

Journal of Spirituality

Service to Neighbour as a Testimony of Faith



SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER OF
SAINT JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA

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16

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Cover Image

“Blessed Gerard”

Founder and First Grand Master of the Order, XI° Century
Fresco in the chapel of the Magistral Palace, Rome

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SAINT JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA



INDEX

1. **Foreword**
(H.E. Fra' Ludwig Hoffmann von Rumerstein) 7
2. **Introduction**.....11
3. **The Role of Chaplains in the Priories and Associations** (H.E. Msgr. Jean Laffitte)15
4. **Tuitio Fidei in the Order of Malta**
(Msgr. Natale Loda)31
5. **The Spirituality of the Order of Saint John**
(Msgr. Luigi Michele de Palma).....59
6. **Regulations and Commentary: Instrument of Formation and Path of Spiritual Progress**
(Fr. Bruno Martin)101
7. **Chaplains and the Liturgical Life of the Order**
(H.Em.ce Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke)129
8. **The Role of the Order Chaplains with Young Volunteers** (Msgr. John Armitage) ...187

9. The Christian Sense of Voluntary Work (H.E. Msgr. Jean Laffitte)	205
10. Promoting Vocations for Knights of Justice (H.E. Fra' Duncan Gallie).....	231
11. Obsequium Pauperum: The Works of the Order (H.E. Dominique Prince de La Rochefoucauld- Montbel).....	247
Past Issue of “Journal of Spirituality”	254



FOREWORD

Dear Consoeurs and Confreres,
Dear Friends and Volunteers of the Order,

After a period in which the Sovereign Order of Malta and some of its leaders have been featured in the newspapers of most of the central European countries and even some US papers and magazines - with both positive and negative comments - it is now important for us to concentrate on the mission indicated by our Order's twofold charism [*tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum*].

The path towards a spiritual renaissance should remind members of the Order of Malta that ours is a lay-religious order. A more deeply rooted spirituality must be the basis for a true moral and ethical renewal to combat the increasingly evident dechristianization of the lay world.

Do members of the Order actively honour their duty to participate in Mass on Sunday and on the

holy days of obligation, or in the annual Confession at least for Holy Easter? I would also add to these obligations the importance of personal prayer and participation in Eucharistic adoration. We must especially pray to the Madonna of Mount Philermos for her to bless her people and all the works they perform, as well as His Holiness Pope Francis.

Are all members of the Order zealous in offering their service, according to the means they possess, to the poor, the needy, the sick and the disabled? The Holy Father Francis constantly reminds us of the mercy of Our Lord Jesus Christ. This does not necessarily mean that we have to give something to every beggar we meet in the street or those asking for alms on the steps of churches. We must instead be present where there is the harshest poverty and need and help this presence by giving. I am thinking in particular of the Christians and refugees arriving from the Near East and North Africa, as well as the many, too many, people who were hit by last year's repeated earthquakes in the Marche and who still need help.

Finally, no activity carried out in the Order and for the Order must be done for financial profit. The

members must serve the Order and not receive personal gain from their membership.

I thank all the authors for their contribution to this journal in the hope that it, and its new graphic design, will be well received.

**H.E. il Venerable Bailiff Fra' Ludwig
Hoffmann – Rumerstein**

Lieutenant ad Interim of the Sovereign Order of Malta



INTRODUCTION

After two years of interruption, we are very pleased to offer a new issue of the “Journal of Spirituality” to all Members of the Sovereign Order of Malta.

We recall, for new readers, that this series was conceived in 2001 by the Prelate of the Order Archbishop Angelo Acerbi, and continued to be published yearly until 2014.

The first fifteen numbers of the series have carefully analyzed the spirituality of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem. Thanks to the dedicated work of the scholars who have contributed to the series, the spiritual history of our Order and its seminal founding insights have helped many Knights and Dames of the Three Classes to improve their awareness of belonging to a true spiritual family, rich in centuries-old traditions.

At the same time, Archbishop Acerbi had, as some of our Confreres, the conscience of the urgency to convey a true formation to our Members, not only

in the history but also in the spirituality of the Order of Malta. During the interval of the past two years, an important book has been published, written conjunctly by some scholars of Order: it is called “*From Jerusalem to Rome. An Historical – Spiritual Journey*”, published in Italian in 2015. The book in translation into several languages (English, French, Spanish ...). This literary initiative had an enthusiastic welcome (in fact the Italian edition was sold out by the end of the year 2015); we are now thinking to publish a second edition.

The need for formation for all Members of the Order has become a common conviction: various initiatives have already been taken in this direction such as, for example, the recent Meeting of the Principal Chaplains of Europe, which took place in Rome at the Magistral Villa on the Aventine, on January 24 to 26, 2017. Other similar events have been scheduled in the forthcoming months.

Among its priorities for the oncoming years, the Government of the Order has recommended to increase formation and training programs. An initiative, in this direction, has been the regular meetings of the Prelate with the National Associations in the

various continents, as well as the meetings with the Chaplains serving in those territorial entities of the Order.

