

2019 Australian HOSPITALLER

The Annual Review of the Australian Association of the Sovereign Order of Malta



Spirit beyond generosity

National Day | The Church of the True Cross | The Pilgrimage



On 28 June Pope Francis hosted the Grand Master of the Order of Malta Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto. Particular focus was placed on the refugee crisis. At the conclusion of the private audience, Pope Francis received the new Sovereign Council of the Order of Malta (elected on 1 May) and the Order's Ambassador to the Holy See, Antonio Zanardi Landi.



WELCOME

2019 Australian HOSPITALLER

Welcome to *Australian Hospitaller* magazine, the Annual Review of the Australian Association of the Sovereign Order of Malta, for the year 2019.

Our cover story marks an historic milestone for the Order in the region with a report on the successful 9th Asia Pacific Conference held at Waurin Ponds, Geelong that welcomed participants from our Asia Pacific neighbours as well as the Grand Magistry in Rome, friends from Europe, and a record-breaking number of participants from Australia. 'Living our faith in a secular society' was the theme of the conference with a special focus on the Promise of Obedience. Working in discussion groups to facilitate input from a broad cross section of members was just one of the many highlights.

The lines next to the picture of our Grand Chancellor on this cover consist of three words, Spirit Beyond Generosity. Many of you may be thinking: What is the meaning behind this statement? How can there be a spirit beyond this wonderful virtue? Generosity is at the very heart of our Catholic faith, for God so loved the world offered his one and only son Jesus who gave his life for us.

In the second book of Paul to Corinthians, the disciple Paul tells the early Christians, that they should make the most of God's gifts and in turn share their blessings with others. (2 Cor. 9-13). Not grudgingly or through mere obligation but instead for the Glory of God.

H.E Albrecht Freiherr von Boeselager laid down a challenge to us during his visit to Australia: he wants us to go beyond generosity. He has asked us to open our hearts to do more than just serve those in need and protect our faith but to actively become part of the lives of our lords, the sick and the poor. He said "Don't just give the poor a hand out but become part of their lives".

These recent words from our Grand Chancellor tap into the message of St Paul. Don't just look after the simple material needs of our neighbours but go deeper, make a genuine connection with those in need, do not just care for them but care about them. Invest of yourself in their lives where possible and make a lasting difference through your actions. The spirit of this message was front and centre during the Asia Pacific Conference as well as during the Grand Chancellor's discussions with the new Executive Council.

Our Prelate H.E Bishop Jean Laffitte in the Journal of Spirituality issue 16 – Service to Neighbour as a Testimony of Faith, refers to a presentation given at the International Hospitallers conference titled 'The Sense of Christian Voluntary Work'.

"I thought that a generous heart should be a distinctive mark of any member of the Order, not only of those committed in actions of compassion.

"How to express this simply? A generous heart exceeds always what is strictly due in terms of justice. Our love to the sick and the poor should inspire our own personal service."

May we first look back at 2019 with gratitude and now face the challenges and opportunities for the Order in Australia in 2020 and beyond with a generous heart and all that it encompasses. ❖

John Murphy
Publisher

† As we went to print with the 2019 edition of *Australian Hospitaller* magazine, it was with great sadness that the Grand Magistry announced the death of His Most Eminent Highness the Prince and 80th Grand Master Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto on 29 April. †



Cover image: H.E Albrecht Freiherr von Boeselager attending the 9th Asia Pacific Conference in Waurin Ponds, Victoria.

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Subpriory of the Immaculate Conception
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Setting a path to

LIVING our

FAITH

The ninth Asia Pacific Conference, held in Melbourne, Australia, outlined a strategic three-year plan for the region and highlighted the Order's spirituality and progressive social and humanitarian works.



From left to right: Australian Association member Mr Jim Varghese; H.E. Reverend Monsignor Jean Laffitte, Prelate of the Order of Malta; and H.E. The Grand Hospitaller Dominique Prince de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel speak at the 2019 Asia Pacific conference, with an agenda focused on the Order of Malta's priorities and plans at a national and international level.

On 21 November, Grand Chancellor H.E. Baron Albrecht Freiherr von Boeselager took to the stage at a pivotal moment for the Asia Pacific associations of the Order. A group of 98 delegates from across the region gathered to hold their annual conference for the first time in Victoria at the Waurin Ponds Estate Geelong.

The Grand Chancellor was encouraged by the Asia Pacific's growth in recent years, but stressed the importance that the Order of Malta "must do more for the sick and poor and cannot get distracted from our mission". He was motivated by the regional plans presented at the conference to expand Hospitaller activities and urged members to be actively involved with works, stating "we must go beyond being generous. We need to be with the poor to be part of their lives".

The setting was a suitable one for the Grand Chancellor to discuss the reforms the Order was undertaking. He outlined steps that have been taken to modernise the Order's operations before anticipated amendments to our statutes are implemented. The priority for the future will be to employ the professed in the first class in the works of the Order in circumstances where they will be expected to live in community, and continue the Order's devotion to hands-on work in caring for society's poor and the sick.

The theme of the conference was 'Living our

Faith in a Secularised World' and the agenda focused on priorities and plans at a national and international level for both the Order of Malta's charitable works and defence of the faith initiatives.

This theme was explored throughout the conference which ran for three days to 24 November. In addition to the Order's Grand Chancellor, the event was attended by high charges from Rome including H.E. The Grand Hospitaller Dominique Prince de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel and H.E. Reverend Monsignor Jean Laffitte, Prelate of the Order of Malta. They were accompanied by Confrère Baron Eugenio Ajroldi di Robbiate, the Director of Communications and Mrs Daniela Bonucci, the Chief of the Order's Internal Affairs Department. Also in attendance was Confrère Dr Constantin von Brandenstein-Zeppelin, a past president of Malteser Hilfsdienst in Germany.

The focus of the first day was for each country to outline their priorities and plans for the next three years. It was an opportunity for members to learn and share ideas. Each country was asked to present their priorities and strategies to achieve them. They were also asked to detail their involvement for the following international activities: Lourdes and Holy Pilgrimage, Youth Camp, Timor-Leste Medical Clinic, World Day of the Poor.

Following opening remarks by the Grand Chancellor, the Prelate shared some remarks

regarding the Promise of Obedience.

"It should become clearer that it is not about a decoration or a promotion, but the response to a specific vocation to serve the Order in an organic and continuous manner, received by one who already lives the charisma of Malta and who works to give concrete form in his or her life to the Obsequium Pauperum and Tuitio Fidei," said H.E. Reverend Monsignor Jean Laffitte. "To become an obedient requires years of experience, service and spiritual maturation."

Professor David Kissane, Procurator of the Subpriory of the Immaculate Conception delivered the third paper on obedience. His remarks included more specific reference to the Australian Subpriory, its history, its growth since conception, and the formation process.

"Before taking this Promise of Obedience, we need to work hard at deepening our spirituality, and thus establish the routine, the practice, and the habit, which will help to sustain the lifestyle," said Professor David Kissane. "Formation helps us to do this over a year of preparation."

Following the presentations on Obedience, delegates broke off into eight groups to discuss the difference an increase in members in obedience would make to the future of the Order. These discussions were then presented to the wider conference.

After the topic of obedience, regional and

international hospitaller activities were the focus of the afternoon session. The Grand Hospitaller introduced the World Day of the Poor 2019 video and then spoke on the works of the Order across the globe.

"The help and support provided should not be understood as the strong helping the weak," said the Grand Hospitaller.

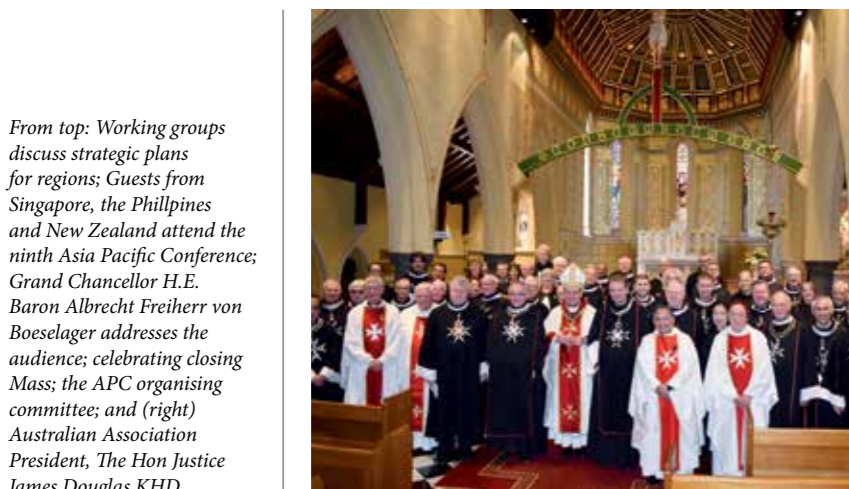
"Disease, disability and need should not be seen as a sign of weakness, but, with your personal support and involvement, as a shared moment of Christian love. In my personal experience as a volunteer in the various Hospitaller works of our Order, I always try to keep that in mind. I try to meet everyone at the same eye level. The eight-pointed cross is my ally. It has always been my source of inspiration."

Regional activities undertaken in 2019 and plans for 2020 followed. The National Hospitaller for Australia, John Murphy, provided an overview of the Asia Pacific's activities including Lourdes Experience Singapore, World Day of the Poor, and Australia's inaugural National Day celebrations.

On 17 November, the Sovereign Order of Malta once again organised numerous initiatives to celebrate World Day of the Poor and bear witness to its daily presence alongside people in need, in 120 countries around the world through 80,000 volunteers and 55,000 members and employees. Australia's inaugural National Day from 12 to

"We have to go from hand out to hands on. We must go beyond being generous. We need to be with the poor to be part of their lives."

- H.E. The Grand Chancellor, Albrecht Freiherr von Boeselager



From top: Working groups discuss strategic plans for regions; Guests from Singapore, the Philippines and New Zealand attend the ninth Asia Pacific Conference; Grand Chancellor H.E. Baron Albrecht Freiherr von Boeselager addresses the audience; celebrating closing Mass; the APC organising committee; and (right) Australian Association President, The Hon Justice James Douglas KHD.

13 November 2019 was a wonderful launchpad to inform parishioners about the work of the Order both nationally and internationally. John said it was successful in attracting new volunteers and supporters, and it is hoped more regions will expand and grow these events in the coming years.

Desirée Jebesen, National Hospitalier for Hong Kong presented an energetic and inspiring report on the 2019 Asia Pacific Youth Camp. She then handed the floor to the camp's 2020 hosts, where Danny Higgins, who is leading the project for the Australian Association, provided an overview of the project's progress.

Professor Michele Campbell, Vice President Australia, then introduced a video presentation from Confrère Alastair Furnival, Project Leader for the region's Timor-Leste Medical Clinic. She then took questions from the floor.

Video messages and presentations about the Order's works internationally were also made by Lisa Simpson, Chief Executive, Global Fund for the Forgotten People; Ingo Radtke, Secretary General, Malteser International; and Thierry Zen

Ruffinen, President CIOMAL.

Director of Communications, Eugenio Ajroldi di Robbiate, presented a lively and thought-provoking insight into the Order of Malta's communications resources, strengths and challenges. In particular he focused on current trends and the speed and consumption of media in today's society. He emphasised the power of social media and PR and encouraged attendees to embrace these communication channels.

In addition to an address to the conference delegates, Dr. Constantin von Brandenstein-Zeppelin also participated in a smaller group discussion with the Hospitaliers.

He shared with delegates the various models employed by associations with established volunteer structures. He suggested that growing associations wishing to expand their volunteer activities and volunteer base have clarity in their model, and provided 'tried and tested' recommendations and strategies to recruit, manage and inspire volunteer entities.

Professor David Kissane took the floor to discuss the activities and initiatives of the Defence of Faith Panel Australia. This

presentation generated much discussion from the floor with questions for Professor Kissane and the high charges from Rome around how as individuals, members can be active in the current climate and the challenges they are facing.

A critical component of the conference was the much-enjoyed team discussions. Four topics related to growth, formation, engagement and living our faith were allocated to eight teams. The team facilitators submitted summaries of their deliberations.

After the conference, presidents and heads of the seven countries represented at the conference drew up goals based on the topics deliberated: growing membership, selection and formation of new members, re-energising members into active life of the Order, and promoting Christian culture in the secular world of the 21st century.

The conference officially closed with comments from the Australian Association's President, The Hon Justice James Douglas KHD and handover to the Hong Kong Association for the 2020 APC with the provisional dates 21 - 24 October 2020. 🇻🇪



ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

In this year's President's Report, the **Hon Justice James Sholto Douglas KHD** highlights the achievements of the Australian Association of the Sovereign Order of Malta and shares a reminder of the Order's commitment to the sick and the poor.

The election of the new Executive Council, declared on 31 August 2019, initiated the next chapter in the story of the Order in Australia. The executive members are as follows:

- President**
Confrère the Hon Justice James Sholto Douglas
- Vice President**
Consoeur Professor Michelle Campbell
- Chancellor**
Confrère Scott Robert Samson
- Treasurer**
Confrère James Gurry
- National Hospitaller**
Confrère John Murphy
- Hospitaller North Eastern Region –**
Confrère Danny Higgins
- Hospitaller Central Eastern Region –**
Confrère Dr John Stephen Quain
- Hospitaller South Eastern Region –**
Confrère David Blackwell
- Hospitaller Northern Central Region –**
Confrère Seán Clement Parnell
- Hospitaller Southern Central Region –**
Confrère Noel Mifsud
- Hospitaller New Zealand –**
Confrère Dr Gregory Coyle

Confrères Daniel Kwok and Anthony Gerada continue as the appointed Delegate and Vice-Delegate of Communications and provide the element of continuity between the Transitional Council and the new Executive. Their energies provide vital contributions to the continuing work of the Order.

We are all deeply indebted to the members of the Transitional Council, particularly the former President, Dr Ian Marshall; the Pro-Chancellor, Mr Sean Farrell; the Pro-Treasurer, Dr Stephen Christie; and the National Hospitaller, Dr Robert Costa, as well as to the regional hospitaliers. Dr Marshall in particular has worked tirelessly for the Order for many years and has been valuable as a resource to be consulted in helping maintain the Order's continuity under our new Executive.

Significant developments

This is a time of change and opportunity for the Order. May we listen to each other carefully and embrace the future with hope and glad hearts.

The new regional structure, designed to emphasise our national nature and to help us cooperate more effectively within Australia and with our neighbours in the Asia Pacific region, is beginning to have effect.

This was particularly obvious in the successful Asia Pacific Conference held in November 2019, principally outside Geelong in Victoria. I have reported about the conference more fully previously, and this magazine addresses it in more detail. Our engagement in the conference was truly national. Its organisation depended heavily on the co-operative work of the National Hospitaller, John Murphy, and his team from across the country. John and Daniel Kwok led much of the preparation, as well as the organisation during the conference.

The most important message from our discussions was that the Order's members should become more actively involved in continuing to help the poor and sick. This is the appropriate way to develop the spiritual side of our activities, and indeed our own spirituality. That was the lesson from the Grand Master, which I conveyed from my meeting with him in Rome in late October. The Grand Chancellor, Albrecht Freiherr von Boeselager, who was present at the conference, also emphasised that we should go beyond the giving of handouts and develop a continuing relationship with those we assist in the everlasting task of reducing misery in the world.

This is consistent with Pope Francis's core message about what we need to do as followers of Christ. It is beautifully expressed by St Teresa of Avila:

"Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world..."

There was much discussion at the conference about how we could provide better access to palliative care, especially in Australia, as our particular contribution to the work of the Church. Should we focus on that as our area or on some other desirable object? It is for us all to consider.

Key goals

In identifying some of the many gaps in caring for the most vulnerable in Australia,

which the Order can help fill, it is evident that we need to increase our membership, as well as increase the proportion of members in obedience, deepening their spiritual lives in the Order. We also need to be active in attracting volunteers.

Those dual aims of better defining the work we do and increasing our member numbers are inextricably linked. A clearer identification of our work will help us to answer the question posed by most prospective members: what does the Order do? We answer that question today by reference among other things to our work in palliative care, relief of drug dependency and in providing assistance to the homeless. We also help support the international Order's clinic in Dili. But much of that assistance is provided by our fundraising more than by our members' direct personal involvement with the poor and sick. That is where the challenge lies. How can we rise to the challenge?

One unexpected opportunity presented itself to our members from the terrible bushfires that have afflicted south-eastern Australia since the end of 2019. Fortunately, the Order had some funds in reserve earmarked for use in natural disasters. Our enterprising national and regional hospitaliers in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia have used those funds and money raised from members and friends of the Order, including branches in the United States and Canada, to provide direct help to families and individuals worst affected.

Members of the Order delivered help in the form of fuel and food vouchers directly to parishioners identified by parish priests in the hardest hit areas. We expect to provide continuing assistance and moral support to those who need the help over the coming months and possibly years. The generosity of our consoeurs and confrères here and overseas has been particularly encouraging. We hope to thank our American and Canadian friends in person at Lourdes. At the time of writing, Malteser International launched a fundraising campaign for bushfire affected communities on its website.

Our other major focus as an Order is defence of the faith. Members of our Defence of the Faith panel have provided us with useful working papers on religious freedom, euthanasia and the seal of the confessional to assist individual members who make

Australian Association President, The Hon Justice James Douglas KHD met with Grand Master Fra' Giacomo dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto in Rome, Italy in October 2019.



representations to politicians and others.

Several members work in the field of bioethics where we are linked with the International Association of Catholic Bioethics based in Canada in defending the Catholic viewpoint in that complex area of current discourse. The Order helped sponsor a bioethics conference in Melbourne in September 2019, and the field is one where we shall continue to focus our energies.

This year, the Executive Council will develop a strategic plan to help drive what we do in the future. In this, we will have regard to a survey of members conducted in January 2020, and to ideas developed in the process.

Reforming our structures

Our statutes will be modernised to recognise our new national structure, and a subcommittee is examining how best to do that. We have also formed a Finance, Audit and Risk subcommittee to examine and evaluate how we perform our current work, and how best to vet proposals for new work.

We wish to re-engage with members who have become less active in their work for the Order. Anthony Gerada, Vice-delegate for Communications, is developing one new tool to assist in the form of a smartphone app, modelled on one used by the Order in America. It promises to be extremely useful as a way of keeping in touch with each other across the country, for informing members of the Order's activities, and providing convenient access to the resources needed to develop members' spiritual life in the Order.

We are also developing common national programs for the selection and preparation of new members. The hope is that such procedures will influence similar rules in the Asia Pacific branches of

the Order. We are encouraging more of our existing members to take the Promise of Obedience as one way of developing their own spiritual life within the Order. The proportion of members in Obedience has been steadily increasing under the leadership of Professor David Kissane, the Procurator of the Subpriory of the Immaculate Conception.

Projects

There is a continuing need to support the Order's medical clinic in Dili. It has been taken on, particularly by the Vice President, Professor Michelle Campbell. Her efforts have helped secure more of the ongoing funding that the clinic needs. We remain confident that it will continue to provide the valuable service to the poor for which it has become known in Timor-Leste.

The Vice President also has a special responsibility for our overseas relations, particularly in the Asia Pacific region. Professor Michelle is well equipped for the role. She has been Executive Dean and Professor of the Faculty of Health Sciences at Australian Catholic University since 2011, a very large faculty that draws students from all over the region.

I have emphasised the Order's expectations that we should be engaged in hands-on work with the poor and sick. I recognise, however, that many of our members have reached an age where that is no longer easy or even possible. Each of us can, however, assist in the work of the Order by providing financial assistance and by our devotion to its spiritual life. As the Grand Chancellor emphasised at APC 2019, the Order is our spiritual home and should be the main object of our charitable donations.

May we all, therefore, adhere to that spirit of deep and generous Christian devotion demanded of us in the Order's daily prayer. 🙏

"This is a time of change and opportunity for the Order. May we listen to each other carefully and embrace the future with hope and glad hearts."



SUBPRIORY PROCURATOR

Professor David Kissane AC KMG (Ob) reports on the Subpriory of the Immaculate Conception.

Members in Obedience reside within the lay religious community of our Subpriory, while engaging in parallel with the Australian Association for their Hospitaller works. There were 35 members of the Subpriory during 2019. Retreats were held in February and August 2019, and eight members were engaged in preparation to take their Promise of Obedience.

Highlights for the Subpriory in 2019 included:

- In February, Confrere Richard Caesar-Thwaytes took the Promise of Obedience during Mass, concelebrated by Fathers O'Collins and Lenehan, Conventional Chaplains of the Subpriory, at the Carmelite Convent in Kew, Victoria.
- In February, at the Campion Retreat Centre in Kew, Fr Gerald O'Collins led a retreat in which 24 members took part.
- In May, a Chapter General of the Order was held in Rome, at which a new Grand Commander was elected, H.E. Fra' Ruy Gonçalo do Valle Peixoto de Villas Boas, Professed Knight in Solemn Vows. Fra' Ruy is from Portugal and is the High Charge responsible for members of the Order in Obedience.
- Several members of the Subpriory took part in May in the annual pilgrimage of the Order to Lourdes and supported the Irish Association in their care of malades.
- In June, Confrère Justin Harkiewicz took the Promise of Obedience during Mass, celebrated by Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP, Conventional Chaplain ad Honorem at the Church of St Benedict in Sydney. Confrère Harkiewicz had travelled from Shanghai, where he is a member of the Hong Kong Association, to give his witness to Christ during our National Assembly.
- A Subcommittee of the Subpriory, led by Confrère Daniel Kwok, completed a Guideline to Formation for members of the Association seeking to undertake Preparation for Obedience.
- In August, at the Canisius Retreat Centre in Pymble, New South Wales, Fr Geoffrey Plant led a retreat in which 15 members took part.
- A Subcommittee of the Subpriory, led by Confrère Ian Leitch, developed a prayer book for members entitled *A Spiritual Companion*, and published this with the generous assistance of Confrere John Murphy.
- In November, several members of the Subpriory took part in the 9th Asia Pacific Conference (APC) held at Deakin University's conference centre in Victoria. The Prelate of the Order,



H.E. The Grand Chancellor and H.E. The Grand Hospitaller attended the APC as the Region reported on its Hospitaller activities across its varied associations.

- During 2019, we have been delighted to have several members proceed with their preparation for their Promise of Obedience: Consoeurs Lillian Antonelli and Margaret O'Donnell, and Confrères Sauro Antonelli, Geoffrey Horgan, Gerard O'Donnell, Sean Parnell, Frank Testa, and Confrère Collin Yap from the Singapore Association.

Now that the Australian Association has held elections and established a new National Council, the Grand Commander has asked the Subpriory to hold a Chapter early in 2020 for the purpose of electing a new Regent and Advisory Council of the Subpriory.

This will therefore be the final report that I present as Procurator of the Subpriory. I take this opportunity to most deeply thank all members of the Subpriory for the generous support they have given me during my tenure as Procurator. I especially thank those members who served on the Transitional Advisory Council that have supported me during this period and assisted in the overall administration of the Subpriory. ✖



A PIECE OF HISTORY

Master to fallen knight.

