done in cooperation with Caritas Australia.

In July 2008, the Association, together with its many young volunteers, also played a role during World Youth Day in Sydney, caring for disabled people at the Vigil and Papal Mass. Projects abroad include Timor Leste and Papua New Guinea (see below).

In 2007, the International Committee of

the Order of Malta, CIOMAL, took over from the Order's Embassy in **Cambodia** in the running of a programme through which extra food and other necessities are provided to pregnant women and children living in the country's prisons. CIOMAL – which has been diagnosing and treating cases of leprosy since 1994 – continues to provide this service in support of the Ministry of Health. The total number of new cases detected in 2007 was 315, with 265 admissions and 485 out-patient consultations in the rehabilitation centre. A further 812 out-patient consultations were provided for people with various skin diseases. The year also saw the introduction of a new focus on providing both physical and socio-economic rehabilitation services to people disabled as a consequence of leprosy. Many small loans were made to rehabilitated patients as income-generating programmes.

Malteser International runs community-

based projects for a health insurance system, and to educate the local population in basic care, with particular emphasis on mother and child health, in Oddar Meanchey, north west Cambodia.

The Order's humanitarian aid mission to **Georgia**, in 2008, organised and provided by the Order Embassy in Tbilisi and the Polish Association, gave expert medical assistance to 3,000 patients, together with medical care for the 8,400 residents of six refugee camps. In addition, the mission provided ten tonnes of pharmaceuticals, food, hygiene products and medical equipment to help those injured or displaced as a result of the conflict.

Two massive earthquakes struck Sumatra, **Indonesia** in late 2009, leaving thousands stranded. In remote Pilubang, Sungai Limau, Malteser International has provided emergency relief for 1700 families with basic necessities and healthcare. Elsewhere in the Aceh Utara Lhokseumawe region, support programmes include training farmers to cultivate chillis and peanuts to supplement their meagre income and diet, and training villagers in basic community healthcare and school-children in hygiene awareness.

The Order's Embassy in **Kazakhstan** has organised humanitarian aid, including financial support for orphanages in Almaty, Keskelen and Kapciagaj, the donation of two minibuses to provide transport for needy people, and the funding of a new and larger soup kitchen in Astana.

In north-east **Pakistan**, the Order of Malta's International Relief Corps is operating mobile units with doctors and midwives to tackle the serious humanitarian situation in the region, where the existing health centres are either inaccessible or under attack after clashes between the Pakistan army and the Taliban. Internal refugees number over 1.5 million. The Corps has been in Pakistan since 2005 and is working on projects in the Muzaffarabad and Kohistan districts, focusing on health-

care and disaster preparedness. The efforts have been recognised in an award from the State Disaster Management Authority of the State of Jammu and Kashmir in October 2009. In Swat, Pakistan's north-west frontier, returning displaced persons in late 2009 suffering emotional and heat exhaustion and intestinal diseases, found no adequate health care, as centres had been destroyed. A Malteser International medical team has supported the most vulnerable, particularly mothers, infants and small children.

In **Papua New Guinea**, an Eye Project supported by the Australian Association at the Mt.Sion Centre for the Blind has provided cataract surgery for over 5,000 patients since 1995. The Project includes running a programme for children to recognise if family members exhibit symptoms.

The **Philippines** Association, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2007, organises regular visits by volunteers to nine hospitals and hospices. It also runs the Order of Malta medical and dental clinic in Manila, which is staffed by volunteer doctors and medical and

nursing students and treats 7,500 patients a year. As well, the Association offers a First Aid and emergency service for public events and pilgrimages. In 2008, 360 wheelchairs from the United States were distributed throughout the country, and an ongoing medical distribution programme collects and distributes medical supplies to 124 recipients in three major regions. In early 2009 an innovative programme for the Prevention of Mother-to-Child transmission of HIV/AIDS, called the St. Ubaldesca PMTCT Program, was created to operate in a number of hospitals and health centres.

The **Singapore** Association was officially established in 2006 and immediately started to provide emergency humanitarian and medical aid to the victims of a series of natural and man-made disasters.

Already in 2003, following the Bali bomb disaster, urgently needed medical supplies were provided, while in 2006 antibiotics and other medicines were sent to the Order's Hospital in Bethlehem following an outbreak of conflict between Israeli and Palestinians.



■ Malteser International distributes aid in Burma/Myanmar

Following the Asian tsunami in December, 2004, the Association raised funds to help restore a severely-damaged church and school in Aceh and to work with NGOs in the building of over 100 new homes and two jetties on the island of Pulau Aceh (population 6,000), as well as the provision of 10 new fishing boats for the returning villagers to earn a living, and two visiting teachers' homes.

Overseas activities include the building and equipping of a small clinic and dispensary at Chom Chieng in North Laos, sending orthopaedic surgeons to Bandul, Indonesia, after the 2007 earthquake there, to work with the wounded. They also give support for the Mother Theresa Home in Calcutta, India, the CIOMAL International Leprosy project, repairs to the Maria Stella convent school in Sulawesi and the provision of medical and financial aid following the Myanmar cyclone disaster in May 2008.

In Ampara and Galle, **Sri Lanka**, the greatest problem is water. Malteser International has implemented the WASH project, to deal with water contamination after the 2004 tsunami, where areas were left with inadequate water supplies, or water was contaminated or salinised; it continues to promote ecological sanitation and hygiene awareness. In Galle, Matara, Hambantota and Ampara, 53 schools are part of the WASH project, giving 16,000 children access to child-friendly water and sanitation facilities at school and improving their hygiene practices. Additionally, 5,000 rainwater harvesting tanks have been constructed for 3,100 families. From March 2009 Malteser International has worked in the overcrowded displaced persons camps, where 200,000 survive in tents in the Vavunya region. Support includes food distribution, improvement of sanitary conditions and provision of water tankers to alleviate drinking water shortages; emergency aid is focused on psycho-social care. The army / Tamil Tigers war is over but problems remain, including the inhuman living conditions of 300,000 war refugees.



■ Malteser International staff distribute aid in Indonesia after the earthquake of September 2009

Medicines are regularly distributed by volunteers from the Australian Association to four missions in **Timor Leste**. By the end of 2007 over AUD \$1 million worth of medical supplies had been distributed to a number of clinics and to the Dili Hospital. The Association funds eight scholarships for students to Salesian Agricultural College, Fuloiro; as well as two indigenous teachers at the Marist College, Bacau, and provides financial support for a clinic at Venelate for the care of patients with tuberculosis. And the Portuguese Association supplied some 150,000 items of medicine and medical equipment, as well as school books for poor students, during 2007-2008.

Underway since September 2009: enhancement of the ambulance service in Timor-Leste, seriously cut back during the civil strife that has plagued the country in recent years. Promoted by the Order of Malta's Australian Association and the Order's Embassy on the island, the first courses started in

October 2009, for 35 nurses and for drivers specialised in emergencies who will manage the ambulance services. Timor-Leste President, Ramos Horta, personally expressed his appreciation to the Order for the initiative.