In this context, it was decided to resume the publication of the “Journal of Spirituality”, on the basis of one issue per year, as in the past. The publication will continue to be directed by the Prelate of the Order.

This issue, which is the 16th of the series, offers the readers a well-balanced set of essays in order to focus on the theme: “*Service to Neighbour as a Testimony of Faith*”. Besides the articles of some well-known contributors, such as Msgrs. Natale Loda and Luigi Michele de Palma, and Fr. Bruno Martin, you will find the addresses offered by Msgr. John Armitage, H.E. Fra’ Duncan Gallie, the Cardinal *Patronus* Raymond Leo Burke, and the Prelate on the occasion of the aforementioned training session for the Principal Chaplains of Europe; as well as on the occasion of the past two International Hospitallers’ Conferences of the Order of Malta, held in Malta in 2016 and in Paris in 2017.

To encourage our initiative, H.E. the Venerable Bailiff Fra’ Ludwig Hoffmann von Rumerstein, Lieutenant *ad Interim*, has offered a welcome address;

and we also deemed appropriate to present, by way of conclusion, the most recent humanitarian activities of the Order, as set out in the contribution of the Grand Hospitaller, H.E. Dominique Prince de la Rochefoucauld-Montbel.

In order to emphasize continuity with the work edited by Archbishop Acerbi, we chose to keep the format of the previous editions, while proposing a revamped cover with the beautiful portrait of our founder, Blessed Gerard, which is in the Chapel of the Grand Magistry.

Finally , we would like to express our gratitude to Mr Robert Halley and his family for their generous support in the publication of this volume.

J.L.



THE ROLE OF THE CHAPLAINS IN THE PRIORIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

The occasion of our meeting is reason for great joy; it is not very frequent that chaplains of the Order from different nations have the opportunity to meet, if we except the annual pilgrimage in Lourdes. I would like to express my gratitude to our Grand Master Fra' Matthew to have encouraged this initiative, demonstrating once more how the role of the chaplains is important in his eyes for the entire Order of Malta. I thank also HE Fra' Duncan Galie for the work he did to prepare this meeting, the program that is proposed and all the material assistance he gave to the Secretariat of the Prelate. And thank you very much to all of you for your presence these three days.

This session is the first step of different initiatives that will develop in the context of the Formation Project, which was decided two years ago by His Highness and the Sovereign Council. As you know,

there are already different occasions for the Knights and Dames to meet and receive some teachings during small sessions of formation: for instance, International Regional Meetings for the Presidents of Associations, as it was in Panama last February (Meeting of the Presidents and Chaplains of Central America and Caribbean); or Meeting of the Hospitallers like it was in Malta in March 2016 or like the one that will be held next March in Paris. Such initiatives not only serve to unify the transmission of the teachings, indications or practical norms ; they also contribute to increasing the awareness of being members of a true spiritual family and favouring through spiritual teachings the Christian fraternity between knights having different functions.

All of us here have the same responsibility: we are in charge of a certain number of Chaplains. This conversation would like to briefly explore two kinds of reflection: first, the nature of the service of the chaplains to the Priories and Associations; second, the nature of our own service as chief chaplains to the chaplains who are under our responsibility.

I. The Service of the Chaplains to the Knights and Dames

1) *What does it mean to be a priest in a religious Order?*

Of course this is a paradox: some of our chaplains are not secular priests but religious priests, members of various religious congregations. For them, there is an easier, a more natural understanding of what is the essence of a religious vocation, even if it remains the specificity of a lay religious family which differs in some aspects from a classical religious family, where priests are the majority. In our Order, there are also religious priests, the professed chaplains, but they are a very small minority, 6 or 7 people.

I propose that we examine our own vocation of Chaplain in order to see then how we can have an authentic role of advising our brother candidates in preparation for the first or second class.

2) *The Chaplain of the SMOM Incarnates the Spiritual Essential Intuitions of the Order*

The Chaplain should see his belonging to the Order as a kind of providential privilege (and not a social privilege!) for himself and for others. For himself first : as a

member of the Order, he should not consider all the traditions, the intuitions, the aims and purposes of the Order as concerns external to him, like requests that would concern only the other members. It would be wrong to see the service of the chaplain as a simple priestly service that could be carried out by any priest. Too often we meet this situation: priests who are requested only to celebrate the holy Mass and not for any other spiritual help. This is an utilitarian view that cannot be fruitful within an association. Of course any Eucharistic Sacrifice is sacramentally fruitful, but it is necessary to remember that the spiritual intuitions that structure the different classes of members of the Order of Malta are the common good of the Order; it means that they are also the good of any chaplain. That is why the chaplains are supposed to have an aptitude for helping the sick, the suffering, those in need and the elderly as it is stated in Article 3 of the *Regulations for Conventual Chaplains ad Honorem and Magistral Chaplains*¹. This disposition is an important element of discernment. The chaplains are not indifferent to the suf-

¹ SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER OF SAINT JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA, *Regulations for Conventual Chaplains Ad Honorem and Magistral Chaplains*, Rome 2011 (from now on, *Regulations for Chaplains*), p. 7.

fering of people; they have a compassionate heart, full of mercy for the sick and the poor.

