

# CONSTITUTIONAL CHARTER

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

promulgated 27 June 1961  
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**This free translation is not be intended as a modification of the Italian text approved by the Extraordinary Chapter General 28-30 April 1997 and published in the Bollettino Ufficiale, 12 January 1998.**

**In cases of different interpretations, the official Italian text prevails (Art. 36, par. 3 Constitutional Charter).**

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## TITLE I

### THE ORDER AND ITS NATURE

#### ARTICLE 1

##### *Origin and Nature of the Order*

- Par. 1 — The Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes, and of Malta, arose from a group of hospitallers of the Hospice of Saint John of Jerusalem who had been called upon by circumstances to augment their original charitable enterprise with military service for the defence of pilgrims to the Holy Land and of Christian civilization in the East. It is a lay religious Order, by tradition military, chivalrous and nobiliary, which in time became sovereign on the islands of Rhodes and later of Malta.
- Par. 2 — In nations where it exercises its activity in virtue of its rights or of international conventions, the Order's structure comprises: Grand Priorities, Priorities, Sub-priorities and National Associations.
- Par. 3 — In this Constitution and in the Code the Sovereign Military Order of Malta is also referred to as "the Order of Malta" or simply as "the Order".
- Par. 4 — In the rules which follow, the Grand Priorities and the National Associations are also referred to as Priorities and Associations. The term Code refers to the Code of the Order.

#### ARTICLE 2

##### *Purpose*

- Par. 1 — The purpose of the Order is the promotion of the glory of God through the sanctification of its members, service to the faith and to the Holy Father, and assistance to one's neighbour, in accordance with its ancient traditions.
- Par. 2 — True to the divine precepts and to the admonitions of our Lord Jesus Christ, guided by the teachings of the Church, the Order affirms and propagates 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 and age.

The Order fulfils its institutional tasks especially by carrying out hospitaller works, including social and health assistance, as well as aiding victims of exceptional disasters and of war, attending also to their spiritual well-being and the strengthening of their faith in God.

- Par. 3 — In order to be able to perform their institutional tasks, the Priorities and Associations may, according to the regulations of the Code, establish dependent organizations in accordance with national laws and international conventions and agreements made with States.

ARTICLE 3  
*Sovereignty*

- Par. 1 — The Order is a subject of international law and exercises sovereign functions.
- Par. 2 — Legislative, executive and judicial functions are reserved to the competent bodies of the Order according to the provisions of the Constitution and Code.

ARTICLE 4  
*Relations with the Apostolic See*

- Par. 1 — The Order is a legal entity recognized by the Holy See.
- Par. 2 — Religious members through their vows, as well as members of the Second Class through the Promise of Obedience, are only subject to their appropriate Superiors in the Order.
- In accordance with the Code of Canon Law, the churches and conventual institutions of the Order are exempt from the jurisdiction of the dioceses and are directly subject to the Holy See.
- Par. 3 — In the conduct of relations with the Apostolic See, the acquired rights, customs and privileges granted to the Order by the Supreme Pontiffs are in force unless expressly abrogated.
- Par. 4 — The Supreme Pontiff appoints as his representative to the Order a Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church on whom are conferred the title of *Cardinalis Patronus* and special faculties. The *Cardinalis Patronus* has the task of promoting the spiritual interests of the Order and its members and relations between the Holy See and the Order.
- Par. 5 — The Order has diplomatic representation to the Holy See, according to the norms of international law.
- Par. 6 — The religious nature of the Order does not prejudice the exercise of sovereign prerogatives pertaining to the Order in so far as it is recognized by States as a subject of international law.

ARTICLE 5  
*Sources of the Order's Law*

The sources of the Order's law are:

- 1 – the Constitution, the Code of the Order and, as an adjunct, canonical legislation;
- 2 – the legislative provisions according to Art. 15, par. 2, a) of the Constitution;
- 3 – international agreements ratified according to Art. 15, par. 2, h) of the Constitution;

4 – its customs and privileges;

5 – the Code Rohan where not in contradiction to current norms.