Typhoon Ketsana struck **Vietnam** in late 2009. The heavy rains which followed it left a devastated population. Malteser International teams were immediately in action, distributing hygiene kits for 5,300 families and iron sheets for hundreds of families for first repairs of their houses. They are now concentrating on the rehabilitation of infrastructure in the fields of basic health care and water, sanitation and hygiene and long-term will implement a community based disaster preparedness project in Danang. In other parts of the country, local clinics are being upgraded, training in small businesses for poor women in Danang province are underway and traditional medicine gardens for ethnic minority communes are under construction in Quang-Nam.

Malteser International

Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation

Compassion without question, aid without boundaries

Whenever aid is needed urgently, Malteser International – the Order’s worldwide relief organisation – is ready to provide it; with care, with compassion, and with a commitment to help with sustainable rehabilitation once the immediate need is over.

The organisation currently has some 200 humanitarian programmes and projects active in more than 30 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas, helping to ensure that around eight-million people receive the help and support they are crying out for so desperately.

The President of the organisation, Nicolas de Cock de Rameyen, reflects on aspects of the organisation’s work.



■ Malteser International President Nicolas de Cock meets young patients in a rural health centre

What are the most demanding ongoing activities for Malteser International?

Right now, a focus activity is emergency aid for thousands of internally displaced people in the north of **Sri Lanka**. We are working on improving hygiene conditions in camps in Vavuniya and in Pulmoddai and will develop further areas of intervention with the supply of food, medicines and psychosocial counselling by trained volunteers.

In **Myanmar**, over two years after Cyclone Nargis hit the country in May 2008, Malteser International is concentrating on the sectors of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), on strengthening the health systems for improved health service delivery and on the reconstruction of health centres and schools in Labutta township and on Middle Island.

In **Congo**, a particular concern is the number of women and children who have been affected in a country where rape is often used as an instrument of war. So we have extended our activities in medical and psychological support for victims of sexual violence.

How do you envisage Malteser International’s activity over the next few years?

Because Malteser International expresses the Order of Malta’s mission to help people in disasters and crisis worldwide, we will intensify the Order’s capacity for international emergency relief and rehabilitation.

What motivates Malteser International staff around the world?

Our people in the field aim to provide



■ Malteser International support for earthquake victims

those in need with rapid and efficient support. Worldwide, more than 1,000 highly qualified staff members are working for Malteser International. During my project visits I am always very impressed by the great commitment with which our staff face the problems on the ground, and how professionally they help those in need to overcome their problems and build a new future. Every day of every week they carry out their commitments, prompted by the Christian principles which guide the Order of Malta.

What keeps them going in difficult situations?

Our staff – both national and international – are proud to be part of the worldwide Malteser family. The Order of Malta is the foundation which gives their work a meaning. It is their mission to alleviate human suffering worldwide and it keeps them going, even in difficult situations. I commend them for their commitment, their motivation and their high professionalism.

Have you a special memory of one of your visits to a Malteser International activity?

My very special memories go back to a visit to our project region in South Sudan in December 2001. Our journey by car from Arua (Uganda) to Yei (South Sudan) on a road that could not even be called a field path – passing from one pothole into another – was an adventure in itself. The country was in a deplorable situation, stricken by poverty, disease and wartime terror. When we at last arrived at our project location, I felt we were back in the Middle Ages. I saw children carrying arms, and absolutely everyone was always alert, ready to jump into the next bomb shelter to escape unexpected air raids. But despite the truly miserable living and working conditions, I was able to meet the highly committed Malteser International staff, to accompany them to the wards for patients suffering from tuberculosis and malaria and to join the outreach teams visiting remote villages to identify those suffering from leprosy, cholera or

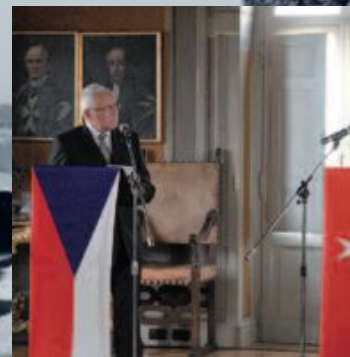
sleeping sickness.

When I returned a second time, six years later, Malteser International had established new clinics, and a hospital in the grounds of the Catholic church in the settlement of Yei. When I attended Mass on Sunday, the church was crowded with people praying, singing and dancing. Despite all the difficulties, the people of Yei have maintained a natural dignity and a profound faith. And Malteser International gives them hope and the experience that the love of God, through those helping them, will lead them and their children to a better life.

I would like to express our most sincere gratitude to all friends and supporters of Malteser International and to invite everyone attracted by our work to come and see our projects on the spot. Make yourself a member of the team, come and visit the projects!

For more information:
www.malteser-international.org

government



The government of the Sovereign Order of Malta is composed of a senior council of ministers and councillors who assist the Grand Master in overseeing the Order's activities around the world in all their aspects: religious, hospitaller, judicial and diplomatic.



The government of the Order

Composition and operation

The purpose of the Sovereign Order of Malta is “the promotion of... the Christian virtues of charity and brotherhood.

The Order carries out its charitable works for the sick, the needy and refugees without distinction of religion, race, origin or age.

The Order fulfils its institutional tasks especially by carrying out hospitaller works, including health and social assistance, as well as aiding victims of exceptional disasters and war...”

(Extracts from Article 2 of the Constitutional Charter)

Government of the Sovereign Order of Malta is similar to the structures for state governments. However, it also includes specific features associated with its nature as a religious lay order, as well as particular terminology evolved from nine centuries of history.

The Order’s system of governance is divided into three powers: legislative power, which resides with the Chapter General, the representative body for the knights, and the Grand Master with the Sovereign Council; executive power, which resides with the Sovereign Council; and judicial power, which is in the hands of the Courts of the Order. The Grand Master is the Order’s Supreme Leader, elected for life by the full Council of State. Members of the Chapter General and the full Council of

State are drawn from representatives of the Grand Priorities, the Sub-Priorities, the National Associations and the Order’s organisations established around the world.

The Grand Master governs the Order, assisted by the Sovereign Council, which he chairs. It is made up of the Grand Commander (the religious superior of the Order’s religious members); Grand Chancellor (Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Interior); Grand Hospitaller (Minister for Health and Social Affairs, Humanitarian Action and International Co-operation); Receiver of the Common Treasure (Minister for Finance and Budget), together with six other members, all elected by the Chapter General from among the Professed Knights or Knights in Obedience. The Sovereign Council is elected for a term of five years.

The Constitutional Charter and Code governs the life and activities of the Order. The Chapter General of 1997 instituted an Advisory Board to the Order’s government – the Government Council. The Board of Auditors is responsible for economic and financial control. Every five years, the members of these two bodies are elected by the Chapter General. The Order’s Courts are Courts of First Instance and of Appeal, with a President, Judges, Judicial Auditors and Auxiliaries. Legal questions of extraordinary importance are submitted for advice to a technical body, the Juridical Advisory Council.



■ Fra' Matthew Festing 79th Grand Master of the Order of Malta

Government of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta

SOVEREIGN COUNCIL

The Sovereign Council assists the Grand Master in the government of the Order. It is composed of Grand Master, Grand Commander, Grand Chancellor, Grand Hospitaller and Receiver of the Common Treasure and six Council members. The Sovereign Council is called by the Grand Master and meets at the seat of the Order of Malta at least six times a year and whenever special circumstances require it.