I would add that, if their vocation is authentic, they have a special quality: a generous heart. Allow me here to refer to the last meeting of all the hospitallers that took place last March in Malta². I was asked to speak on this very particular topic: what it means to have a generous heart. I was sincerely surprised and pleased of this demand that sounded more oriented towards spirituality than simply ethics of action. 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. A generous heart should qualify any priest member of the Order. 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. The Chaplains look always to the Sick and the Poor with the eyes of Christ. They immediately recognize in them the presence of the Lord and Master.

This is the foundation of the *obsequium pauperum*,

² Cf. *infra*, J. LAFFITTE, *The Sense of Christian Voluntary Work*.

one of the two inspiring charisms of the Order of Malta.

The other foundation has an even greater importance: *tuitio fidei*. As we know, as chaplains, we have to care about the faith of our brothers members of all the three classes. We will see later what it means exactly. The *tuitio fidei*, nevertheless, refers also to the faith of the priest himself. The chaplains of the Order should have the determination of growing in the faith of the Catholic Church and in the Christian way to act in their ministry activities. These words, *tuitio fidei*, imply a deep assent to the content of Divine Revelation and to what the Church teaches, *in fide* and *in moribus*. In this perspective, the Chaplain should be for his brother Knights an authentic reference for the exact and faithful and loving transmission of Church teachings. Here we have an extremely important service to carry out: being able to explain what the Church retains as essential for the salvation of her children. Our brothers and sisters are eager to hear from us what is legitimate to do in their service, what is compatible with the teaching of our Lord of which the *Magisterium* is the true interpreter. We cannot express our personal perplexities or doubts, when it is about essential elements of

Faith or Christian ethics. It is their right to receive the ecclesial teachings through their priests who are supposed to help them to discern, when matters appear to be more complex. This implies that we care about our own personal permanent formation. Even if we are not supposed to be specialists in any theological field, there are questions, especially in Christian anthropology and ethics that need a certain preparation. Thanks be to God, in these matters, the Church teachings are very substantial and precise. We cannot ignore this material.

3) *The Necessary Exemplarity of the Chaplains*

As any of us has experienced, all members of the Order look at the chaplains in a very demanding way. For them, they are also a reference as priests. The regulations insist much on the duty of sanctification the chaplain should carry out for all the members of the Order.

Let me quote some sources: in Article 3 of the text already mentioned, it is written about the “*ability for ministering spiritually*”³; or about the liturgical participation in the ceremonies of the Order, or on

³ *Regulations for Chaplains*, p. 7.

pilgrimages (Article 5). We all think of the extraordinary pilgrimage in Lourdes on which most of us had the opportunity to participate in the past. We have also sometimes the grace of attending for instance a Promise of Obedience, or to celebrate liturgical particular events of Feasts proper to the Order. All this is a grace for us, but certainly, our presence is essential for our brothers who have been preparing for a special commitment.

The ministry of sanctification goes beyond the limits of the celebrations: it includes what Article 5 calls: “*to ensure spiritual help for members of the Order, especially in cases of illness*”⁴. We have to make ourselves available, when it is possible, to respond to a particular demand of spiritual direction or advice. As we can imagine, in order to be able to do it with a supernatural fruitfulness, it is important to know well what it means for a brother to assume publicly a new commitment in the Order, or to change status, or to pronounce a religious vow. We are asked to take this very seriously as it is about a divine vocation, or at least about the choice of a means to progress in

⁴ *Regulations for Chaplains*, p. 11.

the way of a major union with the Lord, through the service of the Sick and the Poor.

There is also a special request to encourage and organize, if possible, spiritual retreats and spiritual formation for the Knights and the Dames, as well for those involved in the activities of the Order⁵.

All this refers to what we can do for our brothers; if we carry out faithfully these services and if our generosity will meet the generosity of our members, there will be a kind of reciprocal exemplarity that will allow the Order to do its mission according to its specific vocation; we should not forget that among the so-called “*Fundamental Requirements for Chaplains of All Classes*” indicated in Article 3, an “*upright priestly life*” is mentioned⁶. Obviously, it is not my intention here to moralize, but to tell you what I perceived from the expectations of our brothers, especially from the lay people, concerning the chaplains. In other words, which are the qualities they appreciate more in a chaplain? Being spiritual, men of prayer; our being available for the various services; our understanding

⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶ *Regulations for Chaplains*, p. 7.

of what their personal call is; the absence of clericalism, being related to our knowledge of the lay specificity of the Order, especially in matters of government, faithfulness to Church teachings, and what the Christian Tradition calls the *urbanitas*, that is a certain gentle, open, meek, respectful, humble way to deal with people. Among the defaults they dislike the most are arrogance, the desire to command, brutality in words, doctrinal or moral insecurity in our teachings.

Of course, the same quality of attention and service we reserve to the Knights and Dames should be equally directed to the volunteers and friends of the Order: only in this way can they be attracted by the perspective of entering our family.