The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist, by Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, is renowned as one of the most iconic of the 17th Century.

The entrance and adjacent window on the main façade of the Grand Master's Palace in La Valetta is more than just a tourist's viewpoint. It's a world-famous landmark, admired by art aficionados the world over. This is because it serves as the background in the renowned painting *The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist*, by Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1571–1610).

The masterpiece is so famous, it's been described as: "The painting of the 17th Century".

The painting is characteristic of Caravaggio's chiaroscuro technique, that is the use of strong contrasts between dark and light. It was a technique he popularised throughout his works, which focused on momentous scenes featuring violent struggles, torture and death. True to its namesake, this particular painting depicts the execution of John the Baptist. He is in the act of being beheaded, while nearby Salome stands with a golden platter for the head. Another woman stands by shocked at the wrongful killing, while a jailer issues instructions to the executioner. These details of the scene are not from the Bible, but rather from the *Golden Legend*, a collection of biographies of saints by Jacobus de Voragine.

Violence and death are themes that followed Caravaggio both in art and in life. The artist fled Milan after murdering a man in a fight, and subsequently received a death sentence. He ended up in Malta seeking refuge. He was briefly feted on his arrival in Malta and was even accepted into the Order of Saint John. This now famous painting was received in lieu of his passagio – his payment due to enter the Order. His time as a Knight lasted only six months, after which he was defrocked in absentia as a "foul and rotten" member by the Order.

The painting, however, remained in Malta. Today, it is still on display in the Oratory of the Co-Cathedral of Saint John in Valetta. Visitors can look closely to find Caravaggio's signature, placed in the red blood spilling from Saint John's cut throat. It is the only known painting to bear Caravaggio's signature. ✖



Above: Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio
Main image: Oratory of the Co-Cathedral of Saint John in Valetta.



NATIONAL HOSPITALLER

HANDS ON

A report on the Australian Association's hospitaller activities by John Murphy KMG reveals a busy year for the Order, reaffirming a commitment to increase our direct work with the poor and sick in our society.



Council, in particular overseeing the Coats for the Homeless program, working with the Timor-Leste clinic as well as leading the pilgrimage to Lourdes.

Thank you also to all of our new regional Hospitaliers who have taken to their roles with much enthusiasm confrères Greg Coyle, Sean Parnell, Danny Higgins, Stephen Quain, David Blackwell and Noel Mifsud.

Coats for Homeless

Our coats program has had its biggest year to date with distribution of 6000 during the colder months of 2019. Specifically designed 'coats for the homeless' are distributed in capital cities in Australia and New Zealand during the colder months of the year providing warmth and protection from the rain. Members and volunteers are rostered to take these coats to those in need as well as partner entities who facilitate distribution in some areas we are not present in yet.

Care packs

As a new extension to our coats for the homeless we have created programs to distribute 'care packs' that contain articles such as water, sunscreen, toiletries and sanitary items. This enables us to engage with the homeless throughout the year and in the warmer months and these have been expanded to all regions in 2019. This was initiated in our Central Eastern region but has now been trialled and rolled out in North Central, North Eastern and South Eastern and will continue to expand to make it a national program.

Aged and Palliative care

Most of our regions have a variety of volunteer work in the area of aged and palliative care, in particular our South Eastern region who are involved in Eastern Palliative Care although there is a lot more we can be doing in this area of need in all

states. Currently, our work includes Lourdes Day Mass in each region, biography writing program and visits to aged people's homes. Palliative care leaders have now been appointed in each region and there will be a renewed emphasis to make this a national focus.

Indigenous peoples

Our Northern Central region work closely with indigenous Australians with food, clothing, blankets and also a breakfast program that offers children nutritious breakfast at school to ensure they have at least one good meal a day. This is unusual in Australia as all children are fed breakfast at home.

NEW ACTIVITIES

Order of Malta National Day

To coincide with the Feast day founder Blessed Fra' Gerard, members across the country spoke at Churches to inform parishioners about the work of the Order both nationally and internationally. After Mass, members were available to answer questions about our activities and distributed information brochures, Lourdes Holy Water, Rosary beads and prayer material. The goals were to improve knowledge of the Order of Malta and its activities, attract new volunteers and supporters, and promote health and solidarity.

National Day is a wonderful opportunity to not only improve the wider community's knowledge about our activities, but to give them the opportunity to volunteer and support our projects.

Third World Day of the Poor

Several regions took part in the Third World Day of the Poor. This was the second time we have been involved and we have expanded the activities considerably since 2018. The activities ranged from breakfast with the homeless to the delivery of care packs and serving evening meals as a

group to the homeless. It was an opportunity to raise awareness of the homeless and mark this day dedicated to their care. We were able to utilise social media very effectively and share our activities with our members and followers.

NATIONAL PILGRIMAGE AND REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Timor-Leste Medical Clinic

The Australian Association is involved in funding and oversight of the medical clinic that is functioning at a level of 600 local patients treated monthly. The current staff consists of 1.5 doctors, two nurses, a receptionist, a driver and a part-time accountant.

Lourdes 2019

Australia took part in the 2019 yearly pilgrimage. The plan required a synchronisation of three programs – international, Irish and Asia Pacific. The delegation was comprised of: Hong Kong – 31, Korea – 10, Australia – 11. The Australian Association had planned to take malades from our country to Lourdes for the first time in 2020. This will now occur in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bushfire appeal and response

Like all Australians, and indeed the rest of the world, it was with great sadness that many parts of Australia where besieged by bushfires with heartbreaking footage of families losing everything as bushfires raged.

The Order of Malta Australia launched a Disaster Relief Fund that has so far raised approximately \$100,000 thanks to the generous support of our members and friends Malteser International and associations around the globe. In particular, the three United States and Canadian associations have been very generous with large financial donations.

The initial response was aimed at having an immediate impact on those affected and offer our members an opportunity for direct involvement and, if possible, 'hands on' assistance. The first level of response incorporated cash and food vouchers delivered directly to those affected through their local Parishes to give immediate relief. Members have visited the affected areas and joined victims in prayer and made introductions with locals someone to talk to.

Confrère Frank Testa is the coordinator for our bush fire relief program leading the initiatives that will aid the victims of this disaster for the months and years to come.

Needs are changing constantly. The next phase in the bushfire crisis is recovery and rebuilding of communities which will be ongoing for months and years. We have commenced programs of visitations and assistance at a very local level and these will continue to develop and be rolled out in 2020. Supporting outreach programs financially and having our members actively involved in the bushfire-stricken areas in East Gippsland and Southern New South Wales is the priority. 🇺🇦

Towns like Conjola on the New South Wales South Coast were flattened after a bushfire tore through on New Years' Eve. The Order of Malta Australia will continue to support locals directly affected via outreach programs.





North Eastern Region Hospitaller: Danny Higgins KMG and Derek Pingel KMG

The North Eastern Region of the Order of Malta Australia provides support across the State of Queensland and far north New South Wales.

With a population of just over five million people, an Order membership base of 34 and around 70 volunteers, we face many challenges. Despite the obstacles, our members have continued to find ways to reach out into more rural and remote areas.

This year, we welcomed two new members at the biennial investiture celebrations in Sydney. At all times we welcome interest from potential members seeking spiritual enrichment in their lives and wanting to make a difference in the lives of those in real need throughout this community.

ORDER OF MALTA AUSTRALIA NORTH EASTERN REGION 2019 ACTIVITIES Coats for the Homeless

In 2019, more than 40 different outreach services and organisations partnered with Coats for the Homeless to expand the service across a broad area and distribute almost 1700 coats. The program has come to be recognised as making a significant difference in the lives of the homeless throughout our region and continues to be embraced by our membership.

Deep gratitude is expressed to David Simon and the team at Simon National Carriers. They provided bulk transportation

of coats throughout Australia in an efficient and timely manner. This service was provided at a very heavily discounted price for which we are sincerely grateful.

While this activity remains our most significant work, there are now other avenues of assistance being developed providing our members more hands-on opportunities to fulfil the charisms of our Order.

This year, a fundraising dinner was held with the support of our Chaplain Father Gerard McMorrow, with more than 80 guests attending and raising several thousand dollars for the purchase of coats for the homeless. One hundred dollars will buy three specially designed, warm shower-proof coats for those who need them.

Lourdes Healing Mass

On 17 August 2019, Saint Paschal's Church, Wavell Heights, hosted the 2019 Lourdes Healing Mass, which was very well attended. Magistral Chaplains, Fathers David Pascoe and Gerard McMorrow celebrated this very special Mass with assistance by Fr James O'Donoghue.

Members and young volunteers of the Order of Malta hosted nearly 200 people to celebrate Holy Eucharist. Those in the congregation in need of healing in body, mind and spirit were able to receive an anointing. A special blessing was also offered for the carers present.

Knights and Dames spent time with those in attendance and provided everyone present with bottles of Lourdes Water and Rosary packs. This activity is one of the ways in which our Order provides service to our Lords the poor and sick.

Assisting the chronically ill at St Vincents Hospital Brisbane

We are confronted nationally with a drive for legalising euthanasia. As such, our regional Order is proud to support the palliative care unit at St Vincent's Hospital in Kangaroo Point. Through the hospital's volunteering program, members and volunteers visited patients. We also provide funding for a service allowing patients to enjoy a favoured tittle to help bring a relaxing moment of comfort in their illness.

We hope to have a much greater hands-on involvement in palliative care in the years ahead. We honour always the late Consoeur Tess Cramond who has left an incredible legacy in her commitment to caring for those at the end of life, which can be a most difficult time.

Care Packages

Late 2019 saw the launch of our regional Hygiene Care Pack Initiative. This initiative has members and volunteers partnering with Rosies' outreach program to provide much needed toiletries and personal care products at one of the inner Brisbane outreach locations. Members and volunteers have the opportunity to make a personal connection with people who are struggling in their lives while offering practical support. This initiative has been well received and benefits from the tremendous recognition our Coats for the Homeless program has achieved.

SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES

Parish visits

Regional members strongly supported our two parish visits during the year. For Lent in March 2019, we were invited to attend The Twelve Apostles Church in the Darra Jindalee Parish. Parishioners were very interested in the history and charisms of our Order.

In November 2019, the Parish Priest, our Magistral Chaplain Fr David Pascoe, and the



local chapter of the Knights of the Southern Cross to St Peter's Church in Caboolture hosted our members. They were very interested in our outreach programs and within a matter of days had made a substantial donation to our works.

Defence of our Faith

This year, the Queensland State Government has moved to dramatically allow greater access to abortion and is currently receiving submissions regarding similar moves in the areas of assisted suicide. Excellent documents provided by the National Defence of the Faith Panel have bolstered our regional members to articulate reasoned and factual support for the right to life.

We now find ourselves in the midst of another state government push to legalise euthanasia. Much is being done by our conventual Chaplain and Archbishop Mark Coleridge and our Order is taking up the fight in every venue and avenue possible.

OTHER INITIATIVES

Young Order of Malta Volunteers

After the Transitional Council agreed to streamline and unify some consistency around our young volunteers and their involvement within our Order activities, it is pleasing that these volunteers are now recognised as Young Order of Malta Volunteers. Our North Eastern Region has a vibrant group of young volunteers who continually support every activity of the Order. We look forward to opening up the opportunities for this group to commence their own Hospitaller outreach, spiritual activities and volunteer recruitment.

Regional Housing Hub

Our Order continues its involvement in the regional hub in Toowoomba with the provision of Coats for the Homeless and other support at events run within the housing hub, generally around the Darling Downs

region. This year, support has expanded to entities serviced by this organisation.

External Sponsorship Support

The North Eastern Region Order of Malta has sponsored the Order of Malta Prize for Excellence in Palliative Care for many years. It is awarded to a second year Bachelor of Nursing student studying the unit NRS259 Promoting Health in Extended Care, who constantly shows a positive attitude towards the subject matter of end-of-life care and ageing. This year's winner was Karen Fisher-Smith, an inspirational and worthy winner.

Advent Mass and Dinner

On 10 December 2019, members and guests combined with parishioners of Our Lady of Angels Parish Chermide West/Wavell Heights to celebrate our annual Advent Mass and dinner. There was a tinge of sadness as Magistral Chaplain Fr Gerard McMorrow will be leaving the parish for his new appointment to Southport Parish on the Gold Coast early in 2020. The Order regionally has received strong support and hospitality from the Our Lady of Angels parish. Parishioners have been major sponsors of our Coats for the Homeless campaign from its inception.

Member Recognition

During 2019, individual members of our region have received various honours and awards for their contributions both to the Order and the wider Catholic community.

Confrere Ashley Goldsworthy was invested into the Papal Knighthood of the Order of St Sylvester the Martyr, and Danny Higgins received the Community Leader of the Year Award from the Catholic Leader Newspaper.

Danny was humbled by the award and commented that he draws strength from Christ's example as he ministers to those who suffer from poor mental health. His commitment in continually assisting those with severe mental health conditions is a great example of how we as members can make a difference with our service to those in most need. Congratulations Danny for your commitment in this area of service.

November 2019 also saw Confrere Adam Walk ordained to the Permanent Diaconate for the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

Transitional Council Hospitaller Derek Pingel KMG

The North Eastern region expresses its thanks to the outgoing Regional Hospitaller Confrere Derek Pingel for his tireless work both for the region's projects, administration and spiritual development and also for his contributions at a national level during his membership of the Transitional Council. Derek has served during a period of change and development, truly forgetful of himself, for the benefit of our Order.

Almost 1700 coats for the homeless were distributed across more than 40 different outreach services and organisations in 2019.





Central Eastern Region Hospitaller: Dr Stephen Quain KMG and Mark Boffa KMG

The Central Eastern Region has had an active 12 months, highlighted by hosting the Biennial Conference from 31 May to 2 June 2019 in Sydney.

There were 112 registrants for the Assembly held in Sydney at The Hilton Hotel. This year's theme was 'Embracing The Challenge' and we were fortunate and very grateful to have high quality addresses from Senator Amanda Stoker, Justice Dyson Heydon, Commissioner Robert Fitzgerald, Bishop Vincent Long, Monica Doumit, Director of Public Affairs from the Archdiocese of Sydney, and Dr Trudy Dantis, Director of the Australian Catholic Bishop's Conference, National Centre for Pastoral Research.

All the addresses were stimulating, thought provoking and ensured appropriate questions and discussion. A particular highlight was former Prime Minister, The Honourable John Howard's after-dinner address, which discussed the issues of religious freedom in Australia.

Coats and the Community Care Van
The Coats for the Homeless program

continued under the leadership of Confrère Ben Franklin. Once again, an estimated 3000 coats were distributed, not only within inner city Sydney and Parramatta but also in provincial areas through other agencies such as the St Vincent de Paul Society. In the inner city, we were again very fortunate to have the assistance and support of trained nurses from St Vincent's Mental Health and Homeless Nursing Unit. Their support ensured that in addition to giving out the coats in the colder months or water, sunscreen and hats in the warmer months, any homeless person requiring medical attention was duly attended to.

Mass for Deceased Members

Monsignor Tony Doherty, our Senior Chaplain in the Sacred Heart Hospice Chapel celebrated Mass for our deceased members in October.

Spiritual activities and defense of the faith

Our Chaplains continued to celebrate our Friday Vigil Masses with around 15 to 20 members attending. To increase numbers, members have been reminded of our

obligation for regular involvement in the Order's spiritual activities.

Scheduled members' meetings were not held in April and June due to the Biennial Assembly and then the election of the new National Executive. Meetings resumed in November. We were very pleased to have our new President, His Honour, Justice James Douglas, address us on that occasion.

Our annual Day of Reflection was again held at the Mary MacKillop Centre in North Sydney on 17 August. Chaplain, Fr Danny Meagher led the Mass with 35 members in attendance. In the two days prior, the Subpriory held its Sydney retreat at Canisius College conducted by Fr Geoffrey Plant.

On Sunday 15 September 2019, members celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Philermos at St Mary's Cathedral with the Maltese Community, with readings in English and Maltese.

Membership

Seven candidates continued to attend preparatory sessions prior to the Vigil Masses at least five times through the year under the guidance of Monsignor Doherty.



While the 'Drinking from the waters of faith' program remained the mainstay, it is expected to expand next year to include podcasts, as well as other readings relevant to the Catholic faith, particularly in our turbulent times today.

Again, we remain grateful to Monsignor Doherty for his guidance and support with this program.

Volunteer support

There has been a transition in the rostering which now has also come under the direction of Confrère Ben Franklin. Improved ways of managing the volunteer roster and ensuring availability are being explored so that programs are well supported.

Many of our volunteers, including members, have now committed to a monthly or more frequent contribution, which provides more certainty to the programs. We remain very conscious of our mission of Obsequium Pauperum and our encounters with rehabilitating drug and alcohol-affected people, as well as the homeless and those with mental health issues, which are always rewarding.

Lourdes Day Mass

On Saturday 7 December 2019, the Lourdes Day Mass

was held at St Mary's Cathedral with approximately 700 in the congregation, including 40 Knights and Dames. Due to the efforts of longstanding Confrère Malcolm Irving, assisted by Stephen Chiew, Graham Beal and Vivian Hardjono, an increased number of Malades were in attendance, despite the smoky haze over the city.

Archbishop Fisher and the Order's chaplains, Monsignor Tony Doherty, Monsignor Vince Redden and Fr Gerry Gleeson celebrated the Mass with assistance in particular from the Chief Usher and the staff of the Cathedral. This was a most moving and spiritual ceremony, particularly with the Blessing of the Malades by the Archbishop and the traditional handing out of the vials of water from the shrine of Lourdes.

Prevention and Recovery Centre

Central Eastern Region plans to financially support St Vincent's Hospital Sydney's mental health and homeless health service project in Woolloomooloo.

Modifications to the building are expected to start in 2020 once regulatory approvals are in place. This is a major project with a commitment over the next 10 years.

Left: Volunteers and members distribute an estimated 3000 coats to the homeless within inner city Sydney, Parramatta, and provincial areas. Top right: Archbishop Anthony Fisher celebrates Lourdes Day Mass.



South Eastern Region Hospitaller: David Blackwell OAM, RFD, KMG(Ob) and Sauro Antonelli AM KMG

In 1992, the Order of Malta Hospice Home Care (Vic) Incorporated was formed as a partnership of the Sisters of Charity and the Order of Malta. This home-based service was staffed by nurses, pastoral care and social workers and a core of trained volunteers. In 1997, the two partners became two of three founding partners in Eastern Palliative Care Association (EPCA).

EPCA is one of the largest Home Palliative Care providers in Australia and serves the eastern corridor of Melbourne. It provides home care services to more than 600 terminally ill persons. Consoeur Anne Hunt OAM is Chair of the EPC Board. Three of our members serve on the Board of Management and three members are on the Association.

The Order is very active in the EPCA award-winning Biography Program. Some 20 members and spouses are trained volunteers. The biography volunteers work one-on-one with a client to allow them to tell their story. The process of storytelling enables messages, philosophies, beliefs, memories and culture to pass from one person to the next. Many clients who undertake the Biography Program report a reduction in anxiety, depression, pain and breathlessness, and an increase in self-esteem. Biography recording takes place over six to 10 visits of one-hour duration.

Coats Program

Between April and September 2019, the South Eastern Region through its members and volunteers, directly and personally gave more

than 600 coats to the homeless. Our program continues to grow by serving areas of need and by responding to new areas. Order members and volunteers from Newman College accompany St Vincent de Paul Food Vans in its city rounds, covering Federation Square, South Melbourne and the Victoria Market. During the vacation period, other volunteers are enlisted. Almost 40 members are personally involved in the program together with almost 50 volunteers. We have also continued to attend the Capuchin Food Stop for the Poor in St Kilda each Monday night led by Confrère David Kissane AC.

This year, we extended our coverage into the Western suburbs as we followed new routes served by the St Vincent de Paul Food Vans to new stops in Footscray and Braybrook. We have also extended our coverage by attending at North Melbourne and the Victoria Market every Monday night, and North Melbourne every Wednesday night.

St Vincent de Paul Presidents will look to extend the program this year to the regional cities of Moe, two days weekly; Traralgon, two days weekly; Rosebud, once a week at a barbecue; and Berwick.

National Day

Members in Hawthorn, Black Rock and Toorak presented a two-minute overview of the Order from the pulpit. They explained our history, works of the order, defence of the faith and spirituality at Churches to inform parishioners about the work of the Order

both nationally and internationally. After Mass, members were available to answer questions about our activities and distributed information brochures, Lourdes Holy Water, Rosary beads and prayer material.

Outcomes from the day included increased awareness and understanding of the Order, and entries for our database of interested parties. Members also had direct contact with the community.

World Day of the Poor

On 17 November, four members of the South Eastern Region went out early Sunday morning to the inner-city area of Melbourne, around the Yarra River, to support the third year of the special initiative of Pope Francis. In doing so, we affirmed the Order's charism Obsequium Pauperum to help people in need. Water, coffee, Maccas hamburgers, socks and care packs were distributed. An additional member and three volunteers were involved in preparing the care packs.

Region General Meeting

A general meeting of the Region was held on 31 October 2019 at Our Lady of Good Counsel in Deepdene. Thirty members attended. They were invited to consider a range of topics, including reengaging members into active life of the Order, growing membership and volunteers, and creating and proposing new opportunities for members in South Eastern Region to be more involved in living out our call to love and serve the poor and the sick. These initiatives are already building a sense of community and it is wonderful to see and be a part of it.

Tasmania

Dr Peter Daale is our member in Tasmania. Peter is exploring ways as to how the Order can be expanded there. Peter attended, and contributed, to our Region meeting on 31 October 2019.

Spiritual Activities

Our Spiritual activities commenced with our Annual Retreat on Saturday 2 March 2019 at the Carmelite Monastery in Kew. Principal Chaplain of the Sub-Priory, Fr Gerald O'Collins SJ AC, led the retreat.



The second activity for the Order was Our Lady of Philermos Mass at the Newman College Chapel of the University of Melbourne celebrated by Fr Gerald O'Collins SJ AC. As in past years, leaders and members of the Maltese Community in Melbourne attend our Mass. A reciprocal invitation is always extended to members of the Order to attend the Maltese Community's Bambina Feast Mass at St Mary's in West Melbourne at 3pm on the same Sunday 8 September. Some of our members accept the invitation each year. This year, Consoeurs Sandra Berto, Alicia Deak, and Mary Galea, and Confrères Timothy Gorton and Joseph Borg attended that Mass.

Our third Spiritual activity was the Mass for the Faithful Departed. On Sunday 3 November 2019 at 10.30am members of the South Eastern Region attended the Annual Mass for the Faithful Departed at the Carmelite Monastery in Kew. The Most Rev Terence Curtin, Auxiliary Bishop of Melbourne and Conventual Chaplain ad Honorem celebrated the Mass. Members were joined by the Carmelite Sisters and local Mass attendees to pray for our deceased dearly beloved brothers and sisters of our Order. We continue to work on identifying surviving spouses of our departed members so that we can invite them to future Memorial Masses.