79th Prince and Grand Master H.M.E.H. Fra' Matthew Festing

H.E. Ven. Bailiff Fra' Gherardo Herculani Fava Simonetti
Grand Commander

H.E. Bailiff Jean-Pierre Mazery
Grand Chancellor

H.E. Bailiff Albrecht Freiherr von Boeselager
Grand Hospitaller

H.E. Bailiff Marquis Gian Luca Chiavari
Receiver of the Common Treasure

COUNCIL MEMBERS

H.E. Professed Knight Grand Cross, Fra' Carlo d'Ippolito di Sant'Ippolito
H.E. Professed Knight, Fra' John T. Dunlap
H.E. Professed Knight, Fra' Duncan Gallie
H.E. Professed Knight, Emmanuel Rousseau
H.E. Knight Grand Cross, Antonio R. Sanchez-Corea, Jr.
H.E. Bailiff Winfried Graf Henckel von Donnersmarck

GOVERNMENT COUNCIL

Vice President

Fausto Solaro del Borgo

Councillors

Ruy do Valle Peixoto de Villas Boas
Raphael Debbané
Juan O'Naghten y Chacón
Simon Grenfell
Daniel J. Kelly

BOARD OF AUDITORS

President

Franz Harnoncourt-Unverzagt

Councillors

Fra' Roberto Massi Gentiloni Silverj
Bruno de Seguin Pazzis d'Aubignan
Emmanuele Emanuele
Lancelot d'Ursel

Alternate Councillors

Stephen Diaz-Gavin
Janos Esterhazy de Galanthia

BOARD OF COMMUNICATIONS

President ad interim

Franz Harnoncourt-Unverzagt

JURIDICAL COUNCIL

President

Prof. Avv. Andrea Comba

Vice-President

Prof. Avv. Leonardo Perrone

Secretary General

Prof. Avv. Paolo Papanti Pelletier de Bermigny

Members

Dr. Alberto Virgilio, Honorary Vice-President
Prof. Damiano Nocilla
Prof. Avv. Arturo Maresca
Dr. Massimo Vari

MAGISTRAL COURT OF APPEAL

President

Prof. Avv. Cesare Maria Moschetti

Judges

Prof. Avv. Annibale Marini
Prof. Avv. Giancarlo Perone
Prof. Avv. Leonardo Perrone
Prof. Avv. Arturo Maresca
Avv. Massimo Massella Ducci Teri

MAGISTRAL COURT OF FIRST INSTANCE

President

Prof. Avv. Paolo Papanti Pelletier de Bermigny

Judges

Prof. Avv. Giovanni Giacobbe
Prof. Avv. Gianpiero Milano
Dr. Arturo Martucci
Prof. Francesco d'Ayala Valva

Chancellor of the Magistral Courts

Col. Alessandro Bianchi

COMMISSION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NAMES AND EMBLEMS

President

Fra' John T. Dunlap

STRATEGY STEERING COMMITTEE

President

The Grand Chancellor

Delegated President

Winfried Henckel von Donnersmarck

COMMISSION FOR DIPLOMATIC AFFAIRS

President

Amb. Philippe de Schoutheete de Tervarent

Conferences

The Order's activities stretch around the world and involve thousands of members, volunteers and donors. They are important for discussion, sharing of information and extension of experiences in the many categories of aid the Order provides.

International and regional meetings on strategic, hospitaller and communications matters take place regularly, with special topics chosen for examination and action at each conference.

- European Hospitallers Meeting, Paris, March 2007
- European Communicators Meeting, Krakow, July 2007
- The Seventh Conference of the Americas, Mexico City, November 2007
- American Hospitallers Meeting, Mexico City, November 2007
- Central and Eastern Europe, Vienna, November-December 2007
- European Communicators Meeting, Malta, January-February 2008
- European Hospitallers Meeting, Malta, February-March 2008
- European Communicators Meeting, Paris, September 2008
- International Strategy Seminar, Venice, January 2009
- International Hospitallers Meeting, Venice, January 2009
- International Ambassadors Conference, Geneva, February 2010
- International Hospitallers Meeting, Vienna, March 2010



■ Every conference includes international representatives of the Order



■ The plenary session, Venice Conference 2009: 'The Order Ten Years Ahead'

Looking 10 years ahead

The **Venice Strategy Seminar** which took place in January 2009 brought together over 400 participants from the Order membership worldwide. Entitled 'The Order Ten Years Ahead', the seminar was organised to examine and define the Order's future strategies.

Special meetings were convened for the Professed knights, the Presidents of national Associations, the Hospitallers of the Associations and the Order's Diplomatic Corps, and then twelve working groups met and discussed their own topics in detail and deliberated on future demands.

In every group, the focus was on reviewing spiritual commitment and its development in the future, on the promotion of the Order's many charitable activities around the world and its special international programmes, the promotion of pilgrimages, the Order as promoter of peace among nations, religions and societies and the Order's response to the needs of the 21st century.

Official Visits of Grand Master Fra' Andrew Bertie

2007

24 January

Meeting of the Grand Master Fra' Andrew Bertie and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic, Massimo D'Alema, at the Italian Embassy to the Order of Malta.

29 January - 1 February

Fra' Andrew Bertie pays an Official Visit to Brussels. King Albert II of Belgium receives the Grand Master in the Royal Palace. Fra' Andrew Bertie is received by Hans-Gert Pöttering, President of the European Parliament, José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, Ján Figel, European Commissioner, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, Secretary General of NATO, Armand De Decker, Belgium Minister of Cooperation in Development.

19 February

The President of the Italian Senate, Franco Marini, is received at the Magistral Palace.

8 March

Fra' Andrew Bertie receives Jan Figel, European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Multilingualism.

12-15 May

Official Visit to Poland. Grand Master is received by the President of the Polish Republic, Lech Kaczyński. Fra' Andrew Bertie meets with the Prime Minister, Jarosław Kaczyński, the Polish Parliament Speaker, Ludwik Dorn, the Vice Speaker of the Senate, Ryszard Legutko, and Cardinal Primate Józef Glemp.

22 May

Latvian Foreign Minister Artis Pabriks is received at the Magistral Palace.

22 June

At the Vatican, on the occasion of the feast day of the Order's patron saint, St. John the Baptist, Pope Benedict XVI receives Fra' Andrew Bertie, who is accompanied by the Sovereign Council.

15 October

The Foreign Minister of Paraguay, Rubén Ramírez Lezcano, is received by the Grand Master at the Magistral Palace.

22 October

Grand Master Fra' Andrew Bertie receives Emília Kršíková, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Works, Social Affairs and the Family of the Slovak Republic.

6 November

Grand Master Fra' Andrew Bertie receives the Foreign Minister of Montenegro, Milan Roćen.

2 December

Grand Master Fra' Andrew Bertie welcomes Pope Benedict XVI to the Order of Malta's San Giovanni Battista Hospital in Rome.