To summarize: as priests they consider us as fathers, and as members of the Order, they consider us as brothers.

II - The service of the Chief Chaplains

The duties of the Principal Chaplain are part of the text *Regulations for Conventual Chaplains ad Honorem and Magistral Chaplains*, issued by the Grand

Master and the Sovereign Council on June 20th, 2003. The first instruction is the organization of a meeting of the Chaplains at least once a year⁷. Such a meeting allows not only the coordination of all pastoral and liturgical activities and the transmission of eventual news or instructions from the authorities of the Order, but also the development of a true fraternity between the chaplains. In Article 8 it is stated that the Principal Chaplain has “*to advise the Chaplains and give them fraternal help in carrying out their ministry, especially if they are ill or elderly*”⁸. As we can see, the authority of the Principal Chaplain is a service of fraternal nature. He discusses with the competent Superiors matters of the Order in which the priestly ministry is involved. Among these questions, Article 8 mentions the maintenance of good relations in pastoral collaboration and spiritual understanding with local Churches and their Pastors; the promotion of an annual course of spiritual exercises, which can be open to all delegations; making sure that the churches of the individual bodies of the

⁷ *Regulations for Chaplains*, art. 8 §1 a), p. 13.

⁸ *Regulations for Chaplains*, art. 8 §1 b), p. 13.

Order are carefully supervised, and that services are carried out always in conformity to the directives of the Holy See⁹.

It is not necessary to develop any of these instructions here, because many of them are inspired by solid experience and common sense. The Principal Chaplain facilitates the relationship between the authorities of the Order and any of the single chaplains. He should not be an obstacle: any member should feel free to establish spiritual contact with the chaplain, if there is a need.

It is also for a prudential reason, that if we insist on this fraternal dimension of the relationship we are having, as principal chaplains, with our brothers priests: we should be aware of a particular responsibility we have, to be vigilant and to care for our chaplains. Sometimes, it may happen that a chaplain has personal difficulties in his life or in his ministry. Often when we become aware of it, it may be too late, only because we were not able to anticipate the problem and to see how it increased. When we are linked with our priests through fraternal friendship,

⁹ *Regulations for Chaplains*, art. 8 §1, p. 13.

we may be able to notice something and to prevent a possible future huge problem.

We all know that kind of situation. Sometimes at the beginning, we may notice in one of our priests a trend towards honors, worldliness, decorations, titles, the desire to obtain more power, and so on. If we are not attentive, this trend may develop in a true problem for the association or for the other chaplains. We have to protect our members, Knights and Dames, as well as our chaplains. Sometimes, just one or two similar cases can create locally a huge difficulty. These are only examples. The true, sincere and fraternal care for our brothers is a very efficient means to consolidate our group at the service of our Priory and Association.

During the last months, I visited various Associations and then of course the chaplains who serve in them: after the international meetings in Panama and Malta I have already mentioned, I could visit the French Association, the American and Federal ones, and five Associations of South America; also the Canadian and German ones, the group of the chaplains of the Grand Priory of Lombardy and Venice; and the Spanish Association. The differences between all these

entities of the Order are important, especially for the chaplains' service. In some places there are only two or three chaplains, and sometimes even only one priest. I give you an example. I met all the chaplains in the countries I visited in South America: Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Bolivia and Peru. In one country, Uruguay, there is only one chaplain in activity. I could see him, celebrate with him at the Cathedral of Montevideo in the presence of more or less 30 people including the members of the local Association, and have a very good and fraternal talk. This priest is very active, but he has no opportunity to meet other chaplains; certainly he would like to go to Lourdes, but honestly when you are in Uruguay, Lourdes seems the extremity of the world! All this is true, yet this man has a right and very deep understanding and perception of what his service as a chaplain is. With his brothers present in the other countries of South America, he might participate in a regional meeting of the chaplains, that has to be organized, and so he will know other priests, and all will have the opportunity to exchange their personal experiences at the service of the Order.

What I was able to learn from these various visits is this: there is an expectation in everyone to know

better the Order in its complexity, to know the other chaplains, and of course to know the Prelate of the Order and to communicate with him. It is very interesting for me to see how the volume of letters and e-mails coming from the chaplains is increasing. I have to plan a better organization of my own work and secretariat. It is a great experience. Of course many Associations, among which the three American ones, have a substantial group of chaplains, which allows to experience a kind of fraternity. We always have to consider that the chaplains are not only a gift for the Association, but also for us, the other chaplains. For that it is necessary to think of the providential gift that anyone represents for the other. It means that all our meetings, our relationships, the constructive conversations, are part of a benevolent design of divine Providence.

Let me finish with Lourdes: last year, our Pilgrimage in Lourdes gathered 125 chaplains during the chaplains' meeting. Thinking about it, we may consider that Lourdes is the only opportunity in the year for any member of the Order to meet all other members, Knights and Dames, Professed and Chaplains coming from all over the world. This is

particularly true for the chaplains. We must believe that the experience of Lourdes is a unique one, to meet other brother chaplains from different cultures, perspectives, ecclesial background, and to exchange experiences in our relationship with our brothers and sisters, the Knights and the Dames of the Order of Malta.