The fourth activity is the annual Lourdes Day Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral on 7 December 2019. The Most Reverend Archbishop Peter Comensoli celebrated Mass, and was concelebrated by the Order's Chaplains. An estimated 1200 people attended. Each received packages containing Lourdes Water, Rosary beads, and prayer material. We had 32 members in attendance with volunteers from, Mandeville Hall, Genazzano, Xavier, and De la Salle colleges.

During the year we hold Monthly Vigil Masses at



St Joseph's in Hawthorn from February to November. We also hold Lourdes Masses at Catholic aged care homes throughout the metropolitan area where members share the Gospel and Eucharist with the Lord's elderly and sick. On average, about six to eight members attend to sit and relate to the residents and their families and distribute packages containing Lourdes water, Rosary beads and prayer material.

Prison visits

Three members of the South Eastern Region participated in the prison visits ministry, which the Catholic Prison Ministry operates in Victoria. Prison Chaplains visit men and women in every prison and correctional centre in Victoria, offering emotional, spiritual and sacramental support. During prison visitation, Chaplains listen, connect, endeavour to understand and comfort people who may otherwise feel lost or abandoned and can also provide support to prisoners' family members and/or significant people in their lives.

Bioethics

The Order of Malta is extremely supportive of Catholic bioethics movements and institutions. This includes running the International Association of Catholic Bioethics, a community of bioethicists and others working in related fields to foster collaboration and promote ethics in health care and research that is informed by Catholic theological and philosophical foundations.

The South Eastern Region supported the relaunch of the Australian Catholic Bioethics Conference which ran over two sessions on Saturday 14 September 2019. The Order will also be a partner of the new Australian Catholic Bioethics Association.



Left and top: Care packs were distributed to those in need around inner-city areas of Melbourne in recognition of World Day of the Poor. Above: Around 1200 people, including representation from the youth, attended the annual Lourdes Day Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral.



Central Southern Region Hospitaller: Noel Mifsud KMG and Damian Wyld KMG

I thank my God whenever I think of you, and every time I pray for you all, I always pray with joy – Philippians 1:3-5

The Grand Master, H.M.E.H. Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto encouraged members of the Order of Malta to engage in active, hands-on involvement in service of the sick and poor and defence of the faith. This challenge echoed the words of the Holy Father in 2019 to roll up our sleeves and get our hands dirty. The following report from activities by members of the Central Southern Region in 2019 is a celebration of such hands-on work, prayer and service.

Member news

Regional Chaplain Monsignor Robert Aitken celebrated his 90th birthday on 25 May 2019. In sadder news, Confrere Professor Ivan Shearer AM, RFD, passed away on 22 July 2019 together with Confrere Dr Bob Britten-Jones AO on 8 May 2019. We pray their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Congratulations to Confrere, The Hon Gregory Crafter AO, who together with Confrere James Varghese AM, was awarded the Orders' Cross of Commander pro Merito Melitensi on 24 November 2019, following the Decree Motu Proprio of the Grand Master on 7 November 2019.

South Australian members embraced the invitation from Rome to publicly celebrate the National Day of the Order and speak about the work of the Order.

Elections of the Australian Association of the Sovereign Order of Malta

The 2019, newly elected members were reminded of their responsibility and deep commitment to service. The Central Southern Region extends a vote of thanks to the outgoing National Executive and our Regional Hospitaller Confrere Damian Wyld for their service and humble leadership. We also thank Confrere Andrew Evans who continues to serve as Treasurer for South Australia.

Snapshot 2019 Events: Coats for the Homeless

The Western Australia Members in Perth distributed 600 coats for the homeless along with regional centres of Mandurah, Albany, and Kalgoorlie. Confrere Phil Wyld coordinated the distribution of 450 coats in South Australia to urban and rural areas.

2019 film night

More than 200 people attended the annual Order of Malta Film Night in November, which raised \$4283.79 to support the Coats for the Homeless project. Funds raised will pay for 171 coats to be distributed in 2020. We were deeply appreciative

of the support given by the National Communications Office who assisted with event bookings and publicity.

National Day of the Order

Our South Australian members actively embraced the invitation from Rome to publicly celebrate the National Day of the Order on 10 November 2019. Vicar General and Administrator Delegate, Fr Philip Marshall and St Francis Xavier Cathedral staff were generous in their support of the event and accepted our invitation to speak about the work of the Order at the conclusion of Mass.

Annual retreat

We attended an annual retreat at the Jesuit Monastery in Sevenhills from 22 to 24 November 2019. Fr Rob Norris SJ led members in the three-days of prayer, discussion and fellowship. Established by the Jesuits in 1851, Sevenhills is not only a popular retreat centre but also hosts the oldest winery in Southern Australia's Clare Valley. It was a breathtaking venue to appreciate the beauty of God's creation amid the stunning hills and vines. We sincerely thank Consoeur Mary Kennedy who faithfully organises our annual retreats.

Western Australia

We are blessed to be served by five members of the Order of Malta in Western Australia.

Chaplain Monsignor Kevin Long celebrated Masses and provided spiritual guidance to members throughout 2019. Earlier in the year our previous Hospitaller Confrere Damian Wyld visited members in Western Australia. In my role as Hospitaller, I enjoyed the exchange of emails and phone calls between Western Australia and South Australia discussing issues in defence of the faith including the proposed Federal Religious Discrimination Bill.

Southern Australia

The spiritual leadership of Chaplains Monsignor Robert Aitken and Fr Allan Winter graced our members in Southern Australia. In 2019, members participated in a range of activities including the Lourdes Day Mass, held in St Xavier's Cathedral, annual Marian Procession, Biennial National Assembly, and Morning of Reflection at St Joseph's Centre, Kensington. Members also attended bimonthly meetings, spiritual and social gatherings.

While our members are engaged in many hands-on public works of charity, we are also engaged in many individual projects such as visiting the dying at Mary Potter Hospice, serving meals to the poor and homeless, fundraising for Calvary Catholic Hospital, lobbying politicians in defence of the faith issues, and actively promoting the sacrament of Marriage and Holy Orders.

Future challenges

The Southern-Central Region engages a huge geographical distance with Perth spanning more than 2600 kilometres from Adelaide.

In 2020, we will aim to bridge the geographical divide by continuing to share reflections on the Defence of the Faith to inspire united action and prayer. We will work collaboratively with the National Executive to develop a national strategy to increase volunteers and membership. Confrere Dr Ian Leitch and I are also embarking on home visits to every Southern Australian member and via email or a visit to Perth for our Western Australia members. The aim is to listen to each member and ensure their voice, concerns and reflections are heard and considered to deepen their commitment and experience in 2020.

In an email in November I wrote to our members saying that it is not easy to be a Member of our Order. Sometimes we may not have the time, funds or strength to carry out our work in the Order. I remain inspired, humbled and blessed by the witness, love and generosity of our members who roll up their sleeves in solidarity and love for the sick and the poor and in defence of the Church.

I thank my God whenever I think of you, and every time I pray for you all, I always pray with joy. ✝





Northern Central Region Hospitaller: Seán Parnell OAM KMG and Maria Randazzo DMG

On Sunday 23 June 2019, seven of us joined Fr Ched as we drove from Darwin to the Nauiyu community west of Katherine on the Daly River and south of Darwin. The population is around 450 people and is 86 per cent Aboriginal – most of whom speak English and are largely Catholic. There are 10 different language groups. The traditional owners of the land are the Malak Malak people. The area was originally a source of copper mining. The community is now equipped with a store, school, health clinic and police station.

After a two-and-a-half-hour drive south of Darwin and 230 kilometres later, we arrived at the Presbytery, originally part of a Jesuit Mission, and met up with the Principal of St Francis Xavier Catholic School, Frances

Enilane. The school is an Indigenous Catholic community school with nine teaching staff drawn from all over Australia. Local Indigenous teaching assistants support the 55 students from years one to 10. Other students are educated in Darwin.

Mass with Fr Ched was a highlight on this Sunday of Corpus Christie in the beautiful church. Dr Frances explained the purpose of our visit to some of the congregation elders, family members and teachers. She spoke of the history and charisma of the Order. A printed overview provided by the Order was handed to Frances. This overview will be helpful for those unable to attend the mass. Following Mass, several of the coats and blankets were distributed.



Coats for the Homeless distribution

Members of the Central Northern Region of the Order of Malta have distributed coats and blankets to families residing at Harts Range, Santa Theresa and the Alice Springs communities. The program has been very well received by recipient families.

Fr Asaeli Raass, who is the Alice Springs parish priest, and recently appointed Provincial of the Divine World Missionaries, has overseen the distribution of Coats for the Homeless in Central Australia with Fr Olivier, also from Alice Springs. They assisted with the logistics of the coats' distribution during visits to Harts Range.

Fr Raass and Kiim Parnell distributed the last of the coats to families from several Aboriginal Communities around Alice Springs, in particular to the elderly. Many of the elderly experience mobility issues but find the coats relatively easy to put on due to their generous size, elasticised wrists, and velcro tabs used to secure the coats. All families were very grateful for the gift of warmth given the near freezing weather during winter months. The Northern Territory contingent hopes to continue with distribution of the coats and blankets into the future, with the possible inclusion of Katherine and Tennant Creek.

Breakfast program

Since July 2019, the Northern Central Region has sponsored the breakfast program at Gray Primary School in Palmerston, Northern Territory, a small city about half an hour from Darwin. To ensure children have enough food, 42 students are provided with breakfast, 47 receive recess, and 62 students receive lunch through the program.

The Gray School Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage is 818, with the national

average 1000. Sixty-three per cent of families whose children attend Gray Primary School fall in the bottom quarter, meaning that the majority of them come from the low socio-economic sector of our society.

On Friday 16 August 2019, Principal Ms Rebekah Stapleton welcomed Consoeurs Maria Randazzo and Frances Booth at the School Assembly. They were invited to give a talk to the students explaining what the Order of Malta is and the purpose of our cooperation with the school, which is providing decent meals to assist each child to fulfil his or her full academic potential.

Solidarity with itinerants

From July to August 2019, all members in the Northern Central Region have been actively involved in donating sanitary packs to the itinerants at Ozanam House, managed by St Vincent de Paul Society. Members prepared 100 reusable bags, including shaving kits, spray bottle deodorants, small towels, paper tissues, sanitising packs, combs and liners. The donation was made in November 2019.

Further, to celebrate World Day of the Poor on Sunday 17 November 2019, members of the Northern Central Region assisted the Missionaries of Charity in feeding the homeless. Approximately 80 homeless were fed. As a hands on project for 2020, our Region will assist the Missionaries of Charity one Sunday each month in the purchase, preparation and distribution of an evening meal.

Finally, we held our annual members spiritual retreat in the second half of the year. Our Magistral Chaplain Fr Malcolm Fyfe facilitated the retreat, a wonderful event that focused upon St John Paul II's letter to the Australian Indigenous People and the Beatitudes. 🇺🇸

Members of the North Central region assisted the Sisters of Charity in feeding 80 homeless men and women in Darwin; members prepared sanitary packs for itinerants at Ozanam House, including shaving kits, spray bottle deodorants, small towels, paper tissues, sanitising packs, combs and liners.



New Zealand Hospitaller Dr Greg Coyle

There has been an increased level of activity for the Order in New Zealand thanks to older members who have greatly served our Lords the Sick and the Poor, becoming elderly and infirm themselves. This has required other members to step up and take the reins. This report outlines the activities undertaken in 2019 and provides a view of what our future might hold.

Coats for the Homeless

As with other sections of the Australasian Order of Malta, coats were distributed in Wellington and Christchurch in 2019. This year, instead of providing the coats for other charitable organisations to distribute, our small number of members walked the streets in the cold evenings in Wellington and Christchurch and gave the coats to the rough sleepers we encountered. Members also left a coat at the Central Police Station each night. We were assured that all were received with the greatest appreciation. This is a primary mission for our teams and we will be providing coats in the winter of 2020.

Mosque Shooting

Christchurch members responded admirably to the terrible shootings which occurred at the Al Noor and Linwood Mosques. Food support was provided to the members of the Mosque and offers of further support were made. We joined in prayer with our Muslim brothers and sisters at this terrible time.

Membership drive

The New Zealand Section only has 10 members and two are in retirement. We need a lot more members to achieve the goals of spiritual development, protection of the faith and service to our Lords the Sick and the Poor. To this end, in October 2019 we held an Order of Malta Mass and information evening for selected people we thought might be interested in becoming members or volunteers. We were encouraged that 20 people attended, including some from Auckland and Christchurch. Supported by the Immediate Past President of the Australian Order Dr Ian Marshall, the event was truly inspiring. After the Mass, members greeted their guests and were treated

to several presentations on the history, international activities, diplomatic service, types of membership, and formation of new members. All our members spoke of why they joined the Order and how their Christian journey of Faith has been strengthened by their membership of the Order of Malta. The evening concluded with a meal at a local restaurant. The New Zealand Hospitaller has followed up everyone who attended. Several new volunteers have resulted from the evening, including a Chaplain and a few people who are seriously considering joining the Order of Malta in 2020. We pray God's help in procuring new members in New Zealand.

Legislation reform

The issues of cannabis use, euthanasia and abortion are currently being debated in New Zealand as a proposed referendum on cannabis legalisation and euthanasia will be held at the 2020 General Election. Currently, abortion liberalisation is being debated in the Parliament. Our members (as individuals, not representing the Order) have been very active in writing letters and emails to members of parliament,

and submitting oral and written submissions to the Health Select Committee. Our members are also working closely with the New Zealand Care Alliance, which is working on a national campaign to defeat the euthanasia Bill, on which a referendum will be held in 2020.

Day of the Poor

In November 2019, we again partnered with St Vincent de Paul Wellington to take part in the "Free Shop" on the World Day of the Poor. Our members cooked on barbeques and served food to people who came to the Free Shop. Last year, more than 1500 people came and gathered clothing, homewares, bric-a-brac, and enjoyed communing with their neighbour's for good music and food. This year, we offered children's stories where one of our volunteers sat and read to children a book of their

choice. We thanked God for the fine weather the great turnout and the very successful hands on event.

Chaplains

Fr James Lyons of Wellington is to become appointed as a New Zealand Chaplain. It is hoped we can find another Priest in the South Island to also serve us as Chaplain. We pray for a successful outcome of these endeavours in 2020.

Order of Malta Asia Pacific Conference and Lourdes Pilgrimage

Two New Zealand members attended the Order of Malta Asia Pacific Conference in Melbourne in November 2019. Two members and a volunteer had committed to make the Lourdes Pilgrimage in 2020. Sadly, the pilgrimage was cancelled due to COVID-19.

Administration

As a result of changing few office bearers, we have changed our bank signatories and recently submitted our annual accounts to the New Zealand Charities Commission (No. CC44103) This registration enables all donations to the Order in New Zealand to be tax deductible.

The Order of Malta in New Zealand is in good heart and undergoing a reformation with new office bearers, new projects, a renewed vigour for defending the Faith, and a purposeful strengthening of connections with Confrères and Consoeurs of the Order of Malta in Australia. 

In November 2019, the New Zealand Delegation hosted a Free Shop and barbeque for members on the World Day of the Poor.





**Thailand Communications Officer:
Ken Tran**

The Catholic Church of Thailand was established 350 years ago in 1669. Presently, there are 11 Archdioceses with 526 parishes and a population of a little over 383,000 Catholics or 0.58 per cent of the total population. His Eminence Cardinal Francis Xavier Kriengsak Kovitvanit is the Head of the Church of Thailand with His Excellency Archbishop Paul Tsang In-Nam the Apostolic Nuncio to Thailand.

Last year, 2019 was the year of celebration with the 350th Anniversary of Mission Siam. His Holiness Pope Francis highlighted the celebration with congratulatory best wishes and Apostolic blessing to all Catholics in Thailand. Pope Francis also sent his Eminence Cardinal Fernando Filoni, the prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples, as a representative from the Holy See to join in the celebration. On 18 May 2019, His Eminence was the main celebrant to inaugurate the celebration of the 350th Anniversary of the establishment of the Apostolic Vicariate of Siam. During his visit, His Eminence visited the Minister at the Thai Ministry of Culture with our Magistral Chaplain, Reverend Fr. Carlo Velardo among the entourage.

Catholics of Thailand rejoiced from the official announcement of the Holy Father Pope Francis Apostolic Visit in Thailand from 20 to 23 November 2019. Members of the Order of Malta were actively involved in the preparation work to receive the Pope.

Membership

The Order of Malta Thailand started in 2009 with two members. Currently, we are one Magistral Chaplain, 13 Thai Members, four membership aspirants, one Friend of the Order, three visiting members, and three volunteers making up a total 25 in member numbers.

We are in the process of petitioning three membership aspirants – Dr. Maria Teresa Piyada Wattanasan, Dr. Lucr etia Elma



Muangkroot, and Mrs. Felisa Sida Jarungjitpracharom – to be accepted as candidates to prepare for admission as members in 2020 to bring the number of Thai members to 15.

A campaign to train Youth Volunteers for the Order of Malta activities was underway in November to December 2019.

Spiritual Activities

The Order of Malta Thailand Magistral Chaplain, Rev. Fr. Carlo Velardo SDB, held an annual retreat from 8 July 2019 for all members, membership aspirants, and volunteers at the Salesian Provincial Centre Bangkok. The retreat opened with a morning prayer, followed by a short meeting, spiritual formation, and a Eucharistic celebration. In the afternoon, Rev Fr Carlo led the afternoon prayers followed by his Tuitio Fidei talks, Belief versus Faith, and the Catholic Bible.

Our Members and Postulants attended the Eucharistic Celebration preceding every regular meeting. In 2019, we also added Spiritual Formation sessions conducted by Rev. Fr. Carlo, our Magistral Chaplain in every meeting.

Hospitaller Activities

In the winter month of December of every year, the Order of Malta Thailand purchases and sends blankets to various Dioceses for their poor in the North and North East provinces of Thailand. Last year, 300 blankets worth 17,400 Bahts (about A\$800) were donated to the Dioceses of Chiangrai, Chiangmai, Nakhon Sawan, Udon Thani, and Ubon Ratchathani to help their needy parishioners, residents, and hills tribe people.

We observe Christmas as a time of giving, love, joy, and hope to lift spirits of the forgotten sick and the poor. On 17 December 2019, our members visited and made donations to our less fortunate at the following Catholic Centres:

- Angels' Home, caring for severely handicapped children and their parents from slums.
- House of Hope, caring for 95 orphaned children aged three to nine.
- Comunita Incontrol, caring for 250 hills tribe children, and
- St. Clare Hospice, caring for 24 underprivileged terminally ill and dying AIDs patients

Visiting Elderly Home for Women in Ongkharak

On 4 May 2019, The Order of Malta Thailand visited the Elderly Home for Women in Ongkharak district of the Nakhon Nayok province in central Thailand. Members and volunteers prepared lunch for 40 people, mostly wheelchair bound residents, and dined with them while offering assistance to those with physical difficulties.

Donation of Lever Propelled Tricycles

In July 2019, 10 tricycles valued at 53,000 Bahts (about A\$2,400) were provided upon requests from the Archdiocese of Ta Rae-Nong Saeng and the Diocese of Ubon Ratchathani for the needy handicapped with aim to be self-sufficient. The tricycles gave the needy handicapped better mobility and availed them to earn their living.

Helping Flood Victims

In September 2019, the North Eastern provinces suffered heavy flooding from tropical storms Podul and Kajiki, causing 300 deaths and affected more than 400,000 households. Thirty-two provinces were inundated, the worst in Ubon Ratchathani. Despite government and private organisation aids, the peoples in Ubon Ratchathani are struggling to recover from their loss of properties and livelihoods. Members of the Order of Malta along with ex-military member friends went to Ubon Ratchathani in September to donate daily necessities to flood victims. The Order of Malta Thailand planned to return to this province on 17 November, the World Day of the Poor, to donate 1500 blankets to flood victims in Catholic and general communities.

Recognition of Members

His Eminence Cardinal Francis Xavier Kriengsak Kovitvanit, President of Catholic Bishops Conference of Thailand, invited two members of the Order of Malta – Confrère Anthony Chartsiri Sophonpanich and Consoeur Dr. Maria Therese Virachanee Phromsuntorn – to join the Executive Committee for Preparing for His Holiness Pope Francis Apostolic Visit to Thailand from 20 to 23 November 2019. Confrère Anthony Chartsiri Sophonpanich was elected to become the Vice Chair of the Fundraising subcommittee. Dr. Maria Therese Virachanee Phromsuntorn was elected as the Executive Member in charge of fundraising and seating allocation for the Order of Malta and major contributors at the Papal Mass. Members of the Order also made significant contributions toward the funds for preparation of His Holiness's Thailand visit. We were honoured and privileged to have received permission from the Holy See to wear our robes during the Papal Mass on 21 November 2019 at the National Stadium.

Furthermore, our volunteer Ken Tran was chosen as the attaché to the Director of Catholic Social Communications of Thailand in collaborating with the Assistant Director of the Holy See Press Office. He was also the foreign press relationship manager during His Holiness Pope Francis's apostolic visit to Thailand. In preparation for the event, Ken also translated various Operational Communications guidelines into Thai from the Dicastery of Communications for the Catholic Social Communications of Thailand team.

Consoeur Faustina Chavali Osathanugrah was elected the District 17 Governor during their Hong Kong Convention in September. Zonta International is a global organisation of professionals with a



mission to empower women to reach their full potential by providing services and resources. It also advocates women's dignity and their rights as a human person.

The Order of Malta Thailand, although small in number, remains inspired by our Charism of Tuitio Fidei et Obsequium Pauperum and is taking it as our foremost commitment. We are taking steps to increase our members and involve the youths in our activities to increase our strength and widen our recognition in the Catholic community. Through the Grace of God, we continue to grow so that we may better serve the sick and the poor. ✠

Members from the Order of Malta Thailand made donations to the House of Hope, caring for 96 orphaned children and Comunita Incontrol, caring for 250 hills tribe children.



**Korea Chair:
Silvano Yongmaan Park KMG**

The Order of Malta Korea consists of 13 members – four Knights, seven Dames, Magistral Chaplain Matthew Jong-chan Byeon, and H.E. Cardinal Andrew Yeom, Bailiff Grand Cross of Honour and Devotion.

We have more than 200 registered volunteers who are mostly family, friends or colleagues of members, regardless of religious background. Twenty-five volunteers participate regularly in the activities on a weekly basis each month.

Since the very early days, managing the volunteer group has been the Order of Malta Korea's core aim by which we were able to develop, expand and maintain our hospitaller works and discover the potential for future projects.

These volunteers are protected not only by the prayers we say at the beginning and end of each activity, but also by the strict health and safety guideline we practice. They are appreciated by the members and their selfless efforts are celebrated each year at a fun and music-filled year-end party we throw for the volunteers.