2008

24 January

President of the Republic of Timor-Leste, José Manuel Ramos Horta, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1996, is received at Palazzo Orsini in Rome.

7 February

Ceremony for the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess of Luxemburg at the Magistral Palace on the occasion of their admission into the Order of Malta.



■ 29.1.07 Brussels. The President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso



■ 19.2.07 Magistral Palace. The President of the Italian Senate Franco Marini



■ 14.5.07 Warsaw. The President of the Polish Republic Lech Kaczynski



■ 7.2.08 Magistral Palace. Grand Duke of Luxemburg



■ 22.6.07 Vatican City. Grand Master Fra' Andrew Bertie is received by Pope Benedict XVI

Official Visits of Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing

2008

25 March

The President of the 62nd Session of General Assembly of the United Nations, Srgjan Kerim, is received at the Magistral Palace.

10 April

Fra' Matthew Festing receives the Foreign Minister of the Slovak Republic, Ján Kubis, at the Magistral Palace.

11 April

The Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing is received in private audience by Pope Benedict XVI at the Vatican.

14 April

The first official meeting of Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing with the ambassadors accredited to the Sovereign Order of Malta led by their doyen, the Ambassador of Honduras, Alejandro Valladares Lanza.

21 May

Official Visit of the President of Albania, Dr. Bamir Topi, to the Order of Malta.

24 May

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria, Ivaylo Kalfin, is received by Fra' Matthew Festing.

23 June

Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing, together with the Sovereign Council, is received at the Vatican by Pope Benedict XVI.

23 June

Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing receives at the Magistral Palace the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Hungary, Mrs Kinga Göncz.

6 September

Official Visit of the President of Romania, Traian Basescu, to the Order of Malta.

8 October

Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing receives the President of the Italian Senate, Renato Schifani, at the Magistral Palace.

28-31 October

Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing pays an Official Visit to the Republic of Latvia, where he is received by the President of the Republic Valdis Zatlers at Riga Castle.

He has meetings with Minister of Welfare Purne, Minister of Health Eglītis, Deputy Speaker Pētersone, the Cardinal Archbishop of Riga Pujats and the accredited Diplomatic Corps.

6 November

Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing pays an official visit to the President of the Italian Republic, Giorgio Napolitano, at the Quirinale Palace.

23-27 November

The Grand Master pays an Official Visit to Croatia, meeting with President Stjepan Mesić in Zagreb. Following their talks, the Grand Master is received by the Speaker of the Croatian Parliament, Luka Bebić, and meets Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for the Family, Jadranka Kosor.

2009

13 January

Fra' Matthew Festing, accompanied by members of the Sovereign Council and the Prelate of the Order, Mons. Angelo Acerbi, attends the Requiem Mass for H.Em.Cardinal Pio Laghi, Cardinal Patronus of the Order who died on 10 January. The Mass is celebrated in St. Peter's Basilica by the Dean of the College of Cardinals, H.Em.Angelo Sodano, and in the presence of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI.

9-11 February

Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing pays a State Visit to the Republic of Hungary, meeting with the President of the Republic László Sólyom, and with the Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament Katalin Szili, the Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Kinga Göncz and the Cardinal Archbishop Peter Erdő.

16-19 February

Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing, in an Official Visit to Brussels, meets the President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso, the President of the European Parliament, Hans-Gert Pöttering, the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, and NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer.

20 February

The Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing, pays an Official Visit to Cardinal Giovanni Lajolo, President of the Pontifical Commission for the Vatican

City State and of the Governorate of the Vatican City State.

23 February

Marisol Argueta de Barillas, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of El Salvador, is received by the Grand Master at the Magistral Palace.

25 February

Visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus, Sergei N. Martynov, to the Order of Malta.

28 April

The Grand Master, Fra' Matthew Festing, receives the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, on an Official Visit.

16 May

Noel A. Kinsella, Speaker of the Senate of Canada is received by the Grand Master on an Official Visit.

18 May

Official visit of the President of Poland Lech Kaczynski to the Order of Malta.

22 May

Georgi Parvanov, President of Bulgaria, is received by Fra' Matthew Festing, Grand Master, at the Magistral Villa on a State Visit.

30 May

Václav Klaus, President of the Czech Republic and at that time holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, is received by the Grand Master at the Magistral Villa on a State Visit.

18 June

The Grand Master, Fra' Matthew Festing, receives at the Magistral Villa the President of Malta, George Abela.

25 June

Pope Benedict XVI receives Fra' Matthew Festing, accompanied by the Sovereign Council of the Order on the occasion of the feastday of St. John Baptist, patron saint of the Order.

27 June

At the invitation of the President of Hungary, László Sólyom, the Grand Master, with other Heads of State, participates in the celebrations in Budapest for the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Iron Curtain.

15 October

Official Visit of Albert II. The Sovereign Prince of Monaco is received by Fra' Matthew Festing at the Magistral Villa

28 October - 3 November

Fra' Matthew Festing pays an Official Visit to the Lebanon, where he is received by the President of the Republic General Michel Sleiman. The Grand Master also had talks with Prime Minister Fouad Siniora, President of the Lebanese Parliament Nabih Berri, and the 17 heads of the different religious confessions including Sunni, Shiite, Maronites, Greek Catholics, Greek Orthodox, Armenian Catholics, Chaldeans, Druse, Evangelists, Alawites, Assyrians.

5 November

Renato Schifani, President of the Italian Senate, receives the Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing at Palazzo Giustiniani in Rome.



■ 21.5.08 Magistral Villa. The President of Albania, Bamir Topi



■ 6.9.08 Magistral Villa. The President of Romania, Traian Basescu



■ 28.10.08 Riga. The President of Latvia, Valdis Zatlers



■ 6.11.08 Rome. The President of the Italian Republic, Giorgio Napolitano



■ 24.11.08 Zagreb. The President of the Republic of Croatia, Stjepan Mesić



■ 9.2.09 Budapest. The President of the Republic of Hungary, László Sólyom



■ 17.2.09 Brussels. The President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso



■ 28.4.09 Magistral Villa. The President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko



■ 18.5.09 Magistral Villa. The President of Poland, Lech Kaczyński



■ 22.5.09 Magistral Villa. The President of Bulgaria, Georgi Parvanov



■ 30.5.09 Magistral Villa. The President of the Czech Republic, Vaclav Klaus



■ 25.6.09 Vatican City. Pope Benedict XVI receives the Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing and the members of the Sovereign Council



■ 15.10.09 Magistral Villa. Albert II of Monaco



■ 28.10.09 Beirut. The President of the Republic of Lebanon Michel Sleiman

Diplomacy

Linking into humanitarian activity



■ Grand Chancellor Jean-Pierre Mazery



■ Grand Hospitaller Albrecht Boeselager

The Order has bilateral diplomatic relations with 104 countries, official relations with 6 countries, official representations and permanent observer status at the United Nations, the European Union and numerous international organisations, providing a unique diplomatic humanitarian network which is both a demonstration of its sovereignty and an operational instrument for its humanitarian activities.

Diplomatic relations also mean unparalleled access, at the political level, to national governments and international organisations.