May the Blessed Gerard, Our Lady of Mount Philermos, St John the Baptist and all the Saints and Blessed of the Order intercede to protect and guide us in fulfilling our pastoral mission.

✠ **Jean Laffitte**

Titular Bishop of Entrevaux

Prelate of the Order



TUITIO FIDEI IN THE ORDER OF MALTA

Introduction

Most Reverend Excellency, Excellences, dear Conferes, I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to share some reflections with you on *tuitio fidei*, the cornerstone and purpose that identifies the Order of St. John.

The spirituality of the Order of Malta has its essence and scope in the promotion of the glory of God through the sanctification of its members with *tuitio fidei* and *obsequium pauperum*. The *Constitutional Charter* of 1961 and the *Code* of the Order promulgated in 1966, amended in the Chapters General of 1973 and 1978 and permanently revised in the Extraordinary Chapter General of 28-30 April 1997, in Art. 2 §1 establish that:

The purpose of the Order is the promotion of the glory of God through the sanctification of its members, service to the faith and to the Holy Fa-

ther, and assistance to one's neighbour, in accordance with its ancient traditions¹⁰.

This also applies to *Regulations and Commentary*¹¹ - a reference tool for all members of the Order of Malta, offering an aid for ordering their lives to encourage greater unity and achieve perfection in Christian life in the Order¹² - that addresses *tuitio fidei* and *obsequium pauperum* at length.

Regarding the Order of Malta's two traditional values, *tuitio fidei* constitutes the premise of hope and charity, that is of *obsequium pauperum*. The values of *tuitio fidei* and *obsequium pauperum* are rooted in the present life of the Order and ensure that those belonging to it, living according to faith, hope

¹⁰ SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA, *Constitutional Charter and Code of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta*, promulgated on 27 June 1961 revised by the Extraordinary Chapter General of 28-30 April 1997, Roma 2007.

¹¹ SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA, *Regulations and Commentary*, Promulgated by H.M.E.H. the Prince and Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing and approved by the Sovereign Council on February 18, 2011, Roma 2011.

¹² FRA' MATTHEW FESTING, *Reflection of H.M.E.H. the Grand Master*, in *Journal of Spirituality* 9 (2008) pp. 7-11.

and charity, model their lives on God, the Supreme Good.

How can we not recall the words of Benedict XVI, that so well express and recall the diakonia of *tuitio fidei*, during the 9 February 2013 meeting for the 9th centenary of the solemn privilege *Pie postulatio voluntatis* of 15 February 1113, with which Pope Paschal II placed the newly founded “hospitaller fraternity” of Jerusalem, named after St. John the Baptist, under the protection of the Church:

Your Order, from its earliest days, has been marked by fidelity to the Church and to the Successor of Peter, and also for its unrenounceable spiritual identity, characterized by high religious ideals. Continue to walk along this path, bearing concrete witness to the transforming power of faith. By faith the Apostles left everything to follow Jesus, and then went out to the whole world, in fulfilment of his command to bring the Gospel to every creature; fearlessly they proclaimed to all people the power of the cross and the joy of the resurrection of Christ, which they had witnessed directly. By faith, the martyrs gave their lives, demonstrating the truth of the Gospel which had

*transformed them and made them capable of attaining to the highest gift, the fruit of love: that of forgiving their persecutors. And by faith, down the centuries, the members of your Order have given themselves completely, firstly in the care of the sick in Jerusalem and then in aid to pilgrims in the Holy Land who were exposed to grave dangers: their lives have added radiant pages to the annals of Christian charity and protection of Christianity. In the nineteenth century, the Order opened up to new and more ample forms of apostolate in the area of charitable assistance and service of the sick and the poor, but without ever abandoning the original ideals, especially that of the intense spiritual life of individual members*¹³.

Faith as Response to the Gift of God and the Christian Vocation

Faith, which is the first of the Christian virtues in the triptych of the three theological virtues, introduces us to a “life in communion with God” allowing us

¹³ BENEDICT XVI, *Address of the Holy Father Benedict XVI to the Members of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta*, 9 February 2013 in http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2013/february/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20130209_ordine-malta.html.

to enter and live in the Church. In an objective sense the Christian faith is the virtue that has as subject God Himself, his mystery, his word and his works. In a subjective sense faith is the divine life in us, a virtue donated, infused, nurtured, sustained, tested and examined by God Himself. The heart of Christian faith has its foundation in the sacrament of baptism (Rom 6:4) and its response in listening to the Word of God announced, the liturgical celebration, above all the divine liturgy that is the Holy Mass, in prayer and in reciting the Credo (symbol of the faith) that opens us to the awareness that the Lord really gave himself for us, together with the spiritual and ordinary life we lead.