On 16 December, President Silvano Yongmaan Park hosted a party where nearly 100 volunteers attended. They were wildly welcomed by our members. Everyone surprised one another with their shining styles, given that we spent the entire year seeing each other only in our work uniforms, aprons, and masks. Celebrating the year of sharing over the growing number of services and volunteers felt good. We are truly grateful for all that we can share and with our wonderful volunteers.

Lunch box

In 2019, our four-year-old Lunch Box project at Catholic House of Love and Peace continued to grow. This service expanded from twice a week to four times



a week, with weekly services averaging attendance from 15 members and volunteers. A total 12,600 lunch boxes were cooked and packed through 44 services, serving an average 300 slum neighbours per service.

Nearly 50 volunteers, mostly regular volunteers who show up every month, some of them even twice a month, have participated regardless of the weather condition,

Among the forgotten neighbours in the slums whom we serve the lunchboxes regularly, there are quite a number who suffer from various types of disorder or impairment that prevent them from digesting solid food. For those in such condition, we provide rice porridge cooked with minced vegetables, helping them to recover with enough nutrition.

Jacket for Life

The Jacket for Life project kicked off in December 2018. It provides necessities for the homeless, including a special winter jacket that turns into a sleeping bag. A total of 300 jackets were distributed to the homeless near major train and subway stations in



Seoul through five services with an average three to four members. Order of Malta Korea President Silvano noticed there were 'regular' neighbours living in cardboard boxes and suggested we provide the jackets for them, too.

In our outreach work, our small group of members and volunteers were escorted by the local police officers and warmed up many hearts in the freezing night. The Order of Malta Korea is grateful for the dedication of Anna Yura Choi, Francisco Seongkyoon Lim, Bernard Jiwon Kim, Martha Kiok Jeong and Don Bosco Junyoung Maeng.

Bread for the Weekend

Our Bread for the Weekend program started in January 2019 to support seniors living in poverty. This initiative provides nutritious breads to help the disadvantaged survive the weekend. The Sisters of Mary baked the bread at a professional bakery set up thanks to Silvano's donation. Every Thursday afternoon, an average of two members packed the bread for delivery on Friday morning. A total of 9600 pieces of bread were baked and delivered through 32 services, feeding 150 underfed seniors per week.

One of these services was particularly special. On 25 April, Theresa Yoosun Chung who serves as auditor of the Order of Malta Korea, went with her mother Maria Moonim Lee and her 13-month-old daughter Lauren Kim to Sisters of Mary to pack 300 bread items. The scene was extremely touching as three generations spent the whole day serving those in need.

In May, the new "potato cheese bread" was introduced using a healthy recipe developed based on feedback collected from the seniors

to whom we give the bread at Myung Hwi Won on every Friday. The new bread is less sweet and much softer – just like they wanted.

Myung Hwi Won Lunch Service

Since September 2019, the Korean delegation started a weekly free lunch service at Myung Hwi Won, a centre for underfed seniors. Every Friday morning, 12 members and volunteers gather at the centre to cook and serve the free lunch. A total of 300 meals are served to 150 seniors per service.

Spiritual activities

Spiritual Activities in 2019 included the Year End Order of Malta Korea Mass on 31 December, Easter Mass on 21 April, and a Mass on the first Sunday of each month.

On 24 April, Fr Jong-su Kim delivered a lecture on "The Liturgical Calendar and its Meaning". Magistral Chaplain Fr Mathew Jongchan Byeon spoke to us about "Taking a Rest as Christians" on 17 July.

On 24 June, a Spiritual Retreat took place on 'Reflection on the Calling by our Lord', and on 28 September, we made a pilgrimage to Galmaemot, a Martyrs shrine in Korea.

International activities

International Activities in 2019 included the Lourdes Pilgrimage from 2 to 7 May. This was attended by six members, one potential member, two volunteers and a chaplain. A team of four participated in the Hong Kong Youth Camp which took place from 23 – 26 October.

A team led by our President attended the 9th Asia Pacific Conference in Melbourne from 21 – 24 November.

Investiture

On 26 November, the Order of Malta Korea held an investiture at Myeongdong Cathedral in Seoul. One knight and four dames were invested at a Holy Mass celebrated by H.E. Cardinal Andrew Soo-jung Yeom and co-celebrated by H.E. Archbishop Alfred Xuereb, Apostolic Nuncio to Korea, H.E. Bishop Kyu-man Cho and H.E. Bishop Jean Laffitte, Prelate of the Order of Malta. Daniel Kwok from the Australian Association was the master of ceremony, and Sean Parnell, a regional Hospitaller from Australia was delegated to represent His Most Eminent Highness the Prince and Grand Master, Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto.

The Mass was attended by Grand Chancellor H.E. Albrecht Freiherr von Boeselager, Grand Hospitaller H.E. Dominique Prince de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel and delegates from Australia, Singapore and the United States.

Following the Mass, everyone attended a private opening of an exhibition where 10 wooden crosses made out of nearly a century old worker's cart were revealed for the first time. It was a personal project of President Silvano.

A gala dinner followed the Cross exhibition. Guests included foreign ambassadors, priests and sisters who partner with us in our projects, family and friends, and most of all, their devoted volunteers. At the gala dinner, H.E. Cardinal Andrew Yeom received Bailiff Grand Cross of Honour and Devotion by Grand Chancellor H.E. Albrecht von Boeselager, gladly promising continuous support for the Order of Malta Korea.

Organisational activities

On 31 March, the Order of Malta Korea held its Annual General Meeting.

On 6 January 2020, the Order of Malta Korea held a special general assembly and elected new leadership. Silvano was re-elected as President and he appointed Francisco Sungkyoon Lim as Chancellor, Veronica Mihyun Kim as Hospitaller, William Yong-il Shin as Treasurer and Monica Young-sik Park as Secretary of the Board, with Theresa Yoosun Chung as Auditor. All appointments were agreed and supported by everyone who joined the assembly including the Order of Malta Korea chaplain, Fr. Mathew Jongchan Byeon.



Top right: In 2019 the Lunch Box service expanded to four times a week. A total 12,600 lunch boxes were prepared for an average 300 slum neighbours per week.
Right: Attendees at the Order of Malta Investiture Mass 2019 in Seoul, Korea.



THE TRUE CROSS

For the past 800 years, Church of the True Cross, considered one of the best preserved of its kind in Europe, has stood as a shrine to the Vera Cruz and the people of Segovia.



It's Good Friday at the Iglesia de la Vera Cruz, or the Church of the True Cross, in the San Marcos district of Spain, just north of the city of Segovia. The Knights and Dames of the Order gather in their robes, carrying out their sacred celebration of Lignum Crucis.

The procession passes the tombstone at the side door of the temple. The Knights and Dames are guided by an inscription on a tomb, dated 13 September 1208: "Let the founders of this temple be placed in the heavenly seat, and let those who have gone astray accompany them there."

The procession passes the exterior walls made of finely dressed stone, entering the temple, built in a Romanesque style, transcending into Gothic. They pass an opening to a small semi-circular arrow window that gives light to the temple. The members enter the circular nave (the inner temple), with its 12-sided polygon floor plan, surrounding a central two-story chamber.

The portrait of the Patroness of the Order Our Lady of Philermos looks over the procession, next to the Order's Patron Saint John the Baptist.

The Order's old and new flags fly proudly in the temple.

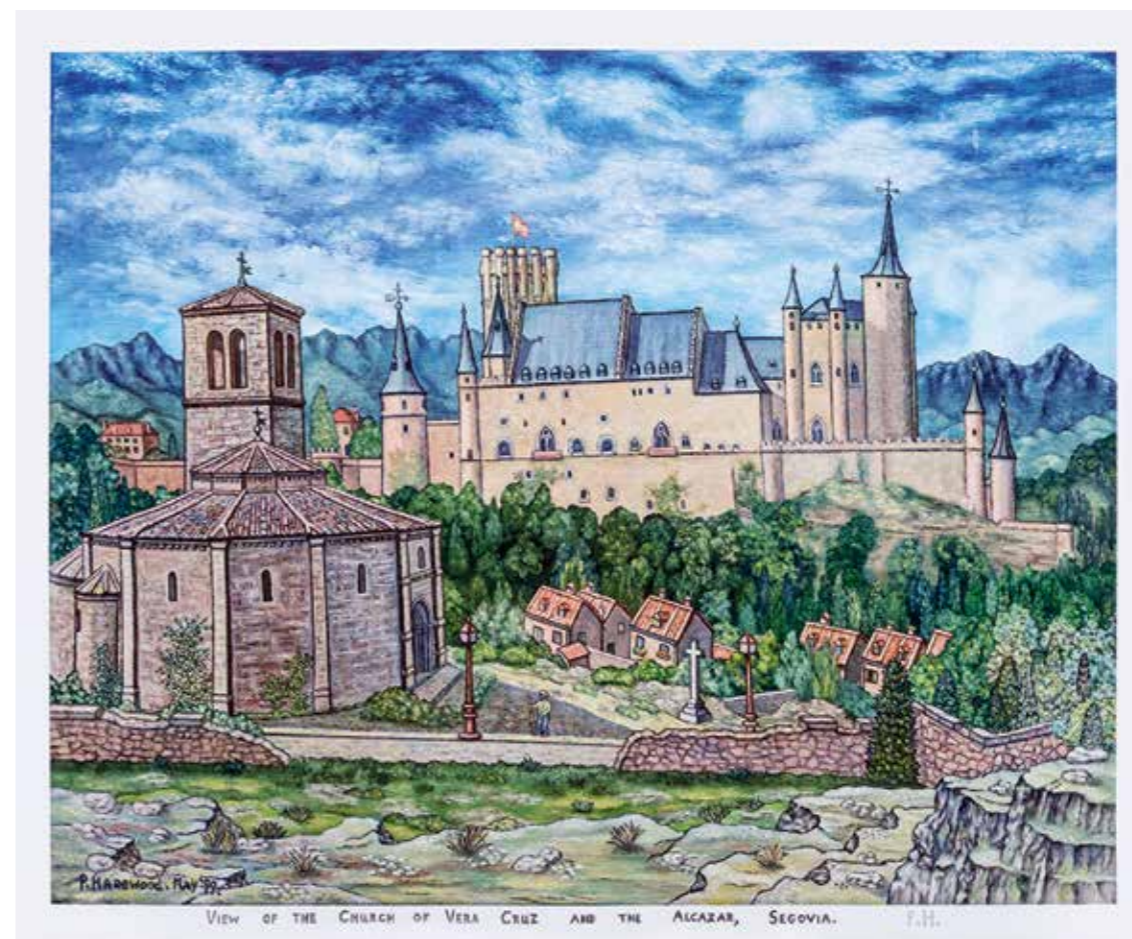
- The State flag of the Sovereign Order of Malta and flag of Saint John and the original eight Langues of the Order
- Langue of Auvergne
- Langue of Italy

- Langue of Castilla y León
- Langue of Germany
- Langue of Aragon and Navarra
- Langue of France
- Langue of Provence
- Langue of Anglo-Bavaria

The Church is said to have been built in 1208, based on the shape of Jerusalem's Church of the Holy Sepulchre by the Knights Templar. According to legend, the True Cross, the Vera Cruz, on which Jesus Christ was crucified, was found by St. Helena in the 4th century. The lignum crucis or the wood of the True Cross, was kept in a niche in the chapel of the tower until it was removed to the nearby village Church of Zamarramala, where it can be admired only at Easter.

After the dissolution of the Templars, the Knight's assets were to pass to the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem according to the Papal provision of 1317. But there were a series of assets that by royal compromise did not reach the hands of the Order. Specifically, the Church of Vera Cruz, which went on to increase the assets of the Order of Canons who guarded the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, together with the Zamarramala commission and others in Zamora.

A little less than a century and a half later, Pope Innocent VIII suppressed the Order of the Canons Regular of the Holy Sepulchre in the bull of March 28, 1489, arranging for its assets to pass to



the Order of Saint John, although the definitive incorporation did not take place until 1531.

The building, despite a few additions, remains in much the same state as the time of its construction thanks to the incredible preservation work made on this historic church. It's considered one of the best-preserved churches of this style in Europe, and was declared a Spanish Property of Cultural Interest on 4 July 1919 by H.M. the King D. Alfonso.

After several decades the Church of the Vera Cruz was donated in perpetuity to the Order of Malta after the necessary restoration in 1951.

Inside the Church, valuable paintings are found on the walls of the polygonal design.

A gothic-renaissance altar piece dates to 1516, and a stone tablet can be found in the central building where the Knights must have carried out the Vigil of their Arms.

The octagonal edicule is said to be based on the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. It has three semi-circular chapels, two doorways with archivolts on columns, and a tower on the south side, which can be climbed for an impressive view of the Alcázar surrounds and the old city.

Someone who saw the beauty in the Church of the True Cross was Dublin-based painter Philip Harewood, who painted a portrait of the church in 1999.

The long-time painter and retired bank official spent his holidays travelling and drawing, mostly churches, but never sold one of his paintings.

Phillip was fascinated in the work of the Order of Malta and so beautifully captured the Church of the True Cross's charm with the Alcázar of Segovia in



the background (see image above).

In 2018, a Dame of the Order and Philip's cousin Mrs Deirdre Page DMG (Ob), kindly donated a print of the original painting of the Church of the True Cross.

In his letter to the Australian Order of Malta, Philip said he would be "honoured" if this donation was met with the approval of the Order, to which it was.

"It's a wonderful depiction of the church," Dame Deirdre says. "It's a moment captured in time, and such a sacred treasure for the Order, given it is the oldest chapel the Order owns." ❄️

Left: Valuable paintings are found on the walls of the polygonal design of the Church, in addition to a gothic-renaissance altar piece dating back to 1516.

Top: A print of Philip Harewood's artwork of the True Cross church, said to have been built as early as the 13th century; Mrs Deirdre Page DMG (Ob) presented the original painting to the Australian Order of Malta in 2019.

THE SPIRIT AND TRADITION OF PILGRIMAGE

For the Order of Malta, the spirit of pilgrimage dates from its foundation in the 11th century in its hospital in Jerusalem, when ailing pilgrims were cared for as well as all who needed help.

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. It is a mission which distinguishes every pilgrimage. It is a life-giving experience. Every year, members of the Order make pilgrimages to Catholic shrines around the world, together with their sick and handicapped guests.

INTERNATIONAL PILGRIMAGES

France: 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 Lourdes, located in the mountainous region of the Pyrenees. In 1858, Bernadette was directed to expose a spring in the rocky ground, which brought forth pure water and was found to have healing properties. The site has witnessed many miracles since then.

Some of the Order of Malta's National Associations had organised pilgrimages to Lourdes earlier than 1958, but then, on the occasion of the centenary of the Apparitions in 1958, an International Pilgrimage of the Order was organised. Since that time, at the beginning of May each year, the Order of Malta makes an annual international pilgrimage to Lourdes, led by the Grand Master. Members and volunteers from 45 countries on the six continents participate in the pilgrimage, bringing thousands of sick and wheelchair-bound pilgrims.



Holy Land: Jerusalem

The world's most famous pilgrimage is to the Holy Land, Jerusalem. From time to time, the Order organises an international pilgrimage of members, volunteers, helpers and handicapped guests. Jerusalem, central to the Christian faith, also has a special significance for the Order, as it was where Blessed Gerard founded the Order more than 900 years ago. The Order of Malta's last historic gathering in the Holy Land was in October 2007, when 1400 pilgrims coming from 20 countries visited Nazareth, Bethlehem and the Sea of Galilee.

NATIONAL PILGRIMAGES

Austria: Mariazell

The Shrine of Our Lady of Mariazell, Styria, a pilgrimage site for 850 years, is the most visited Marian shrine in central Europe. 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. Every year the Grand Priory of Austria, with more than 300 members of the Order, volunteers and guests, makes a pilgrimage to the site.

Bosnia Herzegovina: Medjugorje

In 1981, it is believed that the Virgin appeared to six Herzegovinian children, with the message to pray for the sick. Although not an official shrine recognised by the Vatican, the site attracts thousands of pilgrims every year. Responding to the needs of the pilgrims, Malteser Hilfsdienst, the Order of Malta's auxiliary organisation in Germany, runs a first aid post there.



Germany: Altötting

Every July since 1970, Malteser Hilfsdienst has taken a pilgrimage, drawn from all Bavarian dioceses, to the Black Madonna in the 13th century chapel in Altötting, Germany's most significant shrine. In 1498, a small child, believed drowned, was brought back to life there. Numerous miracles have been credited to the site ever since.

Germany: Kevelaer

For more than 20 years, the German Association has been taking pilgrims from the Cologne dioceses – members, volunteers, the sick – to the shrine where in 1641, a simple man, Hendrick Busmann, heard a voice asking him to build a chapel on this spot to Mary, Comforter of the Afflicted (Consolatrix afflictorum).

Germany: 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 constructed especially to shelter it. The site has been a shrine for more than 400 years, since the procession was first ordered by Bishop Galen in 1651. Pilgrims come from the diocese of Munster, making the 45-kilometre walk from Osnabrück to Telgte. Every year Malteser Hilfsdienst provides a first aid service for them.

Great Britain: Walsingham

Walsingham, north Norfolk, has been a place of pilgrimage since medieval times, when travel to Rome or Compostela was almost 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 Walsingham Manor. She felt as though 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. The British Association of the Order has brought sick pilgrims there every September for more than 60 years.

Hungary: Mátraverebély-Szentkút

Mátra, one of the most beautiful pilgrimage sites in Central and Eastern Europe, is the Catholic

National Shrine of Hungary. Mátraverebély-Szentkút dates from 1091 and comes from the legend of King St László's survival at a spring. In 1201, a commemorative church was built in the village of Mátraverebély, near to the spring. Operated by Franciscan monks, the site has been hosting pilgrims for nearly 800 years from both Hungary and the surrounding countries. The Hungarian Association has an annual pilgrimage there.

Ireland: Knock

Knock is Ireland's national Marian Shrine. In August 1879, Our Lady, St. Joseph and St. John the Evangelist appeared at the south gable of Knock Parish Church. There were 15 witnesses, both young and old. From this miraculous apparition Knock has grown to become an internationally recognised Marian Shrine. The Irish Association of the Order organises a pilgrimage to Knock every August, with the participation of members of the Order's Ambulance Corps with elderly and disabled guests.

Ireland: Croagh Patrick

Renowned for its Patrician Pilgrimage in honour of St. Patrick, Ireland's patron saint, Croagh Patrick has been a pilgrimage site for more than 1500 years, since St. Patrick fasted on the mountain for 40 days in 441 AD. Many pilgrims climb the mountain barefoot. The Order of Malta Irish Ambulance Corps has been providing a first aid service for the pilgrims en route since 1943.

Italy: Assisi

In celebration of Mary's feast day of 8 September, the Order's Italian members make an annual pilgrimage to Assisi. The procession goes to the Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli, where an important copy of the icon of Our Lady of Philermos is housed, having been brought there by Franciscans after the second world war.

Italy: Loreto

Since medieval times, the Holy House at Loreto is believed to be the home where the Virgin Mary lived and raised the young Jesus. In 1469, a large basilica was built around the small shrine, and the sacred site attracts four million pilgrims and visitors each year.

International pilgrims have been travelling to Lourdes in France since 1958. Each year, thousands of sick and wheelchair-bound pilgrims make the journey to the Marian shrine and witness the healing properties of the Pyrenees pure water – in hope of a miracle.



Every October, the three Italian Grand Priorities make a pilgrimage there, led by the Grand Master, with members, volunteers, sick and handicapped guests.

Mexico: Guadalupe

The annual pilgrimage of the sick, in which the Order's Mexican Association participates, goes to the National Basilica of Guadalupe, which commemorates the 1531 visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to St. Juan Diego. The pilgrims, numbering between 10,000 and 12,000, come from all over Mexico, with the wheelchair users transported in special buses, and many of them escorted by members of the Order and their volunteers. Ambulances, medical services, first aid and trained personnel are in attendance throughout.

Poland: Czestochowa

The shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa, in the Monastery of Jasna Góra, is extremely important in the spiritual life of all Poles. It houses the miraculous icon of the Black Madonna, said to have been painted by St. Paul, and safely guarded throughout a troubled history. Every year in May the Polish Association of the Order organises a pilgrimage to the shrine.

Portugal: Fátima

Fátima is the site of the most important Marian apparitions in Portugal, when Mary appeared to three shepherd children in 1917. The pilgrimage route covers a distance of 130 kilometres, and Order of Malta members and volunteers provide a first aid service at the six main stopping points. The Order of Malta Portuguese Volunteer Corps have offered assistance since 1976.

Spain: Santiago de Compostela

The 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. The tomb of the Apostle James the Great was discovered in Santiago early in the ninth

century and has been a site of pilgrimage from then onwards. Since the Order arrived in Spain in the 11th century, its link to Santiago de Compostela and the 'camino' has been very important. The length of the 'camino' is full of hostels, hospitals, and churches founded by the Order to attend to the pilgrims. Still today, the Order's Spanish Association runs the hostel of Cizur Menor in Pamplona, and the hostel of Villalcazar de Sirga in Palencia, which have been adapted to receive pilgrims in wheelchairs. In an agreement with the Archbishopric of Santiago de Compostela, the Order of Malta has been running the relief post at the final stage of the camino for 20 years.

USA: Our Lady of Good Help

The Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help is the site of the only Marian apparition in the United States approved by the Catholic Church (since 2010), where in 1859 Our Lady appeared to Adele Brise, a young Belgian woman, and urged her to pray and offer Holy Communion for the conversion of sinners. The three Order of Malta Associations in the United States travel to Wisconsin each year on pilgrimage to the shrine.

There are many other pilgrimages to shrines in their countries which are organised by Associations of the Order, or in which they take part. They include Argentina: Our Lady of Luján; Romania: Shrine of Mary Comforter of the Afflicted, Sumuleu Ciuc, Transylvania; Slovakia: Shrine of Our Lady of Litmanová; Slovenia: Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Brezje; Lithuania: Our Lady of Siluva. ❀

PILGRIMAGE DATES FOR 2021 INCLUDE:

- **Lourdes** – arrive Lourdes 29 April, depart 4 May 2021
- **Holy Land** – arrive Jerusalem 5 November, depart 15 November 2021
- **Malta extension** – arrive 15 November, depart 22 November.

The sacred site at the Holy House at Loreto is believed to be the home where the Virgin Mary lived and raised the young Jesus. Around four million pilgrims and visitors visit the dedicated basilica and shrine each year.



A LEADING LEGACY

After 27 years serving the Order of Malta Australia, **Dr. Ian Marshall AM AE KC*SG KGCMG (Ob) GCM** is closing a chapter of leadership and leaving behind a trail of charitable work and cherished memories.