There is an important operational link between the Order's diplomatic network and its humanitarian activity and the Order's Embassies in different parts of the world are tasked with helping the medical and humanitarian activities of its national Associations, or of its worldwide relief service, Malteser International.

The tasks of this unique network are:

- to provide diplomatic protection when required, such as when Order activities are developed in countries where the rule of law is less than fully guaranteed;
- to obtain customs and tax exemption to cover medical supplies and other goods essential in an emergency (where applicable following the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, Art.36);
- to promote cooperation with international organisations operating in the field: the Order's diplomatic representations serve to initiate contact, to conclude agreements or to resolve difficulties.

In the international political field, the Order of Malta is neutral, impartial and non-political. Because of these characteristics the Order can act as a mediator.

From 2007 to 2009 the Order of Malta established diplomatic relations with the following countries and international organisations:

Bilateral diplomatic relations

- Kenya 14 September 2007
- Turkmenistan 30 October 2007

- Monaco 6 April 2007 (maintained through a diplomatic special mission)
- Ukraine 9 February 2008
- Bahamas 11 November 2008
- Sierra Leone 28 November 2008
- Namibia 31 March 2009
- Antigua and Barbuda 20 October 2009

Official relations

- Canada 4 June 2008

Multilateral relations

- United Nations Environment Programme - UNEP - Nairobi, 17 April 2009

The Order's diplomatic relations worldwide

THE ORDER OF MALTA HAS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH 104 COUNTRIES:

EUROPE

Albania, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Holy See, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Macedonia (former Yugoslav Republic of), Malta, Moldova, Monaco*, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia (Federation of)*, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Ukraine.

* Relations with these countries are maintained through a diplomatic special mission.

THE AMERICAS

Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Uruguay, Venezuela.

ASIA

Afghanistan, Armenia, Cambodia, Georgia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Philippines, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan.

AFRICA

Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cap Vert, Central Africa, Chad, Comoros, Congo (Democratic Republic of the), Congo (Republic of the), Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Togo.

OCEANIA

Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Kiribati.

THE ORDER OF MALTA HAS OFFICIAL RELATIONS AT AMBASSADOR LEVEL WITH:

- European Commission

THE ORDER OF MALTA HAS OFFICIAL RELATIONS WITH:

- Belgium
- Canada
- France
- Germany
- Luxembourg
- Switzerland

Multilateral relations

ORDER OF MALTA PERMANENT MISSIONS TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND ITS SPECIALISED AGENCIES:

United Nations - New York

United Nations - Geneva

United Nations - Vienna

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Science and Culture Organisation - Paris

Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations - FAO - Rome

World Food Programme of the United

Nations - WFP - Rome

International Fund for Agricultural Development - IFAD - Rome

World Health Organisation - WHO - Geneva

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees - UNHCR - Geneva

United Nations High Commissioner for

Human Rights - UNHCHR - Geneva

United Nations Industrial Development Organization - UNIDO - Vienna

International Atomic Energy Agency - IAEA - Vienna

United Nations Environment Programme - UNEP - Nairobi

ORDER OF MALTA DELEGATIONS OR REPRESENTATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS:

International Organisation for Migration - IOM - Geneva

Council of Europe - Strasbourg

Inter-American Development Bank - IDB - Washington D.C.

International Committee of the Red

Cross - ICRC - Geneva

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies - Geneva

International Institute of Humanitarian Law - Sanremo, Geneva

International Institute for the Unification

of Private Law - UNIDROIT - Rome

Unión Latina - Santo Domingo - Paris

International Committee of Military Medicine - ICMM - Brussels

Cooperation Agreements

signed between 2007 and 2009

EGYPT

(30 January 2007)

The Governorate of Qalyubiya, Upper Nile region, and the Italian Association of the Order of Malta sign a Cooperation Agreement in Cairo for humanitarian and healthcare collaboration at Abu Zabal Leprosy hospice.

CAMEROON

(22 February 2007)

The late Grand Master Fra' Andrew Bertie visits the Mother and Child Center of the Chantal Biya Foundation during his Official Visit and learns of its humanitarian activities. The Grand Master and First Lady Chantal Biya sign a Partnership Agreement to strengthen cooperation ties between the Order and the Foundation.

BURKINA FASO

(10 April 2007)

In Ouagadougou the Government of Burkina Faso and the Order of Malta



■ Cooperation Agreement signed by the Grand Chancellor Jean-Pierre Mazery and the Lebanese Foreign Minister Faouzi Salloukh. Beirut, 28 October 2009

Cooperation Agreement signed with the President of the European Commission, Brussels, 17 February 2009

The President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso and the Grand Master of the Order of Malta Fra' Matthew Festing, together with the Order's Grand Chancellor Jean-Pierre Mazery, signed an international cooperation Agreement, constituting the basis for developing an even stronger relationship between the Order of Malta and Europe.

The Agreement affirms that the European Commission and the Order of Malta emphasise the importance of their adherence to fundamental values and their common approach with partner countries based on the promotion of respect of human dignity, freedom, solidarity, justice and good governance, and that they will cooperate in the areas of:

- assistance in emergency and post-crisis situations, including rehabilitation and development
- medical and social assistance to persons involved in migration
- support to local economic and social development
- protection of victims of trafficking and other vulnerable groups
- dissemination of international human rights
- inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue
- sponsorship of seminars and workshops on topics of common interest.

sign a Frame Agreement in the humanitarian and healthcare field.

POLAND
(14 May 2007)

During the visit of the late Grand Master Fra' Andrew Bertie to Poland in 2007 a Health Cooperation agreement for medical and hospital assistance is signed.

With the Agreement, assistance provided by the Order's Association in Poland for the poorest and most needy, terminal patients and the disabled, as well as collaboration for the development of emergency and first aid, is significantly enhanced.

Also signed: a Cooperation Agreement with the Sanctuary of Jasna Góra in Czestochowa, to provide medical equipment, medicines and training of first-aid personnel.

ITALY
(16 May 2007)

The Italian Association of the Order and the Italian Coast Guard sign an Agreement to collaborate in emergency and first-aid actions at sea.

CAMEROON
(31 May 2007)

A Cooperation Convention to set up the general framework and guidelines for health care activities between the Republic of Cameroon and the Order is signed. Objectives: reciprocal engagement to support and implement measures to facilitate, develop and diversify the social, humanitarian and health cooperation in the country.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM)
(28 June 2007)

The Order of Malta and the International Organization for Migration sign a Cooperation Agreement on emergency and post-emergency situations, including reconstruction: the provision of medical and social assistance to migrants, assistance and protection for victims of traffickers, and the promotion of human rights at an international level

ITALY
(2 August 2007)

To promote a series of joint actions for fighting forest fires, help in protecting the territory and assisting victims of natural disasters, the Order of Malta's Italian Association and the Italian State Forestry Department sign a Memorandum of Understanding.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
(5 December 2007)

In Bangui the Government of the Central African Republic and the Order of Malta sign a Frame Agreement aiming to facilitate and improve the humanitarian works of the Order, in particular in the 17 dispensaries throughout the country.