Faith is born of an encounter with the living God who calls us and reveals his love, us and upon which we can lean for security and for building our lives. Transformed by this love, we gain fresh vision, new eyes to see; we realize that it contains a great promise of fulfilment, and that a vision of the future opens up before us¹⁴.

The entire Christian life is a response to God's

¹⁴ FRANCIS, Encyclical letter *Lumen fidei*, 29 June 2013, n. 4.

love. The first response is precisely faith as the acceptance, filled with wonder and gratitude, of the unprecedented divine initiative that precedes us and summons us. And the “yes” of faith marks the beginning of a radiant story of friendship with the Lord, which fills and gives full meaning to our whole life. But it is not enough for God that we simply accept his free love. Not only does he love us, but he wants to draw us to himself, to transform us in such a profound way that we can say with Saint Paul: “*it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me*” (cf. Gal 2:20).

When we make room for the love of God, then we become like him, sharing in his own love. If we open ourselves to his love, we allow him to live in us and lead us to love with him, in him and like him; only then does our faith become truly “*active through love*” (Gal 5:6); only then does he abide in us (cf. 1 Jn 4:12).

Starting with the fundamental assertion of the apostle John, “*We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us*” (1 Jn 4:16), Benedict XVI, in his encyclical letter *Deus caritas est*, said that:

Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an

event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.... Since God has first loved us (cf. 1 Jn 4:10), love is now no longer a mere “command”; it is the response to the gift of love with which God draws near to us¹⁵.

Faith tells us that God has given his Son for our sakes and gives us the victorious certainty that it is really true: God is love! ... Faith, which sees the love of God revealed in the pierced heart of Jesus on the Cross, gives rise to love. Love is the light—and in the end, the only light—that can always illuminate a world grown dim and give us the courage needed to keep living and working¹⁶.

All this tells us that the fundamental behaviour of Christians is precisely “love grounded in and shaped by faith”¹⁷.

Faith consists of that personal fidelity – that involves all our faculties, that is intellect, will, thoughts, intentions, heart, affections, relations, physicality,

¹⁵ BENEDICT XVI, Encyclical letter *Deus caritas est*, 25 December 2005, n. 1.

¹⁶ *Deus caritas est*, n. 39.

¹⁷ *Deus caritas est*, n. 7. G. ANGELINI, *La fede una forma per la vita*, Milano 2014.

work – to the revelation of the gratuitous and “passionate” love that God has for us, and that is fully demonstrated in Jesus Christ. This encounter with God’s love does not only concern the heart but also our will and our intellect: *“Acknowledgment of the living God is one path towards love, and the “yes” of our will to his will unites our intellect, will and sentiments in the all-embracing act of love. But this process is always open-ended; love is never “finished” and complete”*¹⁸. This means transforming our heart by converting it to God, the forgiveness of sins for a new life.

Faith must be professed and believed through a renewed and convinced confession. The act of faith is expressed in its content, it is reintroduced in the significant magisterial documents and in particular in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* that teaches us the strength and beauty of faith.

Faith must be celebrated and prayed for in the sacraments and especially in the Eucharist, as a *fons et culmen* of the life and mission of the Church.

Faith must be witnessed and announced to be true and credible members of the Christian community.

¹⁸ *Deus caritas est*, n. 17.

***Tuitio fidei* and the Order of Malta**

To have faith in God means entrusting yourself to him with sincerity, to his grace and his strength, it is believing in yourself not as self-reference, but as a person enriched with gifts of divine grace.

In the Gospel of John, chap. 10, Christ describes himself as the good shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep, and says to us (Jn 10,10): “*I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly*”. To have faith is to live life to the full, abundantly, incarnating in your existence the strength of the Holy Spirit. Constructing one’s life in faith (with the grace of God) is to become in turn grace (*Charis*) and gift for our brother or sister: this is how you reach fullness.

The Sovereign Military Order of Malta has established *tuitio fidei* as its motto (I would say almost say a call to arms). This term comes from Latin and indicates *observance, vigilance, custody, defence, protection, care, taking care, treating, supporting, watching over and keeping*.

Tuitio: this is a single word that recognizes and expresses maturity, a generating paternity, being a leader and witness, a *captaincy*, that is the *adult* faith

of the Christian (Eph 4:14)¹⁹, that courageously goes against the winds and currents of the modern world. First of all *tuitio* is a *service to the faith* (Art. 2 §1 *Constitutional Charter*) which members of the Order have to perform. In this sense the word ***tuitio*** as *service to the faith* is a *diakonia*, that includes and signifies: **Observance of the Faith**, assuming the knowledge and profession of the faith of the Church, the history and traditions of an ecclesial community such as the Order of Malta²⁰. Only in this way does the observance of the faith become acknowledgment of the gift of God, imply approaching and living according to charity in compliance with, respect of and obedience to the faith, to the magisterium; these are the virtues of a Knight and of a Dame.

Vigilance, on the integrity of faith itself. This demonstrates that the S.M.O.M. is a military Order, where vigilance is a duty of the soldier-knight.