Confrère Dr Ian Marshall is the first to admit he didn't enter the Order of Malta willingly at first. As a practising family doctor he became involved in palliative care in its early days at Mt Olivet Hospital in Brisbane where a number of the hospital Board were already members of the Order, including the first Queensland Chairman of the Order, the Honourable James Douglas, Professor Teresa Cramond, Mr Kevin J. King, and Mr Bernie Knapp.

"I relented in 1993," Ian says. "I became involved because I was one of the first General Practitioners in Brisbane involved

in palliative care at Mt Olivet Hospital. At the time I joined, the Order was only 19 years old with about 150 members overall, and around 15 members in Queensland. H.E Albrecht Boeselager told me that once you join, the Order takes your little finger, then your arm, and eventually consumes the whole of you."

Slowly but surely, Ian discovered this for himself. In 1995, just two years into his membership, Ian became State Chairman of the Order. In 2005, he was made National Hospitalier, responsible for the oversight of the Order's charitable and humanitarian

works in Australia and its near neighbours. In 2013, he was appointed President of the Australian Association.

In acknowledgment of his ongoing charitable and humanitarian work, His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI conferred on Ian the honour of a papal knighthood in 2012 by creating him a Knight Commander with Star in the Pontifical Equestrian Order of St Gregory the Great.

Ian studied medicine in Queensland and initially trained as a surgeon including a stint with the pioneering cardiac team at The Prince Charles Hospital. He was

involved in the first cardiac double valve transplant in Australia. He was active in the early provision of palliative care services in Brisbane. It was to be general practice that would be his chosen career.

"I like family medicine and enjoyed working as a General Practitioner for many years," Ian says.

That he did. Ian devoted years to his service of the sick and the poor, through his work as a doctor, to which he was a partner at a Brisbane practice from 1974 to 2018, and through his work in the Order.

"I came from a rural background. My father would say to me, 'use your brain and make breeding cattle your secondary consideration,'" Ian recalls. He maintained an interest in the beef cattle industry all his life.

By his side the entire time was wife Judith, who Ian says has been a pillar of strength and support.

"Judith has been nothing but supportive. Members' families have to make sacrifices, especially for anyone who takes on a position in the Order of Malta. It can be financially taxing and demanding on family time. I don't think we give our spouses the recognition due for their selfless support," Ian says

"Judith has been magnificent and has put up with a lot. Our practice was open 365 days a year with someone on call 24 hours a day. I delivered babies, took out appendices, and was on call 24 hours a day. If the phone rang at 3am to attend to an emergency, I would go. You do learn to manage your time a bit better, but seeing the strain on my family, none of my kids wanted to take on a career in medicine."

On many occasions Judith accompanied Ian on a pilgrimage to Lourdes, an expedition he has attended nine times.

"Lourdes is a mystical experience you can't describe. People try to reduce it to words on paper but it's an emotional and spiritual experience," he says. "From a medical perspective, it's interesting that professionals are now researching the Lourdes experience as a physical phenomenon because the euphoria experienced by pilgrims induces chemical changes in the brain."

Ian has attended many strategic seminars and conferences around the world and developed close relationships with fellow Hospitallers and then Presidents, many of whom are now personal friends.

"It's hard to limit the list of major events that stand out in my memory. There have been so many events which have affected the Order, many of which have influenced my attitude to the Order," he says. "They always were a constant source of inspiration."

In 2000, Ian led a small delegation of three young Australian volunteers to the

Annual European Summer Camp for the Disabled in Palmerston, Ireland. It is of some satisfaction that he was part of the team responsible for getting the first Asia Pacific edition of the camp up and running in Asia.

He also recalls the purchase of an operating microscope for the Christian Brothers Mt Sion Centre for the Blind in PNG. This allowed a volunteer team of ophthalmologists, including Consoeur Frances Booth AM, anaesthetists and theatre sisters to visit local villages to remove cataracts and start operating in the bush. The post op recovery room was simply a bench out in the fresh air.

The team trained disabled children in the villages how to make spectacles, and taught locals how to detect cataracts themselves. It is now a large, hugely successful project, thanks in no small way to the initial support of the Australian Association.

Ian regards the development of the Asia Pacific conference as a real success story. About 20 people attended the inaugural event. The first year was devoted to meeting people and making connections. For some years now it's been the only annual event on the Order's calendar that has both the Grand Chancellor and Grand Hospitaller attend.

He considers the long involvement in Timor-Leste culminating in the Order of Malta Clinic as critical in the Asia Pacific story. In future, Ian hopes the Timor-Leste clinic can become a world-renowned hospital for tropical medicine, especially

malnutrition in pregnant women and children, much like the Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem is globally-renowned for its neonatal care.

Albrecht has known Ian since the first Asia Pacific Conference in Singapore. He says the development of the Order in that region has been rewarding, including the development of the Hong Kong Association and the growing membership in South Korea.

"Thanks to his calm and modest way of acting he was able to pave the way for a peaceful transition and good prospects for the Australian Association in the years to come," he says.

H.E. Dominique Prince de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel, Grand Hospitaller, says it was Ian's personal commitment, professionalism and long-standing involvement that benefited the Association, its members and its activities.

"I am sure that you will be considered a 'milestone' in the history of the Australian Association and of our beloved Order," he says.

Denis Chang, President of the Hong Kong Association, acknowledges the contribution Ian has made in Hong Kong, and especially in the Asia Pacific region.

"We owe Ian an immense debt of gratitude to him for all that he is as a person and for all that he has done in the long years of selfless, indefatigable and totally dedicated service to the Order of Malta and its work," he says. "Ian embodies and exemplifies what the requirement of

'nobility' in the Order of Malta is truly meant to signify for all who seek the privilege of membership in the Order, namely the quiet, almost self-effacing dignity that comes from nobility, integrity and generosity of heart, mind and soul."

YM Park, the President of the South Korea Association, says despite the challenges involved in founding new organisations, it was Ian's guidance, expertise, wisdom and patience that proved invaluable.

"We know how often he prayed for us and there is no doubt it is those prayers that got us this far. It is our turn to pray for Ian in our deepest respect and gratitude. Thank you, Ian," YM Park says.

On home soil, Ian has witnessed the continuing growth of Order members, in particular in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and the Northern Territory, a region Ian says is "few in number but huge in performance".

The national Coats for the Homeless initiative is another project that has excelled since its inception in 2009 because of the Order's ability to listen and serve the poor. Ian says the homeless were asked directly: "What do you want, what do you need?" The Order responded by developing a customised coat in a dark colour to their design. The Order now distributes 6000 coats to the homeless each year in every State and Territory in Australia and New Zealand.

"We must constantly re-focus on service to the sick and the poor. Everybody must be involved in hands-on activities. It's started to permeate and has been given a boost through the Coats for the Homeless program, but there's always more we can do," Ian says.

He adds that without a doubt, participating in the Council Complete of State, which elected Frá Giacomo as the 80th and current Grand Master, is an historic highlight. One of Ian's fondest memories, however, was attending the 900th anniversary for the Order of the Knights of Malta Mass at St Peter's Basilica where Pope Benedict XVI addressed 4500 members and volunteers who attended from all over the world. Cardinal Secretary of State, His Eminence Tarcisio Bertone celebrated the Mass.

"I'll never forget watching His Holiness who was quite frail, gently wheeled down among the people. Then the next day, he shocked the world by announcing his retirement," Ian recalls.

Just like his Holiness, Ian has 'hung up his boots' and stepped back from formal responsibilities for the Order of Malta Australia, but is grateful for the memories he's shared, and proud of the impact the Australian Order has had in upholding its mission to alleviate the suffering of the poor and the sick.

"We survived the siege of Malta. We survived the French Revolution, and we survived the Second World War. We survived the threat in the early 1950s of Cardinal Canali's ambitions to take over the Order. We survived the recent constitutional crisis. For all that, I have the greatest confidence in the future of the Order," Ian says. "We survived because we are flexible and adapt to the times"

He is the first to admit that anything achieved in his life in the Order is due to the dedication of those



members who have contributed to the life of the Order to the best of their ability.

The Order is essentially a large corporation, and like any corporation, it has its nominal bosses but they are only as good as its Boards and members. Ian is quick to point out the influence previous Presidents have set.

"Each had his own unique individual style but each has left an indelible imprint on the history of the Order in Australia. We should all be grateful to each and all of them for setting the Order where it is today," he says.

"There are challenges ahead. Practising Catholics are fewer in numbers, but the Order will survive as long as Catholicism survives, and ordinary Catholics go out and help the poor and sick. As long as we stick to that the Order will continue in strength. Each individual makes up the sum of the whole, and we must remember that the Order is not known by who we are but by what we do." ❖

Left: Dr Ian Marshall with wife Judith, whom he says has been a constant support throughout his 27 years serving the Order of Malta Australia. Above: Dr Ian Marshall with the Grand Master Frá Giacomo dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto at Lourdes.

Did You Know...

Take a trip down memory lane at the Order of Malta's 972 year history and discover why there's more to its name than meets the eye.



Since its foundation 972 years ago, many names have been used to identify the Order and its members.

This can be explained by the Order's 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, including Sovereign Military Order of Malta, Sovereign Order of Malta, or Order of Malta, are often used for legal, diplomatic or communication purposes.

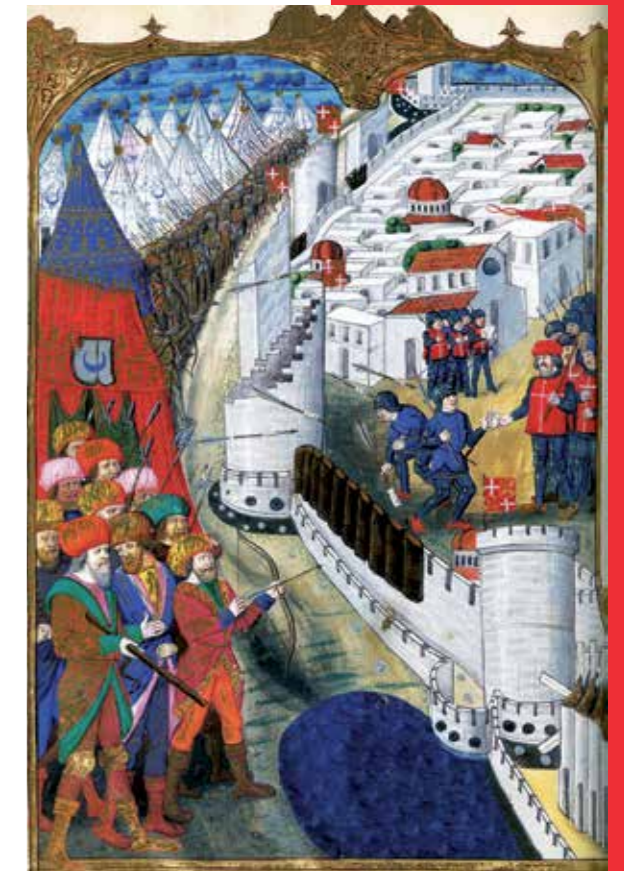
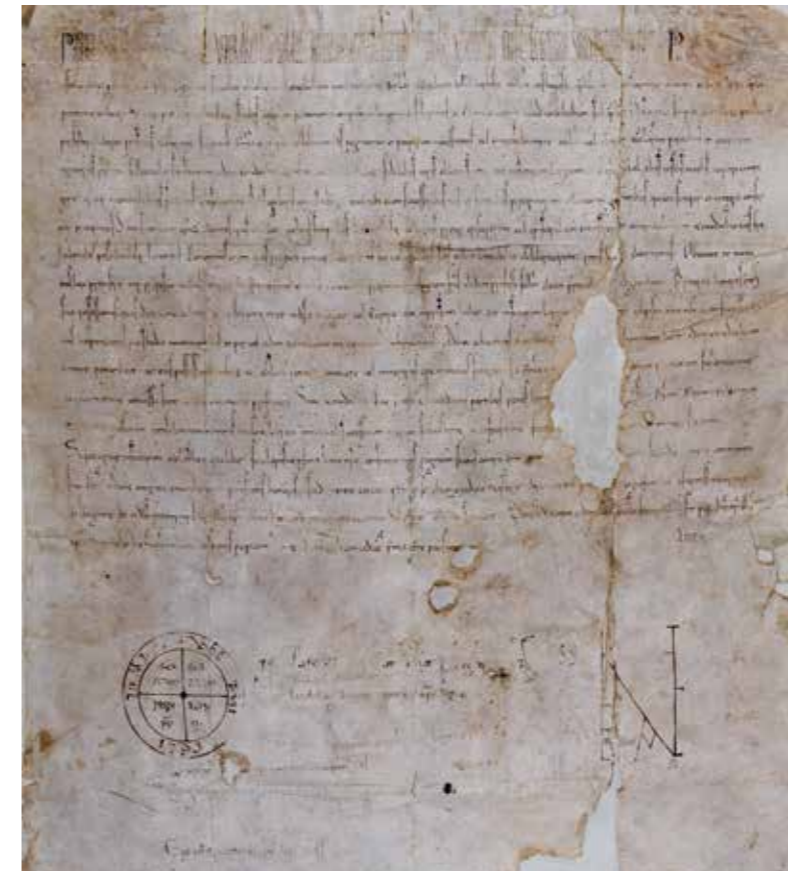
The knights were initially called the Knights Hospitaller (or Hospitallers) to describe their mission. But they were also called the Knights of St John because of the Order's patron saint, St John the Baptist, and also of Jerusalem because of their presence in the Holy Land.

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.

Let's take a historical timeline through the inception of Order of Malta and its evolution throughout the world:



1048 Jerusalem

The birth of the Order of St John 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 which ran the hospital – became independent under the guidance of its founder, Blessed Gérard. Pope Paschal II approved the foundation of the Hospital with the Bull of 15th February 1113, and placed it under the aegis of the Church, granting it the right to freely elect its superiors without interference from other lay or religious authorities. By virtue of the Papal Bull, the Hospital became a lay religious order. All the knights were religious, bound by the three monastic vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

The constitution of the Kingdom of Jerusalem obliged the Order to take on the military defence of the sick and the pilgrims, as well as guarding its medical centres and main roads. 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.

1291 Cyprus

After the fall of St John of Acre and the loss of the Holy Land in 1291, the Hospitaller Order of St John transferred its seat and hospital to Limassol on the island of Cyprus, where it had been present

since 1210 thanks to the concession of important properties, privileges and commercial rights.

It continued to build new hospitals faithful to its hospitaller mission, and benefitted from the strategic position of the Island to constitute a naval fleet to protect pilgrims on the sea route to the Holy Land. The number of members coming from all over Europe continued to grow and contributed to the strengthening of the Order's structure, acquiring new possessions on the Mediterranean shore. Among these were the important port of Famagusta, the city of Nicosia and numerous Commanderies.

Due to the consequences of increasing instability in Cyprus, which resulted in restricting their expansion on the island, the Hospitallers sought to consider a more suitable base for the seat of the Order of St John on the Island of Rhodes. Nevertheless, Magistral Lieutenants remained present in Cyprus to govern the Priors and Commanderies (said to have been over sixty by 1374) for another century until the middle of the 15th century, when the knights were recalled to the Conventual Seat in Rhodes.

1310 Rhodes

Under the leadership of Grand Master Fra' Foulques de Villaret, in 1307, the Knights of the Order of St John landed with their fleet in Rhodes, completing the acquisition of the island by 1310 when it transferred its seat there. Besides offering natural ports for its fleets, the island was a strategic location that linked the eastern and western worlds.

"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, including Sovereign Military Order of Malta, Sovereign Order of Malta, or Order of Malta, are often used for legal, diplomatic or communication purposes."



included Priors or Grand Priors, Bailiwicks and Commanderies.

The Order was governed by its Grand Master (Prince of Rhodes) together with the Council, it 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 members of various nationalities.

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.

1530 Malta

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 decided 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 defended the island for more than three months during the Great Siege of the Ottomans. Following this victory the city and port of La Valletta was built and named after the Grand Master, its founder. The knights transformed Malta, undertaking urban construction projects: palaces and churches were built, as well as formidable new defence bastions and gardens. Architecture flourished as well as artistic patronage. The island was given a large new hospital, considered to be one of the best organised and most effective in the world. A school of anatomy was also founded and the faculty of medicine followed. In particular, the Order contributed to the development of ophthalmology and pharmacology.

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.

The Order's independence from other nations granted by Pontifical deed, and its universally recognised right to maintain and deploy armed forces and to appoint ambassadors, has constituted the grounds for its international sovereignty. 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, and later on an eighth: Castille and Portugal. Each Langue

Top: A sketch of Lepanto; the navy of the Order of St John was based in Malta; the Fortress of the Crusaders in Cyprus.



As well as these activities, for centuries the Order of Malta's fleet took part in the most important manoeuvres in the Mediterranean against the Ottoman fleet and against North African pirates.

1571 The Battle of Lepanto

In 1571 the fleet of the Order of Malta took part in the Battle of Lepanto, contributing to the victory of the Christian fleet against the Ottoman Empire's expansion into Europe.

1798


Two hundred years later, during his Egyptian campaign in 1798, Napoleon Bonaparte occupied Malta for its strategic value. Because of the Order's code prohibiting them from raising weapons against other Christians, the knights were forced to leave their island. The Treaty of Amiens, signed in 1802, which established the sovereign rights of the Order over the island of Malta, was never applied.

1834 Rome

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

The 20th and 21st centuries

In the second part of the 19th century, the original hospitaller mission became once again the main focus of the Order, growing ever stronger during the last century, most especially because of the contribution of the activities carried out by its Grand Priors and National Associations in so many countries around the world. Large-scale hospitaller and charitable activities were carried out during World War I, and World War II under Grand Master Fra' Ludovico Chigi Albani della Rovere (1931-1951).

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 world. 

Heraldry of the Order of Malta: ARMS & EMBLEMS



The Order

The Order of Malta'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 Magistracy and its Institutions: the Grand Priors, Subpriors, National Associations and Diplomatic Missions.



The Grand Master

The arms of the Grand Master, Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto are quartered with those of the Order. At 1 & 4, Gules, a cross Argent (for Saint John); 2 & 3, Azure, on a mount vert a square tower in perspective proper, the ports Sable, surmounted by a Latin cross between two mullets of six Argent. Behind the shield a Maltese cross interlaced with a golden Rosary, from which depends a white Maltese cross.



Emblem

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 State Flag

The red rectangular flag with the white Latin cross is the State flag of the Sovereign Order of Malta. Called the flag of St John, it has been used since ancient times. Giacomo Bosio's "History of the Order" (1594) records that in 1130, Pope Innocent II had decreed that the "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. 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 of Malta'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 Priors and Subpriors, its 48 National Associations and 110 diplomatic missions around the world. It also flies over hospitals, medical centres, as well as wherever the Order of Malta's ambulance corps, foundations and specialised units operate.



Inaugural NATIONAL DAY

From Rome to Melbourne, the Order of Malta in Australia has launched its first National Day to promote its significant work to the wider Catholic community and help develop the next generation of supporters.

In October 2018, Italian members of the Order of Malta launched a National Day in Rome to improve the knowledge of the Order of Malta and its activities, attract new volunteers and supporters, and promote health and solidarity.

From 9am to 7pm, the Italian Order of Malta initiated its first “Giornata Nazionale Ordine di Malta” across 11 Italian cities, including Bologna, Cagliari, Florence, Genoa, Loreto, Milan, Naples, Palermo, Rome, Turin and Venice. Within these cities, the Order organised for free blood-pressure tests and a doctor’s assessment. Together with basic health information, the day was organised to publicise the Order of Malta’s manifold humanitarian and charitable works in Italy and another 120 countries. In Rome, the event made news headlines as the Grand Master Fra’ Giacomo Dalla Torre visited the Order of Malta pop-up tent in Piazza del Popolo and thanked volunteers for their efforts.

The success of this day was quickly recognised, and Rome saw the opportunity to grow the National Day of the Order into an international event. One by one, many associations around the globe were encouraged to adopt similar activities and celebrate the Order’s National Day to coincide with Blessed Fra’ Gerard’s Feast Day.

For the first time from 12 to 13 November 2019, Australia joined in the occasion. On very short notice, South Eastern Hospitaller David Blackwell and South Central Region Noel Mifsud agreed to participate and launch the event.

Across six parishes, 14 members and volunteers in Adelaide, and in the Melbourne regions of Hawthorn, Black Rock, and Toorak, spoke at Churches to inform parishioners about the work of the Order both nationally and internationally.

“The National Day is a wonderful opportunity to not only improve the wider community’s knowledge



about our activities, but to give them the opportunity to volunteer and support our projects,” explains National Hospitaller, John Murphy.

Members of the Order presented a two-minute overview of the Order from the pulpit, explaining its history, work, and defence of the faith and spirituality

After Mass, members were available to answer questions about activities and distributed 350 information brochures and gift packs, Lourdes Holy Water, Rosary beads and prayer material to worshippers and parishioners.

From a total audience reach of 2700, parishioners responded with a mix of questions and encouragement. Some inquired with uncertainty, asking: “Are you a priest? Where do I find more information?” Others were complimentary in their correspondence: “You are all doing an amazing job.” “Your work in the Church and community has never been more important,” and “How do I get involved?”

As a result of our Australian Order’s efforts, there has been an increase in registration of interest in membership, growth in the database for volunteers and supporters, increased understanding of the Order, and greater direct interaction of members with the community.

Back in Italy, the country held its second edition of National Day in 2019, this time expanding to 22 Italian squares to illustrate the Order’s numerous humanitarian and welfare activities, with the aim of creating an ever greater network of solidarity.

In the stands set up in the squares the volunteers distributed informative material and answered questions about the mission of the Order, which has been serving others for 900 years.

The Italian local and national media devoted ample coverage to the Order of Malta’s national day



and its numerous health and social care initiatives. These include group homes and soup kitchens, the distribution of hot meals and clothing, looking after the sick in hospitals or during the national and international pilgrimages, sea rescue for migrants, summer camps for the disabled young and after-school programs for socially excluded children.

Going forward, Australian members of the Order aim to increase involvement in National Day across all regions in Australia and New Zealand. It is hoped we can expand our reach and member involvement by distributing more brochures on Church seats pre-Mass, applying notices in all Church bulletins in each diocese, and developing a system to capture details of interested parties on the spot.

We can start small, take the learnings and build in coming years. 🇻🇪

For the first time in November 2019, members and volunteers in Adelaide and Melbourne spoke at Churches to inform parishioners about the Order’s activities and give them the opportunity to volunteer and support projects. As a result of the Australian Order’s efforts, there has been an increase in volunteer and membership enquiries.

EMBRACING THE

CHALLENGE



The 2019 Assembly of the Order of Malta Australia addressed the changing face of society, the path ahead, and underlying need to have hope.

Members of the Australian Association of the Order of Malta gathered together in June 2019 to discuss the challenges the Catholic Church is facing, from the legalisation of euthanasia, to persistent threats against religious freedoms. The theme, however, was one overall of hope. Under the banner of 'Embracing the Challenge', prominent guest speakers at the conference presented compelling and thought-provoking insights into how to approach these testing times.