ITALY
(28 January 2008)

The special relations between the Order and the Italian Republic are confirmed in the signing in 2008 of protocols with local regional authorities: 28 January 2008 – the Italian Association of the Order signs with the Municipality of Milan for the collaboration of volunteers from the Order in the Civil Protection

actions in the area of Milan and the possibility for the Order to use equipment of the local Civil Protection services.

ITALY
(4 April 2008, renewed 8 April 2009)

The Italian Association of the Order signs with the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Italian Republic a Cooperation Agreement for first aid to immigrants in the area of the Straits of Sicily, southern Italy. The Order's doctors and volunteers actively collaborate with the Italian Coast Guard.

ITALY
(26 May 2008)

The Italian Association signs a protocol with the Autonomous Region of Valle d'Aosta for the development of volunteer groups of the Order of Malta.

LATVIA
(29 October 2008)

On the occasion of the visit of the Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing to Latvia in October 2008 a Memorandum of Intent is signed with the Latvian Ministry of

Aid to Burkina Faso

The Agreement signed with Burkina Faso has meant the Order was able to intervene promptly after torrential rain lashed the capital, Ouagadougou, in September 2009. The catastrophe left many dead and 150,000 homeless. First steps were to transport the injured to hospital, and at the request of the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Order's first-aid team took care of injured children and their families. Within hours, Ordre de Malte France and Malteser International - which worked together to provide emergency aid - had sent two ambulances, a medical team, supplies and basic necessities to the capital, set up a tent camp for 150 children and their mothers, distributed water and food, and turned the delivery trucks into first-aid stations staffed by nurses, rescuers and Burkina Faso volunteer doctors.



■ Order of Malta medical team in action, Burkina Faso

Welfare to foster cooperation between the Order of Malta and Latvia.

The document diversifies cooperation in the social, humanitarian and health assistance fields and defines the framework and guidelines for further development of relations.

BENIN
(14 December 2008)

In Cotonou the Government of Benin and the Order of Malta sign a Framework Agreement. The purpose is to facilitate the works of the French Association, in particular in the Hospital in Djougou, the largest city in north west Benin.

Order's First Aid Post in St Peter's Square

Since the 1975 Jubilee, the Order has been operating a first-aid post in St. Peter's Square. Now in its 36th year, and equipped with an ambulance car, an electric-powered stretcher and first aid and medical supplies, the post offers continuous service every Wednesday and Sunday, the days of the Pope's public audiences, as well as whenever there are special ceremonies presided over by the Holy Father. A Memorandum of Understanding signed in 1994 and renewed for the third time on 1 January 2009 by the Director of Health and Hygiene of the Governorate of the Vatican City State and the Grand Hospitaller of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta continues the cooperation with the Vatican Health Services of 30 Order volunteers, coordinated by an anaesthetist. Today the volunteers serve in St. Peter's Square, in the Paul VI Hall and in the Basilica itself.

In 2009 over 300 people were treated at the post, the majority in the 41-60 age group, slightly more women than men, and the overwhelming majority coming from Europe, although there were also a number of patients representing all the world's continents.

The Order's national Associations have fond memories of their own first-aid teams participating during the Holy Year of 2000, when volunteer teams from every Association took turns to man the post for the entire year. The Relief Corps of the Italian Association also offered continuous service for the tumultuous and emotional week in April 2005 when millions of mourners came to pay their last respects to Pope John Paul II.

VATICAN CITY STATE
(15th December 2008)

A Memorandum of Understanding, signed in 1994, is renewed for the third time, by the Director of Health and Hygiene of the Governorate of Vatican City State and the Grand Hospitaller of the Sovereign Order of Malta. To date from 1 January 2009, it regulates the cooperation with the Vatican Health Services of volunteers of the Order of Malta at the Order's First Aid Post in St. Peter's Square.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
(17 February 2009)

(see box page 92)

BELARUS
(28 April 2009)

The Order's Embassy in the Republic of Belarus and the Minsk Region Executive Committee for Cooperation in the Humanitarian Sphere, with a common interest in the protection and care of orphan children, sign in Rome a Memorandum to facilitate humanitarian aid from the Order to the disadvantaged children of the region of Minsk.

CHAD
(18 June 2009)

In Ndjamena the Government of Chad and the Order of Malta sign a Cooperation Agreement to facilitate and foster humanitarian works and projects of the Order in the country.

LEBANON
(28 October 2009)

During the official visit of the Grand Master in Lebanon a Cooperation agreement for humanitarian and health issues was signed by the Order's Grand Chancellor Jean-Pierre Mazery and the Lebanese Foreign Minister Faouzi Salloukh.

TIMOR-LESTE
(16 November 2009)

The Order's Embassy in the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste and the Ministry of Health signed a Cooperation Agreement for the rehabilitation of the Timor-Leste Ambulance Service.



■ Fra' Matthew Festing visits the Order's First Aid Post in St. Peter's Square, Rome, February 2009

Postal Agreements

From 2008 to 2009 the Order of Malta signed postal agreements with the following countries:

- **Vatican City State** 24 June 2008
- **Montenegro** 23 February 2009
- **Belarus** 28 April 2009

Postal Agreement signed with the Vatican City State, Vatican 24 June 2008

The agreement with which the Vatican City State recognises the full validity of stamps issued by the Order of Malta was signed in the Vatican on 24 June 2008.

Cardinal Giovanni Lajolo, President of the Governorate, and Jean-Pierre Mazery, Grand Chancellor of the Order of Malta, signed the convention that extended the centuries-old relationship between the Order of Malta and the Vatican to postal services.

Two commemorative stamps were issued: the Order of Malta issued a stamp bearing the Vatican City State coat-of-arms in colour; the Vatican City issued a stamp depicting the Sovereign Order's emblem.

The Vatican City State convention is the 53rd country with which the Sovereign Order has signed agreements for the circulation of mail bearing its stamps.

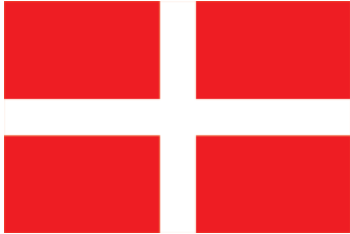


■ Commemorative stamp, postal convention with Vatican City State



■ Grand Chancellor Jean-Pierre Mazery and Belarus Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Martynov sign the Postal Agreement

Flags



The State Flag

The red rectangular flag with the white latin cross is the State flag of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. Called the flag of St. John, it has been used since ancient times. Giuseppe Bosio's "History of the Order " (1589), records that in 1130 Pope Innocent II had decreed that "...Religion in war should bear a standard with a white cross on a red field". Following Pope Alexander IV's Bull of 1259 permitting the Knights in war to wear a red mantle bearing a white cross, the Order began to make systematic use of the latin cross as its emblem. In 1291, the Order left the Holy Land for Cyprus where its sea faring vocation flourished and from that time onwards, the knightly standard was flown over their ships for the next six centuries. Today the State flag flies over the Order's Magistral Palace in Rome and accompanies the Grand Master and members of the Sovereign Council on official visits.