¹⁹ Eph 4:14-15: "So that we may no longer be infants, tossed by waves and swept along by every wind of teaching arising from human trickery, from their cunning in the interests of deceitful scheming. Rather, living the truth in love, we should grow in every way into him who is the head, Christ".

²⁰ SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA, *Regulations and Commentary*, p. 35.

Defence, of the faith with faith and its works. This defence is performed with the profession of faith (*Credo*) and celebration of the sacraments, the Eucharist, with prayer and by bearing witness. This activity also refers to a military order, as a true response to the questions of our times.

Protection, of the treasure God has given us. This is a service both *ad intra*, personally and as members of the Order, and *ad extra*, for all the *Christifideles* and for those who do not believe.

Custody, of the faith through the faith and the other theological virtues. That is, vigilance as a typical action that expresses a *diakonia* of a military order.

Care, so that our free consent to God shines in the world through our witness and acknowledgement of the faith, recognising him as transcendent, guarantor of the truth he reveals. As said before, this involves celebrating the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, as well as prayer and bearing witness. In this way crises of faith are cured. But the word *care* has the medical meaning of *taking care of*, it is solicitude and thoughtful and prompt attention that the faith be preserved, ensuring that it is protected. Care is also expressed in safeguarding your spiritual health.

Watch over: like vigilance and also custody this term has a specific connotation that refers to the

S.M.O.M. being a Catholic Christian military order. **Keep the faith firm and steady:** there must be no wavering, digressions nor false witness, first of all with obedience.

Support the faith: with the strength that comes from grace, even amid difficulties, incomprehension and rejection.

All these descriptions insert a characteristic of *tuitio* that, together with the strength of faith, expresses the *service* to the faith.

The fact of belonging, loving and working, and thus recognizing ourselves in the values of the S.M.O.M., implies for each of us living wholly not only the faith but also the other theological virtues of hope and charity as Christians – especially in the Order of St. John – together with the other moral, natural and human qualities. Note that all the virtues are indicative of the fact that the faith is truly present and we are of Christ.

***Tuitio fidei* is a *Diakonìa* Testifying to Faith**

The title of the first chapter of the encyclical *Lumen fidei* (8-22) is *We Have Believed in Love* (1Jn 4:16),

where the central point of the entire chapter is the acknowledgment of faith as a gift, something united and inseparably joined to charity, to love. To the extent of saying, with a language both simple and peremptory, that *faith does not exist without love and love does not exist without faith*.

If faith is knowing the truth and adhering to it (1Tim 2:4), then its witness comes in the joy of love, it is “walking” in the truth (Eph 4:15). With faith you enter into friendship²¹ with the Lord; but the demonstration and proof of this friendship, living it and cultivating it, is illuminated only in love (cf. Jn 15:14 ff.), with the coherence and witness of life in favour of the person, of justice and of truth. How can we announce and witness faith if we do not realize it in charity, in love and in friendship with our brothers and sisters²², if we do not give it creativity? A creativity that shows the image of the Creator in the person²³.

²¹ In the sense given by P. FLORENSKIJ, *Colonna e fondamento della verità, Saggio di Teologia ortodossa in dodici lettere*, Cinisello Balsamo 2010.

²² F.X. NGUYỄN VAN THUÂN, *La gioia di vivere la Fede*, Vatican City 2013.

²³ N. BERDJAEV, *Il senso della creazione. Saggio per una giustificazione dell'uomo*, Milano 1994, pp. 132-133.

Only the faith that receives the commandment of the Lord and Master, identifying with him, enables us to be witnesses and see ourselves first of all as humanity loved by God. This does not generate only joy, but in turn makes us creators, collaborating with the divine work of creation and construction of the world²⁴. Charity comes from the faith witnessed that gives us the beatitude of putting into practice the commandment of the Lord (cf. Jn 13:13-17). Our humanity through faith is accomplished according to our *structure of being*, that is, we are Christian people intrinsically made *for* God, *for* believing, hoping and loving, *for* others, responding to a love that precedes us and calls us to it. By receiving the gift of faith we are generated like children of God (cf. Jn 1:12 ff.). The witness of faith generates love and charity that make us persevere in the divine sonship, bringing the fruit of the Holy Spirit (cf. Gal 5:22). Faith bears witness to the gifts that the good and generous God entrusts to us, charity makes them bear fruit (cf. Mt 25:14-30).

Faith is an *encounter-dialogue-embrace between Christ and those who believe* that makes us witnesses of his hu-

²⁴ N. BERDJAIEV, *Il senso della creazione*, pp. 184-185.

man essence if we acknowledge the gift of faith and bear witness to it. Thus like St. Ambrose we can say: “It is with faith that we touch; it is with faith that we see Christ” (*Exposition on the Gospel according to Saint Luke*, VI:57), it is by witness to the faith that we encounter Christ in the world and above all in our poorest neighbours.

We are all called to be witnesses of a gift, that of the grace of faith which unites us to the creativity (which is a gift of God) of people and of the Knight, who is responsible for all his brothers and sisters, operating in the world with the aim of transforming it²⁵.