Confrère Dr. Ian Marshall, President of the

The 2019 Assembly concluded with Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral with principal celebrant Auxiliary Bishop Anthony Randazzo.



Top: Members of the Australian Association of the Order of Malta attend Mass to conclude the Assembly.
 Right: Archbishop Anthony Fisher with former Prime Minister, John Howard OM AC, who gave an address at the Assembly formal dinner about religious freedom and the implications of attempts to remove current exemptions in anti-discrimination to religious schools.
 Far right: The Inaugural Australian President Dennis Mahoney AO QC KC*SG and second President Sir James Gobbo AC CVO KGCSG KGCMG (Ob) GCMM.

Australian Association, welcomed the assembly. He noted that the work of the Order was as relevant today as when it was founded 900 years ago to defend the faith and serve the sick and poor.

“The biennial Assembly is the only opportunity for us to congregate en-masse and discuss the affairs of the Order,” said Dr. Marshall. “But more importantly [it’s an opportunity] to meet old friends face to face, make new ones; to welcome our new members into the Order and gain spiritual enrichment and inspiration from each other.”

True to his word, as part of the gathering, Dr. Marshall helped welcome 15 new members to the Order.

His Grace, Archbishop Anthony Fisher provided the opening address and was followed by Dr. Trudy Dantis, Director of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference National Centre for Pastoral Research. Dr. Dantis provided insights into the changing demographic of the family

in Australia today and what that means for the Catholic faith. Senator Amanda Stoker, a Liberal member of the Australian Senate representing Queensland, continued on the assembly’s theme with a discussion on these modern challenges.

“Making the case for the importance of fundamental freedoms – freedom of thought, conscience, belief, freedom of association and freedom of speech – has never been harder,” said Senator Amanda. “And each underpins the social political causes that are important to this room, such as religious liberty and respect for life.”

The Hon Greg Smith SC, former Attorney General in New South Wales, also addressed the assembly, giving an urgent warning that euthanasia and assisted suicide, which came into effect in 2019 in Victoria, would see a domino effect in legislation throughout the country.

“Australia is facing the most concerted campaign to allow voluntary assisted dying it has ever seen in lifting the criminal law sanctions



against euthanasia and assisted suicide in each state and territory,” Greg said. “There doesn’t seem to be enough people fighting against it.”

Judge Dyson Heydon similarly covered threats to religious liberty and the need for legal protection for religious freedom.

The final session for the opening day featured Commissioner Robert Fitzgerald who served on the Royal Commission into the Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. His reflections on this commission were extremely powerful and Bishop Vincent Long, Bishop of Parramatta, also spoke on the response of the church in the aftermath of the Royal Commission’s findings and both speakers answered questions from the assembly attendees in an open forum.

The opening day of the assembly closed with a Vigil Ceremony at St. Mary’s Cathedral followed by a welcome dinner for attendees at the Royal Sydney Golf Club.

The second day of the Assembly featured talks from members of the Order, providing updates and reports on internal activities, charitable works, volunteering activities and ambassador reports. Guest speaker Monica Doumit, Director of Public Affairs and Engagement from the Archdiocese of Sydney, spoke on increasing the role of women in the Church. Members of the Order, Francine and Byron Pirola, who are also Directors of the Marriage Resource Centre, addressed the Assembly on ‘defending the things that matter’.

Damian Wyld, the Order’s Hospitaller to South Australia and the former CEO of Marriage



Alliance, wrapped up the conference segment of the Assembly. His session focused on ‘where to from here for our Order’ and discussed practical and effective responses to key issues that emerged from the presentations.

Delegates then attended an investiture ceremony at St Benedict’s, Broadway, with His Grace Archbishop Fisher as the principal celebrant. The 15 new members were invested and Confrere Justin Harkiewicz took the Promise of Obedience to become a member of the Subpriory of the Immaculate Conception.

A formal dinner followed with the Hon John Howard OM AC, former Prime Minister, making an after-dinner address. He spoke about religious freedom in Australia and discussed implications of attempts to remove current exemptions in anti-discrimination to religious schools and also questioned the right of businesses to make a person’s religious beliefs subject to an employment contract. He was hopeful the new Morrison government would act to protect religious freedoms and that this would receive bipartisan support.

“If parents send their children to denominational schools because they want a Catholic education, or a Jewish education, or an Anglican education then they are entitled to have that delivered – it’s as simple as that and I think that’s a proposition that most people support,” John said.

The Assembly concluded on Sunday with Mass at St. Mary’s Cathedral with Auxiliary Bishop Anthony Randazzo as principal celebrant and concelebrants being the Order’s chaplains. ✠

“Making the case for the importance of fundamental freedoms – freedom of thought, conscience, belief, freedom of association and freedom of speech – has never been harder. And each underpins the social political causes that are important to this room, such as religious liberty and respect for life.”

THE PEOPLE'S JOURNEY

Daniel Kwok KMG (Ob) celebrates the Order of Malta's 61st Annual International Pilgrimage to Lourdes, and Pilgrims share their personal reflections on their spiritual journey.



Led by The Grand Master, Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto, 7400 people, including 1300 Malades from 45 countries congregated at the Marian sanctuary in Lourdes, France in May 2019 for the most important of the Order's pilgrimages.

Our delegation was made up of 30 pilgrims from Hong Kong, 10 from Korea, 11 from Australia and our much-loved Chaplains Fr Mathew Byeun from Korea and Fr Malcolm Fyfe from Australia.

We continued our now traditional collaboration with the Irish Association providing volunteers to accompany their Malades. This year, there were 45 Irish Malades warded at Saint Claire's in Accueil Notre Dame. Twenty-five lower dependency Irish Malades were accommodated at Hotel Roissy.

We were formed into various teams to take care of transporting Malades to events and outings, ward duties and medical shifts. Hong Kong volunteers also manned the Global Fund for Forgotten People desk. For the first time, we had volunteers assisting at the Baths. They worked in teams in four-hour shifts to assist a constant stream of pilgrims and Malades immerse and pray in waters from the spring that appeared miraculously in 1858. All volunteers reported feeling deeply moved by their experience.

The signature events at the Pilgrimage were the Eucharistic procession with the sick to the Sanctuary, the Pontifical High Mass in the Basilica of St. Pius X, celebrated this year by the Archbishop of New York, Timothy Cardinal Dolan, and the candlelight Marian procession.

Each saw several thousand participants in a gentle, harmonious outpouring of faith. Our own Grotto Mass, heard under umbrellas on a wet 2°C morning, was magnificent.

As pilgrims from afar, we can only speculate the majestic movements in the hearts of the Magis after their encounter with Jesus, Mary and Joseph, one silent night 2000 years ago, and the newness in their lives when they returned home.

Our pilgrims were similarly graced during and after the pilgrimage. It is a joy to share with you their reflections.

Holy moments at the Baths

Jenny Choy: Serving at the Baths, assisting and accompanying the pilgrims' innermost moments with Holy Mary is a blessing to me. Through what we did with the pilgrims in silence and with a gentle smile at all times, I came to experience the loving heart of Holy Mary and how tender it is of the grace that she is sending to us. I am an unworthy servant. May Holy Mary be my guide so that I will do what is needed when is needed.

Paul Maher: [I recall] the faith of pilgrims praying intently before plunging in the 12°C water and their gratitude to the volunteers. [I remember a] stretcher-bound American, in pain, uncomplaining,

praying for the return of his siblings to the church, enduring the manhandling and plunge, then filled with joy and gratitude, saying: "Thank you so much. You guys do a great job."

The brain-damaged young Czech man, unable to speak, but clearly aware, and wanting to bathe, prayed with us, smiled and was clearly joyful after his plunge... and many others who in their suffering strengthened my faith.

Hyewon Helene Chung: My first pilgrimage with the Order of Malta reminded me of my previous visit to Lourdes 10 years ago with my family. During that visit, I had a few prayers in my mind. God had responded, though I had forgotten those prayers until I volunteered for the Baths this year.

I had a spine condition when I was young. During my adolescent years I was dependent on an orthosis attached to my back. Though the orthosis eventually came off, I still was admitted to the hospital annually at least for a month to relieve any excess burden placed on my spine. Giving birth was a great challenge, but the Blessed Mother was kind to hear my prayers and I was blessed with a healthy son. However, I was never free from the fear of pain until 10 years ago.

During my visit to Lourdes 10 years ago, I had the chance to be bathed in the very same premises where I volunteered this year. My prayers back then must have been answered. Since then, I have been healthy and capable to physically live my life not different than any healthy person. Perhaps this lack of difference was why I have not thought of my earnest prayers from back then.

On my second day at the Baths this year in Lourdes, the room where I was volunteering in switched to accepting children. Only when I started greeting the children to the room did I realise what the change meant: I was to assist children who were dependent on devices not different from my own orthosis.

Assisting the children undo and redo their orthoses reminded me of the cold feeling coming from the devices – memories which I had buried deep inside myself. It all came back to me so quickly: how cold the orthosis was and how hurt I was from the strange and cold stares.

I was shaken by the sensation of sympathy for the children's inconveniences and their mothers' sorrow. Had I assisted only adults I would not have had the same experience. That moment, I realised God had guided me back here as a volunteer so I could be an evidence of his miracle. I also realised the meaning of being relieved of physical pain is to do God's work better.

While helping the children warm up from the cold water and orthoses, I prayed to the Blessed Mother. I will always remain thankful that I can be of assistance.

Sung-kyoon Francisco Lim: The pilgrimage in Lourdes was especially touching for its beauty under the Pyrenees. The Eucharistic Procession,

Around 7400 people, including 1300 Malades from 45 countries congregated at the Marian sanctuary in Lourdes, France in May 2019 for one of the Order's most sacred pilgrimages.



Grotto Mass, Basilica Mass, and Candlelight Procession were all holy and majestic. I felt our Blessed Mother's presence in Lourdes with her warm and kind smile whenever we assisted the Malades. The Pilgrimage helped me realise that God is within the sick and aged Malades, and that one day, we could be in the same shoes. It was an honourable experience joining the Bath team to assist the Malades seek to heal their body and mind and feel our Blessed Mother's blessing upon them.

Hearts are touched

Jenny Yu: Praise to the Lord – Praise to Our Lady of Lourdes. Lourdes is a place deep in my heart. It is a place filled with faith and love. I am truly grateful I joined Order of Malta Hong Kong and was able to act as a little servant.

Compared with the first two solo pilgrimages back in 2016 and 2018, the exceptional experience this round is unforgettable. Not only the comprehensive program that makes a huge difference, the team spirit offering the little helping hands together is unique, though physically exhausting, it is spiritually rewarding.

The pilgrimage provides spiritual healing. Through tears in touching moments, walking in faith with Malades, praying wholeheartedly day and night to Jesus and Mother Mary.

The sick is not always on the wheelchair. The one standing next to you might be seriously ill. Let's continue to pray for one another, for the sick and those next to you even though you might not know their names.

David Blackwell: This was my second pilgrimage to Lourdes and I again was privileged to have a unique opportunity to fully experience the charism of our Order, service to the sick and the poor, while joining together with Members of the Order from across the globe in an international community of service and faith.

I learned firsthand what belonging to the Order of Malta really means – devotion, service, and fellowship. Linked as it is with hands-on service, the pilgrimage offers a unique spiritual experience where we come into close contact with Our Lady. Personally, I felt very close to my late wife Terry, especially at the Grotto, the Crypt and in the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception.

Pilgrims, together with Malades, experience interior miracles – people who are ill, even dying, are able to leave Lourdes with an inner peace they did not before experience: *"Anyone who drinks the water that I shall give will never thirst again: the water that I shall give will turn into a spring within them, welling up to eternal life."* John 4:14

Jiwon Bernard Kim: As a first-time participant to the Order of Malta's Lourdes pilgrimage, I felt both excited and anxious before arriving in Lourdes. After arrival, my mind became peaceful and cleansed. The atmosphere coming from a sacred place definitely is a factor, though I believe it mostly also came from a well-organised program and friendly faces of the members of the Order of Malta who come from all over the world.

It was an amazing experience communing with the Malades and I was deeply touched by all the warmth we

shared. The atmosphere and environment were perfect for praying and volunteering. All these elements helped me in achieving a spiritual growth. I am looking forward to participating in the Order of Malta's Lourdes Pilgrimage again. I would definitely like to participate every year as far as my conditions allow.

Yoosun Theresa Chung: My first pilgrimage to Lourdes with the Order of Malta can be summarised in three words: concern, gratitude, and joy.

Before leaving for the pilgrimage I was honestly concerned for being part of something I have never done before and anxious that I may not be able to assist the Malades properly. But after the pilgrimage started, I was constantly feeling grateful that I could take part in this wonderful program that has been going on for 61 years.

Each Mass and religious ceremony was absolutely meaningful and beautiful. Additionally, I was so touched by every Malade I assisted or talked with. Though I participated in the pilgrimage to assist, I feel like I was the one on the receiving end. The Malades filled me with so much joy and shared their wisdom in life. I look forward to becoming a regular participant of the Pilgrimage every year.

Benjamin Lee: Lourdes was life changing and I vow to dedicate the remains of my days to the Order of Malta in the service of humanity.

Frontline Encounters

Yongmaan Silvano Park: It was during the short waiting period for the Malades to return from the Baths. Numerous

volunteers and Malades were passing by. My eyes randomly landed on one of the exits and I saw Douglas. I assisted Douglas last year in Lourdes. I was extremely surprised to meet him again this year, as it was my understanding Lourdes is known as the final place to visit, where many seek the last miracle.

I was even more surprised to see Douglas appearing so much healthier than last year. My joy was returned by Douglas' wide smile recognising me. I was thankful to meet Douglas again and to see him in better health.

After returning to Korea, a friend of mine living in Germany texted and told me that she was in a minor car crash not long ago and was having difficulty in recovering. She went on and told me that I was in her dream and somehow, I knew her physical pain and consulted her about the painful spot. She explained how she woke up and recalled the dream and thought to herself maybe her pain would actually go away.

To me, this story comes as a small miracle. It is amazing how it was I who was in her dream and how specifically the dream was about healing physical pain while I was in Lourdes, the sacred place known for the miracles of healing. Now, I pray that she will tell me one day her pain is completely gone.

Christopher Schaffer: What an amazing experience again. Making wonderful new friends and meeting wonderful old friends. This year, although the schedule was much the same, seemed busier and more full-on.

One particularly memorable moment for me was after a long day. My Malade wanted to go back to her hotel even though the event wasn't over. Not a problem, I can help there. We got back and I said goodbye, but she refused to let me go until we had a cuppa at the hotel's café. We just had a lovely quiet chat. It was a good reminder that sometimes we all need downtime and perhaps every now and then we

should get away from the hustle and bustle for some peace and quiet (even when on a pilgrimage).

A Chaplain's reflections

Fr Malcolm Fyfe MSC: I found this year's pilgrimage far more meaningful and engaging for a number of reasons. I was able to interact at a more personal level with all members of the Australian group. We seemed to grow more bonded together this year and thereby able to share more deeply with each other. Clearly, we were all committed to deepening our relationship with the Lord while honouring his Mother Mary and doing this in conformity with the charism and objectives of the Order of Malta. Let me add that it was a privilege to be able to play some small part as Chaplain. I want to thank all those who made this possible.

To conclude, here is an excerpt from a letter from Rev. Cross "ad honorem", General Spiritual Director of the International Pilgrimage of the Sovereign Order of Malta to Lourdes:

In this year, 2019, we celebrate the Holy Year of Bernadette. One hundred and seventy-five years ago, Saint Bernadette was born and was baptised. This April 16 is the 140th anniversary of her death.

The pastoral theme of Lourdes for this year calls us to follow the path of Bernadette to discover true life and true happiness, as the Virgin suggested to Bernadette at the Grotto of Massabielle.

Bernadette found her happiness in the service of the poorest, entering the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity in Nevers. Through the special attention that the Virgin gave her, Bernadette learned that the Lord is revealed in the poor. To care for the poor – to meet them, to help them and, especially, to love them – opens the eyes and the heart to something other than appearances. This is the happiness of the other world, of the world to come, and it is capable of transforming ugliness with a kiss of love. 🇻

Highlights from the 2019 Lourdes pilgrimage included the Eucharistic procession with the sick to the Sanctuary, the Pontifical High Mass in the Basilica of St. Pius X, and the candlelight Marian procession.



FORWARD FOCUS

Significant progress has been made with the operations and finance of the Order of Malta's Clinic in Dili, Timor-Leste.

As members and supporters of the Order will know, the Clinic in Dili, Timor-Leste is focused on maternal and infant health care, particularly on nutrition. The United Nations Children's Fund reports the under-five mortality rate in Timor at 45.8 per 1000 live births, which is a stark statistic if we compare it to only 3.7 per 1000 live births in Australia.

The Order's primary mission is to do all we can to make any impact on this figure, with our Clinic located in the poorest part of the capital city. All care is free to the Timorese, and our service is supported purely by philanthropy.

The good news is that we have received generous funding in recent months. This comes from the Order's Global Fund for Forgotten People,

A major goal in 2020 for the Order of Malta's Clinic in Dili, Timor-Leste, is to increase capabilities in radiology and pathology and offer an expanded service to expatriates in Timor-Leste, as well as corporate clients.



the Emerge Foundation through the auspices of the Australian Catholic University, and from the Australian and Singaporean Associations of the Order. A number of individual members also kindly donated in the lead-up to last Christmas. We remain indebted to Timor Plaza and the Jape family, who provide the Clinic facilities rent-free.


At the same time, we have made progress in our relationship with the Timorese Government, who have asked among other things that the Order consider pioneering palliative care in Timor-Leste. This is an important opportunity, as diagnoses of life-threatening illnesses tend to occur late, and there is effectively no existing palliative care system. However, like any new initiatives of the Clinic, it will require increased funding. We are interested in speaking with any members or supporters who would like to finance this program.

Beyond that, a number of supply-chain challenges, particularly with infant nutrition supplements, have been addressed.

A major goal for the Clinic in 2020 is to increase its capabilities, particularly in radiology and pathology and offer an expanded service to expatriates in Timor-Leste, as well as corporate clients. This would be a fee-earning activity, which would allow us to expand the Clinic's services beyond the walls and reach out to the poor and the sick in their homes and communities.

As well as the technology, this also requires employment of dedicated new medical and nursing staff, so that we are not taking away services from the poor.

All members and supporters are encouraged to make annual commitments to the Clinic. If anyone can suggest other funding opportunities, we're keen to hear about them.

For any information or questions, please contact Alastair Furnival KMG. 



Humanitarian DIPLOMACY

Michelle Rees looks at how the Sovereign Order of Malta acts to serve the poor, sick and victims of conflicts in neutral, impartial and apolitical ways.

The Sovereign Order of Malta has many features that make it unique, and one of the most surprising attributes is its sovereign status. This is significant given it has retained sovereignty with a limited territorial base – Rhodes in 1310 and then Malta until 1798 – but with an influence inversely proportional to the size of its rights-of-way.

The Order of Malta has experienced a marked intensification of diplomatic relations in recent years, however the relevance, need and purpose of these relations are not well understood.

Humanitarian aid is no longer just a matter of last-minute emergency rescuers. Operational means alone, such as logistics and resources for the delivery

of aid, are no longer sufficient to ensure the long-term success of humanitarian action. Humanitarian diplomacy is an invaluable tool for mediation, peace and reconstruction.

The Order of Malta's diplomatic relations

Today, the Sovereign Order of Malta has bilateral diplomatic relations with 110 states and the European Union. It also has permanent observer status at the United Nations, its specialised agencies, and the main international organisations.

The diplomatic activity of the Sovereign Order of Malta is distinct from that of nation states. It has another dimension and other aims. Having no longer a territory to defend, economic or trade interests

to promote, the Order of Malta does not position itself in international conflicts. Instead, it acts to promote ethical and spiritual values, which have guided it for nearly a thousand years through its charitable works, especially in the medical, social and humanitarian fields, and in emergency situations. It does not pursue any economic or political goal and does not depend on any other state or government. It is always neutral, impartial and apolitical.

The scope of its diplomatic relations

The humanitarian activities of the Order of Malta around the world are largely facilitated by the existence of its diplomatic network, which strengthens the relationships with the governments of the



countries in which it operates.

Diplomatic relations offer direct access to national governments and international organisations. They provide a channel which helps the entities of the Order in developing medical and humanitarian projects in accordance with local needs. The Order's sovereignty, together with its diplomatic network, plays a pivotal role in the Order's ability to help people in need, creating an asset for the Catholic Church and for the countries where it operates. The Order is neutral and impartial, which allows it to provide assistance in situations where other organisations have difficulty of access. Thanks to international cooperation agreements signed between more than 50 states and the government of the Sovereign Order of Malta, the organisations of the Order on the ground have an operating framework that favours the efficacy and the durability of its actions. This allows it to be integrated into national and regional healthcare systems and to obtain customs facilities for the importing of essential healthcare equipment. In these relations, the Order and the states are equals. The Order is always recognised and defined as "Sovereign". The agreements stipulated take the form of international accords, although the Order is a non-territorial power.

Moreover, the diplomatic relations offer stronger protection for humanitarian personnel on the field in crisis regions.

Humanitarian diplomacy in the Asia Pacific Region

The Order of Malta has a presence across Asia Pacific where a range of projects improve healthcare and living conditions for many thousands of people. In addition, the Order's national associations and Malteser International are at the ready to respond to natural and man-made disasters and implement extensive programs in disaster risk reduction throughout the region.

Countries the Order of Malta has diplomatic relations within the Asia and Oceania include Afghanistan, Armenia, Cambodia, Georgia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Lebanon, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Philippines, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Kiribati and Turkmenistan.



Myanmar – an example of Diplomacy in action

Malteser International has been allowed to operate in Myanmar since 2001. Because of the Order of Malta's diplomatic relations and status as a neutral, apolitical and independent institution, it enabled access where other foreign relief organisation have been denied. Consequently, when cyclone Nargis hit the country in 2008, Malteser International was one of the very few international organisations able to start an immediate relief operation whereby it channelled international aid into affected regions.

Malteser International now employs more than 350 local staff in Rakhine, Shan and Kayin states operating in primary health care, WASH, Disaster Risk Reduction programs, climate change adaptation and post disaster relief. Another focus is health care for displaced people (the Rohingya) who have fled from Myanmar to Thailand and Bangladesh, where they do not have refugee status and are therefore not eligible for medical care. ❖

Left: The Grand Chancellor of the Sovereign Order of Malta, Albrecht Freiherr von Boeselager, speaks at the United Nations Security Council in November 2009.
Top left: The Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Sovereign Order of Malta to the United Nations in New York, Paul Beresford-Hill, presents his credentials to Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the UN in August 2019.
Top right: H.E. David Scarf with Hernani Coelho, the Timor-Leste Foreign Minister at that time.