ARTICLE 6

*Flags, Insignia and Armorial Bearings  
of the Order*

Par. 1 — The flag of the Order bears either the white latin cross on a red field or the white eight - pointed cross (cross of Malta) on a red field.

Par. 2 — The armorial bearings of the Order display a white latin cross on a red oval field, surrounded by a rosary, all superimposed on a white eight - pointed cross and displayed under a princely mantle surmounted by a crown.

Par. 3 — A special regulation, approved by the Grand Master with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council, defines the characteristics and the use of the flags, the insignia and the armorial bearings of the Order.

ARTICLE 7

*Language*

The official language of the Order is Italian.



## TITLE II

### THE MEMBERS OF THE ORDER

#### ARTICLE 8

##### *The Classes*

Par. 1 — The members of the Order are divided into three Classes:

- A) the First Class consists of Knights of Justice, also called Professed, and of Professed Conventual Chaplains who have made religious vows;
- B) the Second Class consists of members in Obedience, who make the Promise according to Art. 9, par. 2, and who are subdivided into three categories:
  - a) Knights and Dames of Honour and Devotion in Obedience
  - b) Knights and Dames of Grace and Devotion in Obedience
  - c) Magistral Knights and Dames in Obedience;
- C) the Third Class consists of those members who do not make religious vows or the Promise but who live according to the norms of the Church and are prepared to commit themselves to the Order and the Church. They are divided into six categories:
  - a) Knights and Dames of Honour and Devotion
  - b) Conventual Chaplains *ad honorem*
  - c) Knights and Dames of Grace and Devotion
  - d) Magistral Chaplains
  - e) Knights and Dames of Magistral Grace
  - f) Donats (male and female) of Devotion.

Par. 2 — The requisites for admission to the various classes and categories of membership are determined by the Code.

ARTICLE 9

*Obligations of the Members*

- Par. 1 — The Knights and Chaplains belonging to the First Class profess the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience in accordance with the Code, thus aspiring to perfection according to the Gospel. They are religious for all purposes of Canon Law and are governed by the particular rules which concern them. They are not obliged to live in community.
- Par. 2 — By virtue of the Promise, members of the Second Class oblige themselves to strive for the perfection of Christian life in conformity with the obligation of their state, in the spirit of the Order.
- Par. 3 — The members of the Order are to conduct their lives in an exemplary manner in conformity with the teachings and precepts of the Church and to devote themselves to the charitable activities of the Order, according to the provisions of the Code.
- Par. 4 — Members of the Second and of the Third Class, with the exception of priests, make a financial contribution through their national organizations to the Grand Magistracy, fixed by the Chapter General.

ARTICLE 10

*Assignment of Members*

- Par. 1 — Where only a Priory already exists, all members of the three Classes automatically belong to it.
- Par. 2 — Where a Subpriory is established, only the members of the First and Second Class belong to it.
- Par. 3 — Where an Association is established, the members of the three Classes belong to it.
- Par. 4 — Where a Priory or Subpriory is established in the territory where an Association already exists, all the members of the First and Second Class are also members of the Priory or Subpriory.
- Par. 5 — Where neither a Priory nor a Subpriory exists in the territory, the members of the First and Second Class are also aggregated *in gremio religionis* (dependant directly on the Grand Commander).
- Par. 6 — Where neither a Priory nor an Association exists in the territory, the members of the Third Class are assigned to an institution of the Order as the Grand Master decides.
- Par. 7 — The Grand Master with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council, having heard the Priors, Regents or Presidents concerned, may transfer a member of the Order, with his consent, to a Priory, Subpriory or Association, according to the above norms.

ARTICLE 11  
*Duties and Offices*

- Par. 1 — The duties and offices of Grand Master and of Grand Commander are conferred upon Professed Knights in Perpetual Vows.
- Par. 2 — The office of Prior is entrusted to Professed Knights in Perpetual or Temporary vows.
- Par. 3 — The High Offices and the offices of the Sovereign Council, in keeping with Art. 20, par. 4, and the offices of Chancellor, Receiver and Hospitaller of the Priories and Subpriories as well as those of Regent, Lieutenant, Vicar and Procurator, are held preferably by Professed Knights.
- If Knights in Obedience are elected for their specific qualifications, their election must be confirmed by the Grand Master.
- Par. 4 — The positions of High Officers, Priors, Vicars, Lieutenants, Procurators, Regents, Chancellors of Priories, and of at least four of the six Councillors of the Sovereign Council, are reserved to Knights having the requisites for Honour and Devotion or Grace and Devotion.