The Flag of the Order's works

The red flag with eight-pointed white cross is the flag of the Order's works. The eight-pointed cross has been used in the Order as long as the latin cross, and stems from the Order's ancient links with the Republic of Amalfi. Its present form dates back over 400 years; the first clear reference to an eight-pointed cross was its representation on the coins of Grand Master Fra' Foulques de Villaret (1305-1319). This is the flag flown by the Order's Grand Priorities and Sub-Priorities, its 47 National Associations and over 100 diplomatic missions around the world. It also flies over hospitals, medical centres and out-patients' departments, as well as wherever the Order of Malta's ambulance corps, foundations and specialised units operate.

The Flag of His Highness the Grand Master

The red flag with white eight-pointed cross encircled by the Collar and surmounted by a crown is the personal flag of the Grand Master. It flies over the Magistral Palace and the Order's Magistral seats when he is in residence.

Emblems



The Arms of the Order of Malta

The Order's arms display the eight-pointed latin cross on a red oval field surrounded by a rosary and surmounted by the princely mantle and crown (as described in Article 6 of the Order's Constitutional Charter). It is the emblem of the Sovereign Order's Grand Magistry and its Institutions: the Grand Priories, Sub-Priories, National Associations and Diplomatic Missions.



The Emblem of the Order's works

The emblem is the symbol of the Order of Malta's medical and humanitarian activities worldwide. It is a red shield with a white, eight-pointed cross (as described in Article 242 of the Order's Code).



The Coat of Arms of the 79th Prince and Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing

The arms of Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing are quartered with those of the Order.

At 1 and 4 gules (red) a cross argent; at 2 and 3 azure an eagle displayed erminois between three castles argent. The arms are surrounded by the Collar, symbol of the Grand Master, within a princely mantle and surmounted by a closed crown.

Names of the Order

Since its foundation 960 years ago, many names have been used to identify the Order and its members. This can be explained by its nine centuries of eventful life and in particular because the Knights have often been forced to move from countries where they once played a leading role.

The official name of the Order of Malta is the **Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta**. Abbreviations of the name - Sovereign Military Order of

Malta, Sovereign Order of Malta, or Order of Malta - are often used for legal, diplomatic or communication purposes.

The knights were initially called the **Knights Hospitaller** (or **Hospitallers**) to describe their mission. But they were also called the **Knights of St John** because of the Order's patron saint, St. John Baptist, and also **of Jerusalem** because of their presence in the Holy Land. Also used in the past was the term **The Religion** to emphasise the characteristic of religious confraternity.

After conquering the island of Rhodes in 1310, they became the **Knights of Rhodes**. In 1530, the Emperor Charles V ceded the island of Malta to the Knights. Since then the Order's members are commonly referred to as the **Knights of Malta**.

To protect this heritage, the Order of Malta has legally registered 16 versions of its names and emblems in some 100 countries.

The Grand Magistry Library and Archives

Small team, big steps

The Library of the Grand Magistry currently includes between 18,000 and 20,000 volumes, 30,000 photographs, hundreds of maps, prints and postcards. Over the last six years, it has been restored, vacuumed, acid-protected, anti-theft protected – and rendered computer friendly. The library is the cultural point of reference on the Order of Malta.

How did all this come about? Fra' Elie de Comminges, who heads up this treasure trove, has, with his dedicated staff, wrought astonishing changes. He describes what has been achieved so far as “renovations and restorations”. The first tasks undertaken by Fra' Elie and his staff were to start a digital catalogue and to treat the oldest manuscripts to preserve them. Then all the Bulls were restored and are now stored flat. They have all been catalogued and digitised. All these treasures were first cleaned. Then, the move from the old card catalogue to the catalogue online; and currently everything is being digitised. All the folders with archival material are being treated and moved from acidic to non-acidic boxes. A reference section has been established. The Library is now open stacks, with access to everything except the rare book collection. And every reading table in the new Reading Room has computer connections.

Books before 1830 need a unique identification ('signatures' or a 'fingerprint') – because sometimes in the same edition there will be different fingerprints. The books in the collection are random

stamped and each has an anti-theft device which sounds if a book is removed, unauthorised, from the Library.

THE COLLECTION

Of the collection itself, 11,000 titles of the total held have already been catalogued and work continues apace.

The collection covers history, statutes, diaries. 8,000 are titles on the Order of Malta, as well as categories of heraldry, genealogy and history. Additionally, there is a special collection – the John James Watts collection – 400 books on genealogy, heraldry and history, some very rare. The collector was a founder member of the British Association.



■ Fra' Elie de Comminges and his team

15,000 photographs have also been catalogued, with another 15,000 to go and all the prints and maps have been catalogued.

The Library has an agreement with the University of St. John in Minnesota to put all archival material on the internet. (The Order's catalogue is accessible through the Grand Magistry website, Library and Archives section.)

SPECIAL MATERIAL

Fra' Elie summarises some of the special material: "The oldest material in the Library is a Bull dated 1332 and signed by Pope John XXII. Also among the collection are Bulls signed by Emperor Charles V. The oldest book about the Order in the collection is an incunabulum which includes woodcuts: a History of the Siege of Rhodes, dated February 1485, by Caoursin (binding is 19th century). There is a Breviary of the Order, dated 1510: of the 6 or 7 in the world, the only complete one known is in Ulm. The Order's edition - kept in a special, non-acidic box to preserve it - is more complete than the example held in France's Bibliotheque Nationale." Of special interest, too, is the History of the Order by Abbe' de Vertot, the great



■ The Magistral library

historian of the Order in the 18th century and Fra' Elie is building a collection of the editions of his History. And there is a collection of postcards of Fort Sant'Angelo – some old, some black and white, some in colour.

Half of the extensive archives are already in a conservation area of compact stacks covering approximately 600 linear metres, out of a total of 1.5 kilometres. They are climate-controlled, as is the Library itself.

THE TEAM AT WORK

Fra' Elie and his small, highly professional team achieve great things. And there is still much to be done. Between them, they work in English, French, Italian, Latin and Spanish. There are also Agreements in place with La Sapienza, University of Rome, for an internship programme and with the Ecole des Chartres, who send interns for a 'stage' in the summer months.

This unique resource is frequented by a wide variety of researchers – from members of the Order, to genealogists, historians, journalists and students.

And Fra' Elie's favourite items in this exceptional collection? "My favourites?" He pauses. "Everything!"