ORDER OF MALTA DIPLOMATS IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION INCLUDE:

- H.E. Jim Dominguez – Ambassador-at-Large to South-East Asia and the Far East
- H.E. Michael Mann – Ambassador to Thailand and Cambodia
- H.E. Fabrizio Bozzato – Ambassador to the Republic of Nauru
- H.E. Terry Tobin – Ambassador-Designate to Timor-Leste
- H.E. David Scarf – Ambassador-at-Large to Oceania
- Frank Zipfinger – Counsellor of the Embassy to the Kingdom of Cambodia.

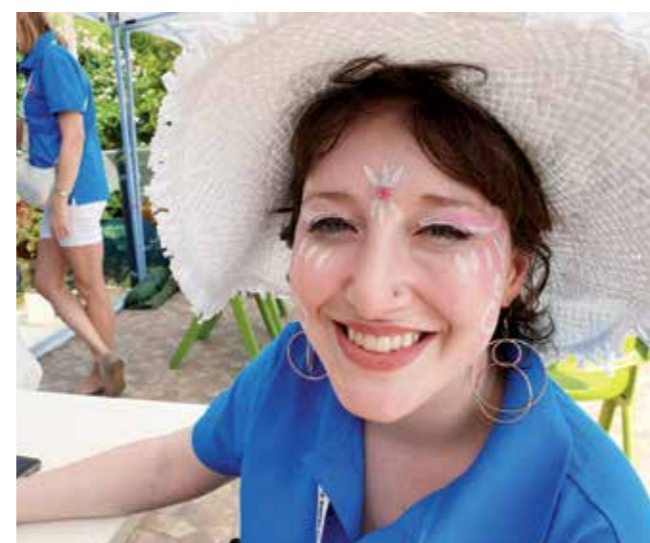


HOPE IN

HONG KONG

Dunstan de Souza KMG reports on the Order of Malta's Third Asia Pacific Youth Camp in Hong Kong.





The Third Asia Pacific camp saw approximately 100 disabled young adults engage in sporting and social activities, parties, and dinner shows, with guests coming from Cambodia, Hong Kong, the People's Republic of China, The Netherlands, Australia and Indonesia.

For the last 36 years, the Order of Malta has run camps for disabled young adults between the ages of 18 and 30. The goals of the camps are to forge a sense of community, promote cultural exchange and help young people overcome personal barriers.

The European camps now attract between 400 and 600 participants depending on the capacity of the venue.

In 2017, the Order organised such a camp in the Asia Pacific region for the first time, hosted by the Singapore association.

The third Asia Pacific Youth Camp was held in Hong Kong from 22 to 26 October 2019. Despite all the civil unrest and the uncertain situation in Hong Kong, or perhaps because of it, the camp was a most inspiring experience for me and the participants.

There were approximately 100 participants at the camp. This number was down from 150 that had booked to attend at one stage. Understandably, many who were planning to attend withdrew because of the civil unrest.

With the participants who did turn up we had a camp filled with inspiration, fun, resilience, courage and faith. We all came away better for the experience.

Guests at the camp came from Cambodia, Hong Kong, the People's Republic of China, The Netherlands, Australia and Indonesia. The Australian contingent comprised three disabled guests, three carers and seven members and volunteers from the Australian Association. The range of activities included games, sporting activities, tourist outings, adventure activities, karaoke, shows and liturgical celebrations, and all were wonderful. We were also so happy to see our amazing Grand Hospitaller, H.E. Dominique de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel, make the enormous effort to travel to Hong Kong for the camp.

The camp formally started with an Opening Ceremony, which commenced with a Mass and then a parade of nations. Two or three athletes represented each country, one of whom carried their nation's flag. Solon Toiava carried Australia's flag, a larger than life guest from Sydney.

During the days, there were lots of varied

activities. They included rock climbing, bubble soccer, swimming, archery, painting, table tennis, an adventure ship cruise, a visit to a theme park and so much more. The organisers put in such an amazing effort.

Every evening there was a party in the main hall at the camp venue. The theme would range from karaoke to disco to professional after dinner shows, including an internationally renowned magician. He was meant to stay for only 30 minutes but left some four hours later as he was so inspired by our guests and had such fun. And there was always lots of dancing.

I think it is fair to say that each night Australia's representative Solon was the best dancer, best singer, had the loudest laugh, and was easily the most entertaining person at the camp.

Every evening, before that evening's party, we would be shown a compilation video of the previous day's activities and evening party thanks to three

videographers from Austria who have recorded these camps for years. This was one of the many highlights each day.

The Australian Association members and volunteers at the camp included Daniel Kwok, Rachel Boffa, Dalton Fogarty, Eoghan Wright, Anna Sammut, Peter Park and me, Dunstan de Souza.

The resilience, courage and joy displayed by the guests was inspirational. Seeing several wheelchair-bound guests doing rock climbing while still in their chairs was just stunning. There were tears of joy each time one made it to the top, and even if they didn't. Seeing a brave 34-year-old go on his first roller coaster ride was inspirational – and terrifying for him. Seeing a person with stumps for legs dangling in a harness off the side of a boat and then being dropped into the sea laughing all the way was just so much fun.

Seeing the joy all the guests showed in everything they did was a lesson for all

of us. Despite all their obvious challenges, they were filled with joy and courage.

A special thank you to the organisers: Alfons Mensdorff-Pouilly, Desirée Jebesen, Selina Fung and the whole Hong Kong team who were so well organised and welcoming. They could not do enough for us. They even looked after us when the conference had finished and some of us stayed on for a few more days.

The Australian Association will have the challenge and privilege of hosting the next Asia-Pacific. It was meant to be in September 2020 but because of the COVID-19 circumstances the camp has been pushed back to September 2021 on the Gold Coast.

If you are interested in helping as a volunteer or funding activities, please contact Danny Higgins, the Hospitaller for the North Eastern region and the leader of the Camp Organising Committee on dannyhiggins@optusnet.com.au.



BETHLEHEM'S MIRACLE WORKERS

Holy Family Hospital is a blessing for thousands of tiny heartbeats each year, giving new mothers and new life hope for a better future.

“**W**herever children are accepted, loved, cared for and protected, the family is healthier, society is better, and the world is more human.” These were the words His Holiness Pope Francis delivered when he visited Manger Square in Bethlehem 2014, and these are the acts of goodwill the Holy Family Hospital performs every day in Bethlehem for the community’s tiniest members.

The French Daughters of Charity founded the Holy Family Hospital as a general hospital in 1888 to minister to Bethlehem’s sick. The Hospital operated until 1985 when political and economic factors forced the sisters to close its doors. In 1989, at the request of Saint John Paul II, the Order of Malta took over the operation and management of the Hospital, converting it into a

specialised maternity and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, promoting its Catholic values of preserving life, fostering peace, and bringing hope to those without a voice.

Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem is located on the West Bank of Palestine, just 1500 steps from the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, the birthplace of Christ.

The Hospital stands as a beacon of hope for poor and at-risk families in the Bethlehem region, nearby desert villages, and refugee camps. The institution is identified as an “oasis of peace”, a place where Christians and Muslims work together side by side to serve the families in need. The private, Catholic hospital and its outreach clinics provide quality medical care to all, regardless of religion, ethnicity, social status or ability to pay.

In 2019, the Holy Family Hospital saw more than 4700 births, with a death rate of under one per cent. The hospital never closes its doors, and its care is never compromised.



No-one is ever turned away, and patients are only ever asked to pay what they can.

The Catholic teaching hospital is a state-of-the-art maternity and neonatal critical care centre serving women, infants, and children throughout the Holy Land. It is the only medical facility in the West Bank to offer a neonatal intensive care unit where critically ill newborns, from premature babies as young as 23 weeks old, or those with congenital problems, can be treated.

The Hospital sees some of the most complex premature cases of birth each year. As such, it partners with medical facilities throughout the region to provide necessary medical education and clinical training.

While the Bethlehem region of Palestine is facing a staggering unemployment rate of 70 per cent, the hospital is committed to the continuing education of its medical staff as a means of ensuring quality patient care for the poor and sick of Bethlehem. The hospital activity fosters peace through medicine, bringing together Palestinian, Israeli and European specialists for ongoing media education and professional development.

As the second largest employer in Bethlehem, the hospital plays a crucial stabilising role in the community, providing jobs to 170 Palestinian families and creating employment opportunities for women in an area where few exist.

“The most difficult aspect of our work is the anxiety about what could happen to our little ones,” says Ishraf, one of the nurses in the neonatal intensive care unit. “The most delicate part,” she adds, “is the relationship with the baby’s parents. Our task is to reassure and comfort them even if we ourselves are very worried.”

In May 2019, premature triplets Ayla, Alma and Lea were born, weighing less than two kilograms each. Their parents, both professionals

at the Hebron University in Palestine, were terrified to even hold them. They seemed so small and fragile. The fear of becoming attached and then losing them had made them incapable of interacting with the babies, so a specialised team of social workers and psychologists gave them the necessary emotional support to create a bond with their infants.

“The best moment is when the doctors finally tell parents that their children are well and can leave the hospital. No-one can imagine the joy we read in the eyes of these parents and we’re lucky to be able to share this happiness with them, so that it also becomes ours,” another nurse at the hospital says.

Thankfully, this was exactly the case of the premature triplets. Two were discharged in July 2019, and the third in August. Now they are at home with their parents. But the work of the neonatal intensive care unit continues, ready to receive other babies needing care and assistance.

The Holy Family Hospital offers an array of healthcare services to families, including prenatal care and delivery, neonatal intensive care for 450 infants annually, postnatal care for mothers and infants, paediatric services and referral care, post-menopausal gynaecological check-ups, cancer screenings, and surgeries, and diabetes screening and treatment.

With its healthcare covering a woman’s life from pregnancy to menopause, the Holy Family Hospital has also intensified its programs for assisting and supporting pregnant women, starting from the very early days of the pregnancy.

Rima, for example, is a young woman living in a Bedouin village near Bethlehem. Every week, the hospital’s mobile clinic visits Rima to give her all the antenatal check-ups, including scans and diagnostic tests. The doctor, besides monitoring

the mother and baby’s health, also advises Rima about her diet, tells her how to recognise the first signs of labour, and how to cope with the birth and postnatal care.

Holy Family Hospital also organises antenatal courses for future parents who, besides receiving important information on the birth and care of the new baby, can share concerns and questions with other couples. The antenatal assistance percentage at the hospital is between 50 and 60 per cent, double that of other facilities in the region. For this reason, last year, Holy Family Hospital launched an awareness campaign for the entire region on the importance of antenatal care. The hospital has also started to cooperate with the main local telephone company to send messages to hundreds of women throughout the region to raise awareness of antenatal care during all the pregnancy trimesters.

Besides their radio spots and leaflets on the benefits of regular antenatal check-ups, doctors and nurses organise workshops in women’s organisations, religious communities and local refugee camps. “We will double our efforts to reach women wherever they might be. We want to give children the best possible start to their lives,” explains one of the hospital gynaecologists.

Holy Family Hospital has experienced rapid growth. In 2019 it faced a 25 per cent increase in demand across all lines of clinical services and it’s a demand that continues to grow. The Hospital is the region’s medical care facility of choice for expectant mothers, women over the age

of 45, and women seeking outpatient care clinics.

To cater to such growth, 12,000 square metres of space is being added to the Hospital’s existing wing. The updated wing will implement modern energy-saving technology and equipment and include expansion and renovation of the surgical wing to create two state-of-the-art operating theatres equipped for lifesaving emergency C-sections, scheduled C-sections, and a variety of obstetrics and gynaecology surgeries.

For all its efforts, the hospital has been recognised by the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology in London and the European Board and College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology. The Palestinian Medical Council even named Holy Family Hospital ‘the training centre for doctors in the specialty of neonatology’.

The failing Palestinian economy sadly limits access to medical care, resulting in urgent health problems for families throughout the Bethlehem region. The mortality rate of mothers and newborns is five times of that in the West, with public health issues worsened by road closures, curfews, security checkpoints, and other daily stresses. But the Holy Family Hospital never closes its doors, and its care is never compromised.

To date, more than 75,000 infants have been born at the Holy Family Hospital. In 2019, the hospital saw over 4700 births, with a death rate of under one per cent.

The Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem Foundation, headquartered in Washington DC, supports 58 per cent of the Hospital’s

annual fundraising budget and 100 per cent of its capital expenditure budget. The Foundation raised most of the funding for the Hospital’s construction and expansion.

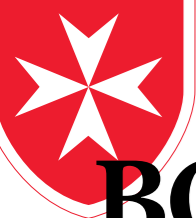
Support from the Fund allows the hospital to provide life-saving treatment to children of some of the most disadvantaged mothers in the community by covering the specialist care costs for those unable to afford them. An estimated 40 per cent of patients are refugees and 60 per cent live below the poverty line.

On 22 June 2018, Pope Francis welcomed to the Vatican Fra’ Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto, then recently elected Grand Master of the Order of Malta. Their meeting began with a discussion of the Order’s major works caring for the sick and the poor throughout the world, including its programs serving refugees and other displaced persons.

The Pope then specifically inquired about the Order’s efforts to assist children and families in the Middle East. The Grand Master responded with details of the Order’s lifesaving ministry taking place at Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem and reminded His Holiness that the Hospital is the only maternity unit region able to deliver and care for babies born before 32 weeks.

Heartened by the Grand Master’s report, His Holiness encouraged the Order to “go with courage” in its life-affirming work, a testimony to the spirituality that animates its over 130,000 members, volunteers and operators in the service of the poor, the sick, the elderly and the marginalised in 120 countries. ❣

The hospital provides jobs to 170 Palestinian families and creates employment opportunities for women in an area where few exist.



BOOK REVIEWS

EMPIRES OF THE SEA: THE FINAL BATTLE FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN 1521 – 1580

By Roger Crowley

John Murphy KMG reviews a compelling work of history and breathtaking story of military crusading, barbary pirates and the Ottoman Empire.

When young Suleiman the Magnificent, Muslim ruler of the Ottoman Empire set his fleet to sail for Rhodes, the stronghold of the Knights of St John in 1521, it would be the start of a 60-year struggle for the control of the Mediterranean and the centre of the world. It was to be a contest between East and West, Islam and Christianity, as well as a story of pirates, popes, emperors, corsairs, knights and slaves. This thrilling narrative history by author Roger Crowley takes us back in time where control of the seas determined the wealth and power of the known world.

Empires of the Sea is a stirring account of the battle for civilisation on the Mediterranean between the Holy Roman Empire, the Holy League and the Ottomans with the Knights of St John defending civilisation against the marching tide of Islam. In graphic detail, it recounts the three main battles that defined the Knights in 16th century Rhodes, Malta and Lepanto, and determined the future of Europe.

The book also explores the geopolitical and religious environment at the time, and the stories behind the many cast members that set the scene. This includes

Hayreddin Barbarossa 'Red beard', from feared pirate to Admiral of the Ottoman fleet; the Grand Master of Rhodes L'Isle Adam and his meeting and treaty with 'The Great Turk' Sulieman; and Charles V from the 'House of Habsburg', the Holy Roman Emperor to his illegitimate son Don Juan of Austria who would become Admiral of the Holy Alliance fleet and fight the battle of Lepanto. Divisions in Christendom with war in the north, unholy alliances and the eventual unification of the Christians in the final battles, all makes for riveting and historically enlightening reading.

Not all of the action is on the water as we know with siege strategy, battlement and rampart design, defensive architecture and engineering explained in great detail. Land bombardment, trench warfare, tunnels dug by captured miners, flame throwers, hand grenades, boiling pitch, all the critical sieges and battles are described in minute detail. Grand Master Jean Parisot de la Vallette's knights, Christian soldiers and the local Maltese fighters fought Sulieman's trusted adviser Mustafa Pasha Dragut and Admiral Piali Pasha, and his 40,000 soldiers. It is a tale of heroics and stoicism as well as barbarism and the harsh reality of bloody

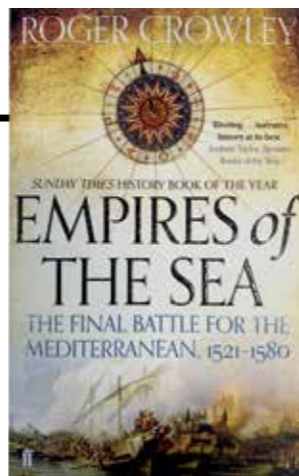
battle and cruelty.

The final scene is played out at the battle for Lepanto for ultimate supremacy of the Holy League and the European Roman Catholic States arranged by Pope Pius V. This included the Spanish Empire ruled by Phillip II, the Venetian Republic, Italian States, and of course the Knights of St John commanded by Frà Pietro Giustinani who were the Ottoman's most hated enemy of the time. In the history of naval warfare, Lepanto marked the last major battle to be fought predominately using galleys. Masses of slaves powered the ships, with criminals chained to benches rowing with oars. They were essentially floating platforms for infantry, which made for violent and bloody battles fought at close range.

The victory of the Holy League is of great significance, marking the halt of Ottoman expansion into the Mediterranean, and in particular expansion into Italy. It was also of great symbolic importance in a period when Europe was deep in conflict with its own wars of religion. Following the Reformation, Pope Pius V was jubilant and instituted the feast of Our Lady of Victory.

The Ottoman Turks had terrified Europe, and the victories of Suleiman the Magnificent caused Christian Europe serious concern. The defeat at Lepanto further highlighted the rapid deterioration of the Ottoman, and Christians celebrated. The mystique of the Islamic Empire was greatly tarnished by this battle, and Christian Europe rejoiced a new age.

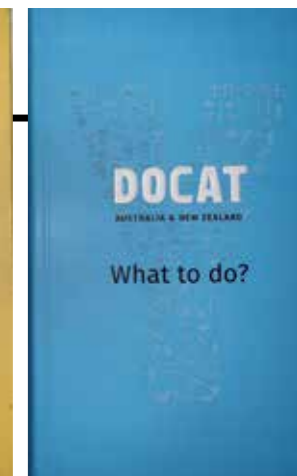
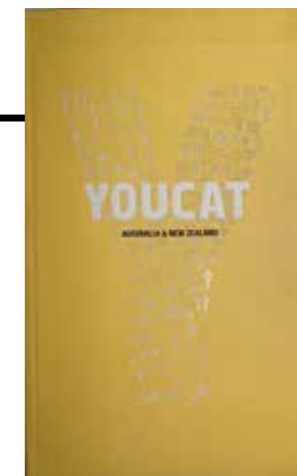
This is a wonderful read that is an historically accurate account of the battle between Islam and Christianity for not only the control of the Mediterranean but expansion of the victorious religion and culture. It is a story where some may say that the Knights of St John ultimately decide the fate of the known world.



YOUCAT – Freedom Publishing

Journal of Spirituality no12 ORDER OF MALTA AND NEW EVANGELIZATION. ROME 2012 N. 12

Discover the evolution of the Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church and how it's progressed to be a gift of language to young people all over the world.



A somewhat embarrassing incident initiated the birth of the Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church (YOUCAT). In 2005, during the presentation of the German Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church in Vienna, Austria by Cardinal Schönborn, a mother asked to speak and said: "Eminence, I wanted to buy this Compendium for myself and my adolescent children, but it is completely unusable for youngsters since it is not understandable. So, I won't buy it."

Hearing her concern, Cardinal Schönborn went to the German publisher of the Compendium, Bernhard Meuser, and said: "What we really need is something specific for young people."

Days later, Bernhard had a meeting with Michaela Heereman, Dame in Obedience of the Order, with whom he wanted to discuss another book project. Incidentally, he told her about the Cardinal's remark, which had been echoing in his heart since the presentation. He described his dream to her: Take time to examine the Compendium with a small group of young people for one week and hear what they think, what they are interested in, what they consider incomprehensible, of no importance, and what their real questions are. After that, a youth catechism should be written on the basis of their critique. He concluded, rather resignedly: "But there are no such young people." Michaela replied: "You're wrong there, such young people do exist."

Michaela was a referent of the so-called "relicamps" along with and Msgr. Johannes zu Eltz. The camp was organised by Count and Countess Magnis, members of the Order of Malta.

Observing the life of their children, who at that time were between five and 15 years old, they had noted that observant young Christians increasingly find themselves in a minority position in school

and among friends. They therefore need external supports for their faith in order to receive a confirmation of the elements that their families try to convey. This led to the organisation of the relicamps. The five-day camps included a mix of games, sports, time spent with friends and age-appropriate catechesis. In the 11th year, the relicamp participants attended the 2005 World Youth Day together in Cologne.

For many of the adolescents, it was an inspiring occasion. However, when those young people were asked whether they were willing to dedicate the 2006 relicamp to youth catechism, the referents were astonished to find that very few of them knew the meaning of the term "catechism".

When the adolescents understood that they were being asked to explain the Church's treasure of faith in an attractive and understandable way for young people, many were scared by the task. They said they weren't theologians and had many more questions than answers. Eventually, those who had enough time cooperated, with 52 young people between 15 and 25 years of age participating.

For the first youth group meeting, the four authors of the YouCat set themselves the goal of making the statements of the Compendium understandable. They realised the questions contained in the Compendium were not straightforward, but rather instructional questions, which at first sight, made the Compendium appear far from real life.

The Compendium was closely analysed for a year. After one year's work, the four authors travelled to Rome to meet with Professor Langer, a religion pedagogue from Regensburg, whom Bernard had asked to consult. His assessment regarding the texts presented to him was withering.

The draft of one of the authors had been written in a well understandable, modern language, but was rewritten by another author

to not lose sight of doctrinal clarity and the connection with the genre "catechism". However, the catechism still seemed incompatible with the target youth group.

On reflection, the authors went to Church for a Eucharistic adoration and it led to a brainwave. Each question was to have two answers, one set in bold type which sticks to the doctrinal style of the Catechism and also employs the wording of the Catholic tradition. The second question was to be set in normal type with comments and explanations to the first answer written in a language that's close to the world and life of the XXI century and its young people. This method was followed for the second draft and presented to girls and boys at the following summer camp in 2007. On the basis of feedback, it took almost two more years to work out the final draft of the YOUCAT texts.

This includes the introduction of marginal columns that now enrich the theological responses to questions of faith and act as a kind of theological dictionary. It also contains a great number of photographs taken from the world of youth. In this way, YOUCAT became not only a book for the transmission of knowledge, but also a small, but polyphonic spiritual treasure chest.

It was the Holy Father himself who made the final decisive step to give YOUCAT a wonderful preface, and thus provided the little yellow book with the required Catholic-universal updraft, which really made "YOUCAT", the youth catechism of the Catholic Church.

"Study the catechism! This is my heartfelt wish," the Pope says. "Study it with passion and perseverance."