TITLE III  
GOVERNMENT OF THE ORDER

ARTICLE 12  
*The Grand Master*

Sovereign prerogatives and honours and the title “Most Eminent Highness” are reserved to the Grand Master, Head of the Order.

ARTICLE 13  
*Requisites for Election of Grand Master*

- Par. 1 — The Grand Master is elected for life by the Council Complete of State from among the Professed Knights with at least ten years in perpetual vows if they are younger than fifty years of age; in the case of Professed Knights who are older, but who have been members of the Order for at least ten years, three years in perpetual vows are sufficient.
- Par. 2 — The Grand Master and the Lieutenant of the Grand Master must have the nobiliary requisites prescribed for the category of Knights of Honour and Devotion.
- Par. 3 — Before the assumption of the office, the election of the Grand Master is to be communicated by letter to the Holy Father by the person elected.

ARTICLE 14  
*The Grand Master's Oath*

The person elected to the dignity of Grand Master, having informed the Holy Father of the election, takes the following oath in the presence of the Cardinalis Patronus in solemn session of the Council Complete of State:

“By this most Holy Wood of the Cross and by God’s Holy Gospels, I, N.N., do solemnly promise and swear to observe the Constitution, the Code, the Rule and the laudable customs of our Order and to administer the affairs of the Order conscientiously. So help me God, and if I do otherwise, may it be to the risk of my soul.”

ARTICLE 15  
*Powers of the Grand Master*

- Par. 1 — The Grand Master, assisted by the Sovereign Council, sees to the exercise of his supreme authority, to the conferral of duties and offices, and to the general government of the Order.

Par. 2 — It pertains to the Grand Master:

- a) to issue legislative measures, with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council, concerning matters regulated neither by the Constitution nor by the Code;
- b) to promulgate by decree the acts of government;
- c) to admit, with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council given in secret, members to the Novitiate and to Temporary and Perpetual Vows of the First Class as well as to the year of probation and to the Promise of the Second Class;
- d) to admit, with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council, members of the First Class to Aspirancy;
- e) to receive members into the Third Class of the Order, with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council or with a provision given on his authority alone (*motu proprio*);
- f) to administer, with the assistance of the Sovereign Council, the assets of the Common Treasure and to supervise the properties;
- g) to execute the acts of the Holy See, insofar as these relate to the Order, and to inform the Holy See of the state and the needs of the Order;
- h) to ratify international agreements, with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council;
- i) to convene an Extraordinary Chapter General which will have the faculty to dissolve the Sovereign Council and elect a new one, in accordance with the norms of the Constitution and Code.

Par. 3 — The decrees of par. 2 b) are designated magistral or conciliar depending on whether the act of government has been issued directly by the Grand Master or whether there has been prior consideration or prior deliberation by the Sovereign Council. When a deliberative vote is required, the Grand Master cannot issue a decree at variance with that vote, but he is not obliged to issue a decree in conformity with it.

#### ARTICLE 16

#### *Resignation from Office by the Grand Master*

The resignation from office by the Grand Master must be accepted by the Sovereign Council and, to be effective, communicated to the Holy Father.

#### ARTICLE 17

#### *Extraordinary Government*

Par. 1 — In the case of the permanent incapacity, resignation or death of the Grand Master, the Order is governed by a Lieutenant *ad interim* in the person of the Grand Commander who can carry out acts of ordinary administration until the Office ceases to be vacant.

Par. 2 — The permanent incapacity of the Grand Master is declared by the Magistral Court of first instance in closed session on a petition by a two thirds majority of the members of the Sovereign Council, which has been convened and chaired by the Grand Commander or the Grand Chancellor, or has convened itself by an absolute majority.