■ Among the collection: Schedel's *Liber Crochnicarum*, 1493, noted for its numerous illustrations

960 years of history



three monastic vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. The constitution of the Kingdom of Jerusalem regarding the crusades obliged the Order to take on the military defence of the sick, the pilgrims and the territories that the



1048 - Jerusalem

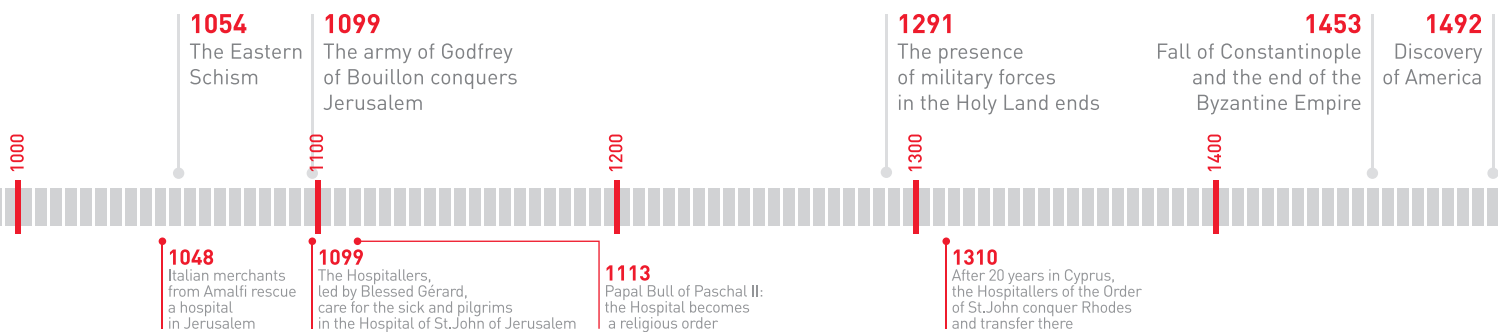
The birth of the Order dates back to around 1048. Merchants from the ancient Marine Republic of Amalfi obtained from the Caliph of Egypt the authorisation to build a church, convent and hospital in Jerusalem, to care for pilgrims of any religious faith or race. The Order of St. John of Jerusalem - the monastic community that ran the hospital for the pilgrims in the Holy Land - became independent under the guidance of its founder, Blessed Gérard. With the Bull of 15 February 1113, Pope Paschal II approved the foundation of the Hospital and placed it under the aegis of the Holy See, granting it the right to freely elect its superiors without interference from other secular or religious authorities. By virtue of the Papal Bull, the Hospital became an Order exempt from the Church. All the Knights were religious, bound by the

crusaders had conquered from the Moslems. The Order thus added the task of defending the faith to that of its hospitaller mission. As time went on, the Order adopted the white eight-pointed Cross that is still its symbol today.

1310 - Rhodes

When the last Christian stronghold in the Holy Land fell in 1291, the Order settled first in Cyprus and then, in 1310, led by Grand Master Fra' Foulques de Villaret, on the island of Rhodes. From then, the defence of the Christian world required the organisation of a

naval force. Thus the Order built a powerful fleet and sailed the Eastern Mediterranean, fighting many famous battles for the sake of Christendom. From its beginning, the independence from other nations granted by Pontifical deed, and the universally recognised right to maintain and deploy armed forces, constitute the grounds for the international sovereignty of the Order. In the early 14th century the institutions of the Order and the knights who came to Rhodes from every corner of Europe were grouped according to the languages they spoke. There were initially seven groups of Langues (Tongues): Provence, Auvergne, France, Italy, Aragon (Navarre), England (with Scotland and Ireland) and Germany. In 1492 Castille and Portugal split off from the Langue of Aragon and constituted the eighth Langue. Each Langue included Priors or Grand Priors,



Bailiwicks and Commanderies. The Order was governed by its Grand Master (the Prince of Rhodes) and Council, minted its own money and maintained diplomatic relations with other States. The senior positions of the Order were given to representatives of different Langues. The seat of the Order, the Convent, was composed of religious of various nationalities.



1530 - Malta

After six months of siege and fierce combat against the fleet and army of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, the Knights were forced to surrender in 1523 and left Rhodes with military honours. The Order remained without a territory of its own until 1530, when Grand Master Fra' Philippe de Villiers de l'Isle Adam took possession of the island of Malta, granted to the Order by Emperor Charles V with the approval of Pope Clement VII. It was established that the Order should remain neutral in any war between Christian nations. In 1565 the Knights, led by Grand Master Fra' Jean de la Vallette (after whom the capital of Malta, Valletta, was named), defended the island for more than three months during the Great Siege by the Turks.

1571 - The Battle of Lepanto

The fleet of the Order, then one of the most powerful in the Mediterranean, contributed to the ultimate destruction of the Ottoman naval power in the Battle of Lepanto in 1571.



1798 - In exile

Two hundred years later, in 1798, Napoleon Bonaparte occupied the island for its strategic value during his Egyptian campaign. Because of the Order's Rule prohibiting them to raise weapons against other Christians, the knights were forced to leave Malta. Although the sovereign rights of the Order in the island of Malta had been reaffirmed by the Treaty of Amiens (1802), the Order has never been able to return to Malta.

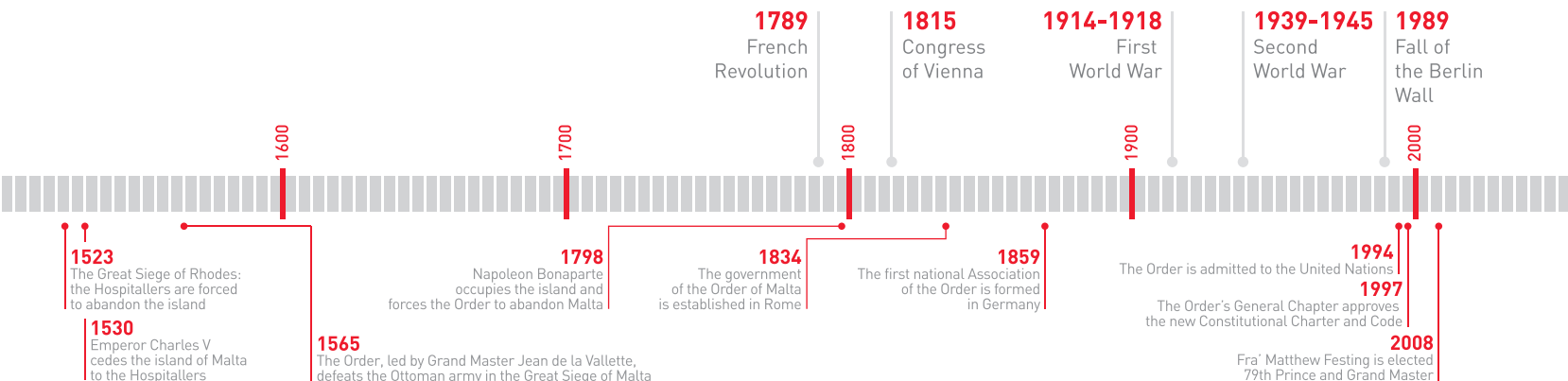
1834 - Rome

After having temporarily resided in Messina, Catania and Ferrara, in 1834 the Order settled definitively in Rome, where it owns, with extraterritoriality status, the Magistral Palace in Via Condotti 68 and the Magistral Villa on the Aventine Hill.



The 20th and 21st Century

The original hospitaller mission became once again the main activity of the Order, growing ever stronger during the last century, most especially because of the contribution of the activities carried out by the Grand Priorities and National Associations in so many countries around the world. Large-scale hospitaller and charitable activities were carried out during World Wars I and II. Under the Grand Masters Fra' Angelo de Mojana di Cologna (1962-1988) and Fra' Andrew Bertie (1988-2008), the projects expanded until they reached the furthestmost regions of the planet.



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