This extract is an edited version of Michaela Freifrau Heereman von Zuydtwyck, Dame of Honor and Devotion in Obedience. For more information, visit www.youcat.org



La Galère Capitaine de Malte entrant dans le grand port de la Vallette de retour de sa Croisiere from the Vinkhuizen Collection



OBITUARIES

Over 2019, the Australian Association mourned the loss of five members. We record the life stories of those members: **Barry O'Callaghan AO KCSG KMG, Professor Ivan Shearer AM KMG, Dr Waldemar Hugon Niemotko KMG, Richard Tracey AM RDF QC KMG and Dr Robert Britten-Jones AO KMG.**

BARRY DAVID O'CALLAGHAN AO KCSG KMG (1936 – 2019)

Confrère Barry David O'Callaghan AO KCSG, Knight of Magistral Grace, was a man of humility, and a mentor who selflessly shared his experience, his judgment and his wisdom. He would advise that faith, family and friends were the non-negotiables in life, a life he shared for 58 years with his wife Claire and five children, Sally, Jenny, Fiona, David and Megan, sons and daughter-in-law, and 14 grandchildren.

Barry attended St Joan of Arc Primary school in Brighton, Kostka Hall junior school, then Xavier College senior school between 1948 and 1954. He went on to study law at Melbourne University and was admitted to the Supreme Court of Victoria in 1960, New South Wales in 1964, Western Australia and South Australia in 1989, and to the High and Federal courts in 1960.

In 1960, Barry began as a lawyer with then Corr and Corr, now Corrs, Chambers and Westgarth. He became partner at the age of just 23, with his principal area of specialisation in commercial practice and expertise in strategy, planning, construction and joint ventures. Barry remained at Corrs for a further 42 years. He was managing partner for several years and described by his colleagues as "the glue of the firm". He retired in 2002, and remained a consultant, rounding out a 50-year career at Corrs.

He taught and inspired generations of lawyers both within the firm and throughout the wider legal and business community.

Barry's service to Xavier College, his alma mater, has been devoted and constant. Barry was a recipient of the Xaverian Award for deep commitment to the ideals of St Ignatius of Loyola and a dedication to serve and make a difference in the wider community. He demonstrated compassion, competence and conscience. Barry was appointed the inaugural chair of the Xavier College School Council in 1993 and held that position until his retirement in 2001.

Governance, stewardship and leadership were hallmarks of Barry's expertise.

He was a board member of many commercial organisations, serving as a



Image credit: Xavier College

Director on boards of the Linfox Group from 1987 to 2001, Hudson Conway from 1987 to 2000, Downer EDI board and Chairman from 1997 to 2003, the RMIT Graduate School of Business from 1995 to 1998, the Committee for Melbourne from 1992 to 1995, Selpam Group from 1992, and the Melbourne Catholic Diocesan Finance Council from 1998.

Barry also served the Catholic Church, charitable, educational and not-for-profit organisations. This included a significant contribution to Mercy Health and Aged Care from its incorporation in 1996, where he served as Chairman from 2000 until his retirement from its board in 2008.

Others included the John Pierce Centre for Deaf and Impaired People and the Catholic Homes for the Elderly from 1992 to 1996.

Barry was honoured as an Officer of the Order of Australia in the Queen's Birthday jubilee year honours in 2002 for his services to the community as a consultant, adviser and board member of health, aged care, religious and educational institutions in Victoria.

Barry was awarded a papal knighthood in 2005, and has been a Knight of the Order of Malta for more than 25 years.

Barry gave his time and expertise freely and graciously, and gave sound advice and touched so many, evident by the 2000-strong crowd of people who came to Requiem Mass at Xavier College Chapel to pay their respects on 26 September 2019. Archbishops Denis Hart and Peter Comensoli were in attendance.

Barry's family was his proudest achievement. He encouraged and supported his children at school, and then continued to offer his support, advice and encouragement to his grandchildren. But, of course, he was so ably supported by his best friend, wife and his own personal mentor, Claire. Their marriage was and remains one of strength, love, versatility, compassion, admiration and respect, but underpinning all these, their strong and binding faith. Their beliefs and values are the backbone of who they are together and how they lived life by example.

We are sure that Barry would want to be remembered as a person of the highest integrity cemented in an unwavering faith and profound love of his wife Claire, their children and grandchildren. Rarely do you meet a person so steeped in Jesuit values, a man for and with others.

Compiled by close and long-standing friend *Julien O'Connell, AM.*

DR WALDEMAR HUGON NIEMOTKO KMG (1931 – 2019)

Confrère Waldemar Niemotko made history when he joined the Order of Malta. He was the first to request entry into the Order in the Australian Association with full blessing from His Holiness, Pope John Paul II.

Until then, potential members were invited by two Knights or Dames who selected from a pool of candidates who were vetted before admission from the Order of Malta.

Little did we know at the time of his admittance to the Order, that Waldemar would be a patriot and hero who risked on several occasions, his career, life and reputation for his beliefs in the Catholic Church. He stood his ground firmly when it came to his principles. In a different era, he would have been happy to die a martyr in the arena of the Coliseum devoured by wild and hungry cats knowing he died as a servant of Jesus Christ.

He came very close to an identical fate many times. In 1970, he was sacked from his government post as Trade Specialist due to his insistence to have a cross mounted on the wall above his workspace.

But there was worse. Waldemar was born on 15 August 1931 in a small Polish town of Garwolin. His father, Jan Niemotko, was an accountant working for the Polish state, and his mother, Wanda Peczalska, a nurse who had cared for hundreds during the outbreak

of the Spanish flu in World War I.

When Waldemar was eight years old, Poland was invaded by the Nazis from the west and the Soviets from the east. Waldemar assisted the Polish Home Army (AK) by storing grenades under his bed. He was wanted by the Nazis for aiding the clandestine resistance movement, Szarych Szeregów, and was captured by the Nazis and interned at Majdanek concentration camp after attempting to deliver packages of food to inmates at Majdanek.

The 10-year old child was subjected to Nazi medical experiments. The Germans injected him repeatedly with Streptococcus to induce rheumatic fever, hoping to find a cure for strep throat for their soldiers. For the rest of his life, Waldemar battled severe mitral valve heart disease, a sequel to untreated rheumatic fever. That did not stop him. From organising clandestine scouting tours to promoting free thought and religious freedom within Communist Poland, Waldemar was banned from travelling abroad for nine years. He was unstoppable.

In the early 1970s, when Sweden enthroned a new King, Waldemar wrote him a letter of congratulations only to be reprimanded by his superiors: "We always thought you wanted to bring back Capitalism but Feudalism... this is too much."



Having experienced the horrors of war and oppression, Waldemar was ever positive and optimistic. He repaid the terror and the worst of human nature with a patriotic and Christian desire to extend freedom, liberty and friendship. His beloved scouts' "God, Honour and Fatherland" were the values closest to his damaged heart.

Ever the perpetual student, Waldemar got his Masters-in-Law from Columbia University in New York City. He also applied his titanic intellect and penetrating mind to writing articles for the Polish Catholic Weekly, sustaining the Ethnic Communities Council, and keeping the memory of Poland's fallen alive.

Waldemar got his PhD in Maritime Trade from Poznan's Mickiewicz University School of Law so that he could go to sea and free himself. At 51, he paid his own way for himself and family to travel to Australia to free his beloved Krystyna and his three children – Peter, John and Anna (Niewczas) – from the bondage of communism. He was the mentor to cohorts of scouts and started the Australian International Research Institute to liberate as many around him as humanly possible.

Waldemar passed away 23 August 2019, aged 88 years. At his funeral, Waldemar was given a hero's send-off.

Pope John Paul II embraced this great man. Likewise, his comrades in the Order of Malta are proud to have been a friend of a Confrère of such outstanding and rare courage. Waldemar's selfless contribution makes our own defence of the faith feel so superficial and paltry. He fought the hard battle and now rests in eternal peace.



DR ROBERT (“BOB”) BRITTEN-JONES AO KMG (1928 – 2019)

Confrère Dr Robert (Bob) Britten-Jones passed away peacefully in the early hours of the morning of Saturday 4 May.

He was the son of Thomas Britten-Jones and Adeline Lewis, who tragically died when Bob was only six months old.

Bob would talk fondly of his early years at Comonella – the family home on Prospect Road, now Blackfriars School where he was doted on by his two aunts Lena and Olive. He'd ride his horse, Trixie, and later, his Malvern Star bicycle down Prospect Road in the 1930s towards the then open fields of outer Prospect and beyond.

The only male at an all nuns, all-girls school (St Dominic's in North Adelaide) for his junior primary schooling, he caught the tram on his own into the city and out to Rostrevor from grade 3. In 1940, at age 12, Bob took the train to Melbourne to commence his studies and board at Xavier College, continuing a family tradition of Jesuit education. By this stage, his father remarried and built what became a magnificent family starting with Ian then Bunny, Alison, Patricia, Alan and Bill.

In his younger years, Bob took an active role in the management of his maternal family's sheep stations, but his career aspirations lay in medicine. He was Dux of his final year of school in 1951. He spent three years working and training in London under the tutelage of two of

the world's leading surgeons and then set up his own surgical practice alongside his father in the Liberal Club building on North Terrace. He went on to have an illustrious medical career including being Head of Unit at the RAH for many years. He was a pioneer in the use of laparoscopic (keyhole) surgery in South Australia.

In 1960, Bob travelled to Melbourne for a friend's wedding. While there, he attended the St Vincent's Hospital annual ball where he met his future wife Lucille Jost, a physiotherapist. It was love at first sight and three months later they were betrothed in what was to become the greatest achievement in a life littered with achievements.

Bob was a kind, gentle and compassionate man, but one who could be a powerful supporter behind the scenes, and a staunch supporter of the Order of Malta itself. He was an early member, admitted to the Order on 24 October 1983, some mere nine years after the formation of the Australian Association. Bob was a very influential member of the Association. He initiated the successful project of collecting pharmaceuticals to send to various charities in Timor-Leste, a project which triggered an expanded interest in our close but poor neighbour, which continues to this day.

Bob knew that most people had not

been dealt the hand he had, so beyond his deep commitment to his family, he gave much of his time – very much supported by Lucille – to bodies like St John Ambulance, the Order of Malta, Meals on Wheels, his local church, St Ignatius' College, Calvary Hospital and the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

For Bob, Christianity aligned naturally with his innate kindness and respect for others.

He loved playing tennis, was a determined sailor and a very good rower, winning both pairs and fours in his final year at Xavier and also rowing for Adelaide University, but he rarely spoke of his achievements, either in sport or medicine.

He was a wonderful husband to Lucille, a great father to Mark, Christine, Peter and Tony, a loving grandfather to 12 grandchildren, a godfather to no less than eight with a respect for all of them – and so many things to so many other people.

At his 90th party, Bob was asked to make a wish. He stopped and looked at his son Peter and said “Son, I only wish one thing and that is when I am gone someone looks after your mother as well as she has looked after me”.

We extend our condolences to his wife Lucille and family, and assure them they are in our prayers, as will be our late Confrère, Bob. May he rest in peace.

PROFESSOR IVAN ANTHONY SHEARER AM KMG (1938 – 2019)

Ivan Shearer joined the Order of Malta in 1975. At that time, he held the Chair, Challis Professor of International Law at the University of Sydney. Ivan's academic career and his long service to public service through international tribunals, defence and foreign affairs advisory roles is unparalleled in Australian legal academia. He brought his laser-like intellect to the service of the international community in resolving disputes and planning pathways to avoid conflict. His deep faith drew him to use his great wisdom to build a more peaceful world. Ivan Shearer was a global citizen and a man of peace.

Fr Roderick O'Brien, a former student of Ivan, delivered a eulogy at his funeral Mass, and said these words: “A few years ago, the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague delivered its decision in the case Bangladesh versus India. Ivan was one of the arbitrators. It is a lawyer's case, of course. The award fills 181 pages, and doubtless a small forest suffered from the printing. But especially when compared to India's ongoing conflict with its neighbour Pakistan, no blood has been shed, no ships sunk, no civilians fleeing bombed villages, no window for foreign intervention.”

Ivan, as a student and an academic, consistently displayed brilliant scholarship.

His deep faith and a love of the classics provided both solace and inspiration to him in a demanding lifestyle. He was an avid student of Latin. In the preparations for an Adelaide National Assembly of the Order Ivan accepted responsibility for the preparation of the liturgies with the officers of the Order. He soon discovered, in the Latin precedents he was provided, several grammatical and spelling errors which he duly corrected. The liturgies at that Assembly were particularly inspiring and much appreciated by all those that attended.

In his semi-retirement Ivan gave much time to the works of the Order. He regularly attended meetings and events, such as the morning of reflection and the annual retreat at Sevenhill, the Jesuit retreat centre and vineyards in the Clare Valley. Ivan enjoyed the opportunities provided by the Order to deepen his faith, assist in the delivery of services to the sick and the poor, and more generally to serve the Church.

Following a recent attendance at the annual Lourdes Pilgrimage as a member of the Australian delegation of the Order, Ivan wrote a moving account of the impact the visit had on his spirituality and the growth of faith through the fulfilment of our responsibilities to “our Lords the sick and the poor”. At a subsequent meeting, he spoke to the South



Australian members about this experience and we were all touched by the beauty of his words and his power of expression.

Ivan led a life of service to the law. He was a gifted advocate applying great skill to the responsibilities entrusted to him, and yet displayed a deep compassion nourished by his faith. Ivan was in so many ways the ideal to which we all strive as members of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta. May his soul rest in the peace for which he strived in his life's work.

RICHARD TRACEY AM, RFD, QC KMG (1948 – 2019)

The Order of Malta laments the passing into eternal life of Confrère Major General, The Honourable Richard Tracey AM RFD QC KMG on 11 October 2019, and records its prayers for him, his family and friends.

The Australian Association of the Order of Malta recognises the outstanding and enduring contribution of Justice Richard.

He attended Melbourne High School from 1962 to 1965, being involved with cadets from the beginning, rising to Cadet Under Officer in his final year. Richard was awarded the Special Cadet Speech Night Prize while he was in Fifth Form. He was also in the school rifle shooting team for two years, and the school debating team, as well as the 2nd XI.

Richard went on to the University of Melbourne, where he was an undergraduate and graduate student at Newman College. He was President of the

Students' Club, a resident tutor in Law at the College, President of the Newman Old Collegians Association for eight years, and on the council of St Mary's College (Newman's partner college) from 1984. Richard's tireless devotion and service to Newman College endured more than 60 years.

Upon graduation Richard was Associate to Sir Richard Eggleston for two years before returning to Melbourne University to teach. He became a barrister and was well respected and successful.

After a distinguished career as an academic and author at the Law School of the University of Melbourne, Richard conducted a busy practice at the bar. He was Chair of the Aged Care Royal Commission and served as a Federal Court Judge for more than 10 years from 2006 to 2018.

Richard served as a member of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) from

1975 to 2014, rising to Major General. He was the youngest and most junior ranked judge advocate of the ADF from 2007 to 2014, and President of the ADF appeal tribunal from 2009 to 2018.

Richard was invested into the Order of Malta as a Knight of Magistral Grace on the 17 October 2009.

On Australia Day 2014, Richard was made a Member of the Order of Australia (Military Division) for exceptional service in the field of military law, as a consultant for the Director of Army Legal Services, as Judge Advocate General of the ADF, and has actively promoted the fairness and integrity of the system. He is described as “a man of the highest integrity”.

Richard died from cancer aged 71 after a short illness. Members of the Order pass their condolences to Richard's wife Hilary, and their children Jack, Philip, Fiona and Rosie.



A BEQUEST TO THE ORDER OF MALTA IS TO GIVE HOPE TO THE FUTURE

Your support can make a real difference to those who need it most.

The Order of Malta has been serving the sick and the poor for over 900 years. By making a bequest to the Order, you will help us continue this work.

The work of the Order of Malta to assist the sick, poor and suffering relies on the generosity and kindness of individuals who make donations. To expand and develop our work with confidence we need funds in place to finance our projects and respond rapidly to emerging needs.

Leaving a bequest is a way of giving that costs nothing during your lifetime. By making a bequest to the Order of Malta in your will you are ensuring we can continue to serve the sick and the poor for years to come.

WHAT WILL YOUR LEGACY BE?

If you would like more information about leaving a bequest to the Order of Malta, please email info@orderofmalta.org.au



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ORIGINAL GLORY

After two years of restoration, one of the oldest churches in Rome, the Church of Santa Maria on the Aventine Hill, is glowing again.

Two and a half centuries after its construction, the restoration of The Church of St. Mary of the Priory, also known by its previous name of St. Mary on the Aventine, was unveiled on 28 March 2019.

Located on the Aventine Hill in the complex of the Magistral Villa, seat of the Sovereign Order of Malta's government, the Church of St. Mary of the Priory stands as an example of medieval architecture and the Order of Malta's history.

The restoration, involving both the interior and exterior of the church, commenced in 2015 from the altar. It took 900 square metres of scaffolding at 12 metres high to restore the only architectural work of the famous Venetian engraver and architect Giovanni Battista Piranesi to its original glory.

From 1764 to 1766, Cardinal Giovanni Battista Rezzonico – Grand Prior of the Order and nephew of Pope Clement XII – entrusted Piranesi with one of the church's first and largest renovation projects, together with the villa and the piazza in front.

Piranesi consolidated the structure of the 16th-century church and raised the side walls. In two years, the artist transformed the ancient medieval church and the adjacent buildings into a Baroque style. He restored the vault, designed the decoration for its new aspect, and redid the façade of the church, covered with elaborate stuccos. One of the highlights on the external façade is the emblems of the noble Rezzonico family and of the Order of the Knights of Malta. This includes a circular oculus, framed by a laurel wreath. Piranesi placed it at the centre of the original structure as a symbol or a burial place for the priors of the Order of Malta.

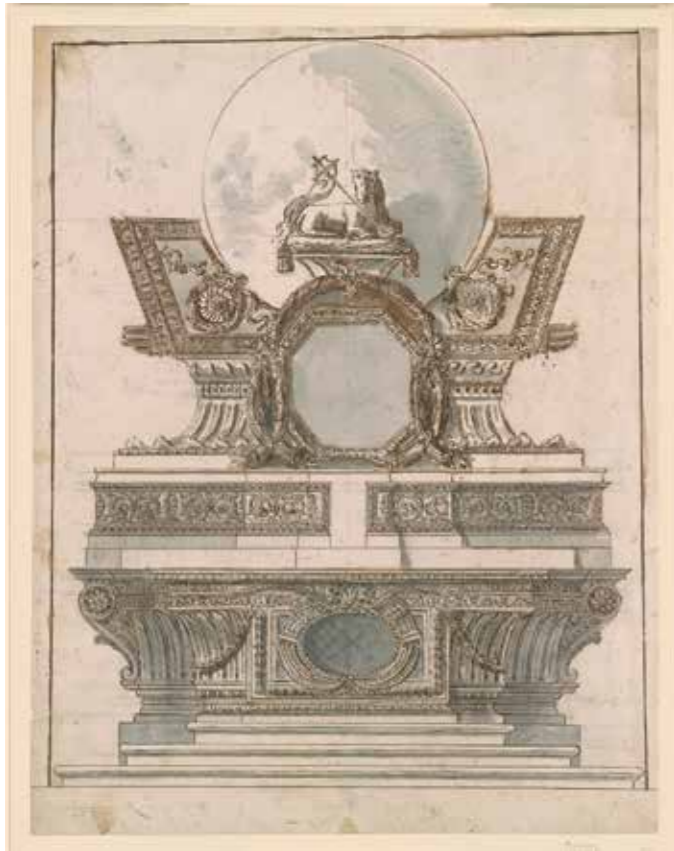
No less impressive is the interior, embellished with stucco and plaster. There are elements symbolising the Templars, such as the snake, the Latin cross, and the ship. The altar is completely made of stucco, considered rather unusual compared to other churches built in the same period.

A pupil of Piranesi, Tommaso Righi, completed the elaborate baroque altar. The composition features three sarcophagi, of which the first constitutes the canteen, above which stands the statue of San Basilio in gloria, surrounded by angels. Next to the altar is the throne of the Grand Master, while the side niches house the tombs of some important personalities linked to the Order.

It was during the time of Piranesi's restoration that he also discovered the suggestive perspective view of the garden in front of the Magistral Villa. Each day tourists would peak through the famous keyhole into Piazza dei Cavalieri di Malta. No key is required, tourists simply put an open eye to the keyhole, and focus on the kaleidoscope vision of St Peter's Basilica dome in the Vatican which is framed by perfectly shaped treetops in the foreground.

The Aventine Hill had always been compared to a ship. Since the time of the Knights Templar, it was said to be ready to raise anchor, catch the tide of the Tevere, and set sail for the Holy Land. Piranesi's construction of the church thus combined this sea-going theme with the memory and myths of the Templars. The obelisks in the square represent masts, while the shrubbery and labyrinth of gardens beyond the door denotes the ship's ropes.

In the 12th century, the church passed into the hands of the Knights Templar the famous warrior monks who maintained it to about 1312 when the monastery became a seat of a priory belonging to the Knights Hospitaller. In the second half of the 14th



Top: A design for the lower section of the high altar of Santa Maria del Priorato lacking figural group of San Basilio, a preparatory drawing. Credit: Morgan Library & Museum.

The restoration of The Church of St. Mary of the Priory was unveiled to some 150 guests on 28 March 2019, representing the patronage of Cardinal Rezzonico and that of the Order of Malta.

century, Pope Paul II granted the monastery to the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. They established their priory in this place and the church took its new name.

Very few interventions have been made to the church since then, except for those of ordinary maintenance, something that renders the recent restoration particularly significant, generously sponsored by the Fondazione Roma and Grand Priory of Rome.

Piranesi was said to be so proud of his work that he was buried at the church in 1778.

Two hundred and forty-two years later, the Roman church was again in the spotlight. A considerable media presence and institutional guests congregated for the unveiling of the restored

church and its works.

The curator of the Order of Malta's Art Collections Fra' John Critien illustrated the most salient features of the restored church.

"The restorers used only scalpels for their meticulous work, carried out with extreme delicacy especially in those parts where inappropriate decoration had covered the original moulding," Technical Director of the work, architect Giorgio Ferreri, explained, pointing out the richness and minutiae of the details, testifying to the great talent of the Venetian engraver. "The method adopted was that of the restoration of painted surfaces, like a picture."

J.S. Bach's partitas and sonatas for violin enriched the inauguration of the church. There was a reading of passages from an anonymous manuscript, written in the period after Giovanni's intervention around the end of the 18th century, which also referred to the completed restoration.

Some 150 guests admired the splendour and magnificence of the building, adorned with symbols of the Order of Malta, to which Giovanni was profoundly linked, as Grand Master Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre recalled in his concluding address: "The church eloquently represents the patronage of Cardinal Rezzonico and that of the Order of Malta. This is testified to by the many symbols on the vault, in the niches and on the façade, as well as in the piazza dei Cavalieri di Malta that narrate the military and naval deeds of our ancient institution, and its character as a religious order of the Catholic Church."

Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre concluded: "It is the responsibility of the Order's government to preserve and enhance the artistic and cultural heritage of which we are transitory beneficiaries."



ORDER OF MALTA
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