The petition is presented by the Grand Chancellor, or by a member of the Sovereign Council delegated for this purpose. If the petition is affirmed, the Grand Commander assumes the office of Lieutenant *ad interim*.

Par. 3 — In the case of the incapacity of the Grand Master for a period of more than one month, the Grand Commander assumes the ordinary administration of the Order and immediately convenes the Sovereign Council for confirmation.

Par. 4 — In the event of the incapacity of the Grand Commander, the Sovereign Council elects from among its members a Professed Knight in Perpetual Vows as Lieutenant *ad interim*.

Par. 5 — The Lieutenant of the Grand Master is elected in accordance with Art. 23, par. 5, from among the Knights possessing the requisites required for election to Grand Master.

Before taking up his office, the Lieutenant of the Grand Master takes the oath in accordance with Art. 14.

The resignation of the Lieutenant of the Grand Master must be accepted by the Sovereign Council and with a resolution which must be communicated to the Holy Father in order to be effective.

#### ARTICLE 18

#### *The High Offices*

Par. 1 — The High Offices are:

the Grand Commander

the Grand Chancellor

the Grand Hospitaller

the Receiver of the Common Treasure.

Par. 2 — The replacement of persons holding High Offices is regulated by the Code.

#### ARTICLE 19

#### *The Prelate*

Par. 1 — The Prelate is appointed by the Supreme Pontiff, who chooses from among three candidates presented by the Grand Master with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council. In the event that none of the three candidates presented meets with the approval of the Holy Father, other candidates will be presented.

The Prelate assists the *Cardinalis Patronus* in carrying out his mission to the Order.

- Par. 2 — The Prelate is the ecclesiastical superior of the clergy of the Order in sacerdotal functions. He ensures that the religious and priestly life of the Chaplains and their apostolate are conducted according to the discipline and the spirit of the Order.
- Par. 3 — The Prelate assists the Grand Master and the Grand Commander in their responsibility for both the spiritual life and religious observances of the members of the Order and in all matters concerning the spiritual nature of the works of the Order.
- Par. 4 — At each session of the Ordinary Chapter General the Prelate presents a report on the spiritual state of the Order.

#### ARTICLE 20

##### *The Sovereign Council*

- Par. 1 — The Sovereign Council assists the Grand Master in the Government of the Order.
- Par. 2 — The following are members of Sovereign Council:
- a) the Grand Master or the Lieutenant, who presides;
  - b) the holders of the four High Offices and six Councillors.
- Par. 3 — The members of the Sovereign Council, excluding the Grand Master and the Lieutenant, are elected by the Chapter General by a majority of those present.
- Par. 4 — The Grand Commander and at least four other members of the Sovereign Council must be Professed Knights in Perpetual or Temporary Vows.
- Par. 5 — For the admission of members to the First Class only the members of the Sovereign Council who are Professed Knights in Perpetual or Temporary Vows are entitled to vote.
- Par. 6 — The members of the Sovereign Council remain in office until the next Chapter General and may be re-elected. For a third or further consecutive re-election to the same position a two-thirds majority of votes of those present is required.
- Par. 7 — The Grand Master does not vote on matters for which the Sovereign Council has a deliberative vote or must give its advice, notwithstanding Art. 15, par. 3.

In the case of a tie vote among the Councillors, including the High Officers, the decision of the Grand Master prevails. If the Grand Master does not express an opinion, the matter is suspended.

## ARTICLE 21

### *The Government Council*

- Par. 1 — The Government Council is a consultative body for dealing with the political, religious, hospitaller and international policies of the Order or other general aspects of the life of the Order. It may issue recommendations to the holders of the four High Offices and to the Board of Auditors. It meets at least twice each year.
- Par. 2 — The Government Council consists of six Councillors from different geographic areas elected by the Chapter General from members of any of the three Classes of the Order.
- Par. 3 — At meetings of the Government Council are present:
- a) the Grand Master or the Lieutenant, who convenes it and presides;
  - b) the members of the Sovereign Council;
  - c) the Prelate of the Order, when there might be questions within his competence.
- Par. 4 — The six Councillors remain in office until the next Chapter General and may be re-elected once.

## ARTICLE 22

### *The Chapter General*

- Par. 1 — The Chapter General is the supreme assembly of the Order and is composed of representatives of the different classes. It is convened once every five years or whenever the Grand Master, having heard the Sovereign Council, may think fit, or on application to the Grand Master by the majority of the Priories, Subpriories and Associations.
- Par. 2 — The following are members of the Chapter General:
- a) the Grand Master or the Lieutenant, who presides;
  - b) the members of the Sovereign Council;
  - c) the Prelate;
  - d) the Priors, or in the event of vacancy, their permanent substitutes (Procurators, Vicars, Lieutenants);
  - e) the Professed Bailiffs;
  - f) two Professed Knights delegated by each Priory or, in the absence of one of these, a Knight in Obedience;
  - g) a Professed Knight and a Knight in Obedience delegated by the Knights in *gremio religionis*;
  - h) five Regents of the Subpriories in accordance with the Code;



- i) fifteen representatives of the Associations, in accordance with the Code;
- l) the six members of the Government Council of the Order.

Par. 3 — The Chapter General is convened to elect the members of the Sovereign Council, the members of the Government Council, the members of the Board of Auditors; to deal with modifications to the Constitution and the Code; to take cognizance of and deal with the most important problems pertaining to the Order, such as its spiritual and temporal state, the programme of its activities and its international relations.

Par. 4 — For the approval of modifications to the Constitution, a majority of two-thirds is required. For the approval of modifications to the Code, an absolute majority is required, with the exception of Arts. 6–93, which refer exclusively to the First Class, for which it is required that in the absolute majority vote there is also the majority of the Professed Knights having the right to vote.

#### ARTICLE 23

##### *The Council Complete of State*

Par. 1 — The Council Complete of State elects the Grand Master or the Lieutenant of the Grand Master.

Par. 2 — The following are entitled to vote:

- a) the Lieutenant of the Grand Master or the Lieutenant *ad interim*;
- b) the members of the Sovereign Council;
- c) the Prelate;
- d) the Priors or, in the event of vacancy, their permanent substitutes (Procurators, Vicars, Lieutenants);
- e) the Professed Bailiffs;
- f) two Professed Knights delegated by each Priory;
- g) a Professed Knight and a Knight in Obedience delegated by the Knights in *gremio religionis*;
- h) five Regents of the Subpriories, in accordance with the Code;
- i) fifteen representatives of the Associations, in accordance with the Code.

Par. 3 — The Grand Master's election requires a majority plus one of those present entitled to vote.

- Par. 4 — The members of the First Class taking part in the Council Complete of State have the right to propose three candidates. In the event that such a list is not presented within the first day of the meetings of the Council Complete of State or if a candidate is not elected from among the proposed list within the first three ballots, the members of the Council Complete of State have freedom of choice in successive ballots.
- Par. 5 — After the fifth undecided ballot, the Council Complete of State decides, with the same majority, whether to proceed to the election of a Lieutenant of the Grand Master for a maximum period of one year. In the event of a negative result the balloting to elect the Grand Master resumes. In the event of a positive result the Lieutenant of the Grand Master is elected by means of a runoff ballot between the two candidates who received the largest number of votes in the fifth ballot. The candidate in the runoff ballot who receives the larger number of votes prevails. Should there be only one candidate, a majority vote of those present is required.
- Par. 6 — If elected, the Lieutenant of the Grand Master must reconvene the Council Complete of State before the end of his mandate.

#### ARTICLE 24

##### *General Norms for Elections*

- Par. 1 — The members of the Chapter General, of the Council Complete of State, and those entitled to vote in the election of a Prior, Regent or President of an Association, must act personally and may not appoint any representatives, or delegates or proxies or vote by letter, except as provided in Art. 196 of the Code.
- Par. 2 — Without prejudice to any other provision, the basis of any vote is calculated on those with a right to vote who are present and vote. Where applicable, a two-thirds majority applies only for the first three ballots. For successive ballots a majority of those present having the right to vote is sufficient, without prejudice to any other provision.

#### ARTICLE 25

##### *The Juridical Council*

- Par. 1 — The Juridical Council is an expert advisory collegial body, which can be consulted about juridical questions and problems of special importance.
- Par. 2 — It is composed of: a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary General and four members.
- Par. 3 — The members are appointed by the Grand Master with the advice of the Sovereign Council. They are selected from among those who are experts in the juridical sciences, preferably members of the Order particularly versed in the law of the Order, in public and international law and in Canon Law. They remain in office for three years and may be re-appointed.

ARTICLE 26  
*Judicial Regulations*

- Par. 1 — Cases falling within the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical forum are submitted to the ordinary ecclesiastical Tribunals, in accordance with Canon Law.
- Par. 2 — For cases falling within the competence of the lay forum between physical and juridical persons of the Order and against third parties, the juridical function is exercised by the Magistral Courts, in accordance with the Code.
- Par. 3 — The Grand Master, with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council, appoints the Presidents, the judges, and the clerk of the Magistral Courts.
- Par. 4 — The judges of the Magistral Courts are chosen from among members of the Order who are specially versed in law. They hold office for three years and may be re-appointed.
- Par. 5 — The judicial regulations and the procedure to be observed by the Magistral Courts are regulated by the Code.

ARTICLE 27  
*The Board of Auditors*

- Par. 1 — The Board of Auditors oversees and controls the income, the expenditures and all the assets of the Order. It is also the consultative body of the Receiver of the Common Treasure.
- Par. 2 — It consists of a President, four ordinary Councillors, and two alternates.
- Par. 3 — The members of the Board of Auditors are elected by the Chapter General in the first balloting, with a majority of those having the right to vote and with the majority of those present in successive ballots. They are chosen from among the Knights versed in the juridical, economic and financial disciplines. They hold office until the following Chapter General, and may be re-elected for one consecutive term and, with a two-thirds majority, for a third term.

TITLE IV  
THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ORDER

ARTICLE 28  
*Establishment of Organizations*

- Par. 1 — The establishment of a Grand Priory, Priory, Subpriory or Association, and the approval of their statutes, belong to the Grand Master with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council.
- Par. 2 — The title of Grand Priory belongs to some Priors by custom or by virtue of a resolution of the Chapter General.
- Par. 3 — The Grand Master, with the advice of the competent Priors, Subpriors or Associations and the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council, establishes new organizations and approves their statutes. The establishment of Priors and Subpriors is to be communicated by the Grand Master to the Holy Father.
- Par. 4 — The same procedure must be followed for the amalgamation, division or dissolution of Priors, Subpriors or Associations.
- Par. 5 — Within each territory, only a Priory or a Subpriory can be established.  
Relations between a Priory and an Association existing in the same territory are regulated by the Code.

ARTICLE 29  
*Government of Priors*

- Par. 1 — At least five Professed Knights are necessary for the establishment of a Priory.
- Par. 2 — The members of the three Classes belong to the Assembly.
- Par. 3 — The Prior is assisted by a limited Council which is elected by the Chapter according to the statutes of the Priory.
- Par. 4 — The following are members of the Chapter:
- a) the Prior;
  - b) the Professed Knights and Chaplains of the Priory;
  - c) the Chancellor, the Receiver and, where no Association exists in the same territory, the Hospitaller;
  - d) two representatives of the Second Class;
  - e) two representatives of the Third Class, where no Association exists.

Par. 5 — The Chancellor and the Receiver are appointed by the Prior from among the Knights of the First and Second Class, having consulted the members of the First Class.

The Hospitaller and the representatives of the Second and Third Class are elected by the Assembly.

Par. 6 — The Professed members propose by a majority vote a list of three candidates from which the members of the Priory Chapter elect the Prior.

Par. 7 — The Prior elect may not take up office until he has received the approval of the Grand Master, with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council, and taken the oath.

Par. 8 — The statutes of the Priory establish the other competencies of the Chapter and of the Assembly.

#### ARTICLE 30

##### *Term of Office of Priors*

The Prior and the members of the limited Council remain in office for six years and may be re-elected. Re-election to a third or further six-year term requires a two-thirds majority.

#### ARTICLE 31

##### *Lieutenant of the Prior*

Par. 1 — Whenever expediency and need require, the Prior, after hearing the Chapter, may appoint a Lieutenant to substitute for him for one year, in all or in part, in the exercise of his duties. The appointment is to be approved by the Grand Master, with the advice of the Sovereign Council.

Par. 2 — In case of necessity, the appointment of the Lieutenant devolves on the Grand Master with the advice of the Sovereign Council, if the Prior has not made provision in accordance with par. 1.

Par. 3 — The Prior, after hearing the limited Council, can appoint a Lieutenant to substitute for him for a maximum period of three months.

Par. 4 — The Lieutenant must be a Professed Knight or a Knight in Obedience, in accordance with Art. 11, par. 3.

#### ARTICLE 32

##### *Vicar and Procurator of a Priory*

Par. 1 — For just and grave cause the Grand Master may, with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council, remove a Prior and appoint a Vicar.

Par. 2 — Should it not be possible to proceed with the election of a Prior in accordance with Canon Law, the Vicar remains in office until the end of the next Chapter General.

- Par. 3 — Should it prove impossible for a Priory to function, or for other just and grave reasons, the Grand Master, with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council, appoints a Procurator who shall remain in office until the end of the next Chapter General.
- Par. 4 — The Vicar and the Procurator must be Professed Knights or Knights in Obedience in accordance with Art. 11, par. 3.

#### ARTICLE 33

#### *Subpriories and the Appointment of Regents*

- Par. 1 — For the establishment of a Subpriory there must be at least nine Knights in Obedience.
- Par. 2 — The Subpriory is governed by a Professed Knight or a Knight in Obedience, with the title of Regent, assisted by a Council and the Chapter, in accordance with its own Statutes and the Code.
- Par. 3 — The Regent and the Councillors are elected by the Chapter. The Regent takes office after having received the approval of the Grand Master, with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council, and having taken the oath.
- Par. 4 — The Regent and the Councillors hold office for six years and may be re-elected. For a third and successive re-election a two-thirds majority is required.

#### ARTICLE 34

#### *Associations*

- Par. 1 — Associations are established by decree of the Grand Master, with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council. Their statutes are drafted in accordance with the legislation of the countries in which they are established and are approved by the Grand Master, with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council.
- Par. 2 — The Grand Master, with the advice of the Sovereign Council, confirms the appointment of the President and the members of the Board of Directors. The term of office is determined by the statutes and lasts from a minimum of three to a maximum of six years. If provided in the statutes, re-election is possible.

#### ARTICLE 35

#### *Delegations*

- Par. 1 — The Priors, the Subpriories and the Associations may form regional Delegations in accordance with the Code.
- Par. 2 — The Delegations are composed of all members of the Priors, Subpriories and Associations who reside in the territory. Their rules are established in conformity with the statutes of the respective Priors, Subpriories and Associations and a regulation approved by the Grand Master, with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council.

- Par. 3 — The Delegation is directed by a member of the Order who has the title of Delegate and who is appointed in the first instance by his own Superior with the advice of the respective Council, and subsequently elected by the members of the Delegation and confirmed by the Superior. The Delegation of a Priory or Sub-priory, where possible, should be entrusted to a Professed Knight or a Knight in Obedience.
- Par. 4 — The Delegate is assisted by a Council consisting of not more than five members and a Chaplain, who has under his care the spiritual life of the members of the Delegation.

ARTICLE 36

*Text and Official Translations  
of the Constitution*

- Par. 1 — The text of the Constitution is written in the Italian language. The Grand Master with the advice of the Sovereign Council shall provide for an official translation in English, French, German and Spanish.
- Par. 2 — The text in Italian, bearing the signature of the Head of the Order and the Seal of State, is kept in the Archives of the Grand Magistry.
- Par. 3 — In cases of different interpretations, the official Italian text prevails.

ARTICLE 37

*Transitional Regulations*

The Grand Master, with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council, issues transitional norms to regulate matters pending when the Constitution and Code come into effect.

signed:  
**Carlo Marullo di Condojanni**  
*Grand Chancellor*

signed:  
**Fra' Andrew Bertie**