***Tuitio fidei* is Witness to and Announcement of the Faith, New Evangelization**

Tuitio fidei was proposed and encouraged by Benedict XVI when, on 9 February 2013, he met the members, volunteers and all those belonging to the Malta family to celebrate the 9th centenary of the Order, saying:

Dear friends, continue working in society and in the world along the elevated paths indicated by the Gospel

²⁵ N. BERDJAEV, *Filosofia dello spirito libero*, Cinisello Balsamo 1997, pp. 395-396.

– faith and charity, for the renewal of hope: faith, as testimony of adherence to Christ and of commitment to the Gospel mission, which inspires you to an ever more vital presence in the ecclesial community and to an ever more conscious membership of the people of God; charity, as an expression of fraternity in Christ, through works of mercy for the sick, the poor, those in need of love, comfort and assistance, those who are afflicted by loneliness, by a sense of bewilderment and by new material and spiritual forms of poverty. These ideals are aptly expressed in your motto: “Tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum”²⁶.

Faith has a necessarily ecclesial form, it is confessed within the body of Christ as a tangible communion of believers implying an assumption of responsibility. It is from this ecclesial place – just as in the Order of St. John Baptist – that faith offers a personal encounter with God (Jn 14:23) opening the individual Christian to all humanity. “Faith is not

²⁶ Address of the Holy Father Benedict XVI to the Members of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, 9 February 2013, in http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2013/february/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20130209_ordine-malta.html.

a private matter, a completely individualistic notion or a personal opinion: it comes from hearing, and it is meant to find expression in words and to be proclaimed"²⁷.

Hence it applies to all Christians in the world²⁸ (in particular for us as members of the Order of Malta) according to our status or rank, to all of us who have to be witnesses and heralds of the faith, of "*that encounter with God in Christ which awakens their love and opens their spirits to others. As a result, love of neighbour will no longer be for them a commandment imposed, so to speak, from without, but a consequence deriving from their faith, a faith which becomes active through love*"²⁹.

²⁷ *Lumen fidei*, n. 22.

²⁸ *Lumen fidei*, n. 17 that states: "Our culture has lost its sense of God's tangible presence and activity in our world. We think that God is to be found in the beyond, on another level of reality, far removed from our everyday relationships. But if this were the case, if God could not act in the world, his love would not be truly powerful, truly real, and thus not even true, a love capable of delivering the bliss that it promises. It would make no difference at all whether we believed in him or not".

²⁹ *Deus caritas est*, n. 31a. They are persons moved by Christ's love, persons whose hearts Christ has conquered with his love - "*Caritas Christi urget nos*" - awakening within them a love of their neighbour (2 Cor 5:14), (cf. *Deus caritas est*, n. 33). This attitude above all comes from the awareness of being loved, pardoned and even served by the Lord, who bends to wash the feet of the apostle and offered himself on the cross to draw humanity into God's love.

Tuitio fidei, with bearing witness to faith and announcing it, shows us that “it is impossible to believe on our own because Faith is not simply an individual decision which takes place in the depths of the believer’s heart, nor a completely private relationship between the “I” of the believer and the divine “Thou”, between an autonomous subject and God. By its very nature, faith is open to the “We” of the Church; it always takes place within her communion. It allows us to grasp a reality that fills us with joy and enthusiasm: “those who believe are never alone,” but “discover that their horizons expand as new and enriching relationships come to life”³⁰. *Tuitio fidei*, witness and herald of faith, operates in communion, in the community, in the members of the Order of St. John. The problem arises when it is necessary to establish the necessary means for the Knights to be witnesses and heralds of faith.

Tuitio fidei as mission of the Order of St. John is expressed not only in bearing witness but also in proclaiming (*Lumen gentium*, 17). This is the new evangelization:

³⁰ *Lumen fidei*, n. 39 recalls the fine testimony of Tertullian who describes: “the catechumens who, “after the cleansing which gives new birth” are welcomed into the house of their mother and, as part of a new family, pray the Our Father together with their brothers and sisters”.

“an intermediate situation, particularly in countries with ancient Christian roots, and occasionally in the younger Churches as well, where entire groups of the baptized have lost a living sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church, and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel. In this case what is needed is a “new evangelization”³¹.

Tuitio fidei is the *diakonia* of faith that expresses the mission of the Order of St. John and becomes the work of a new, articulated and transmitted evangelization³²:

- a) In our culture, in a world that is strongly secularized with hedonism and consumerism, in a hostile and intellectual society, without reference to transcendence, that has become a terrain of daily conflict for Christians, where they have to propose their witness in the social-ecclesial sphere³³.
- b) *Tuitio fidei* with *obsequium pauperum* will tackle the migratory phenomenon and globalization in the

³¹ JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical letter *Redemptoris missio*, 07 December 1990, n. 33. R. BLASQUEZ, “Guai a me se non annunziassi il Vangelo”, *Iniziazione cristiana e Nuova Evangelizzazione*, Napoli 1997, pp. 23-27.

³² G. ANGELINI, *La Fede*, p. 205 et ss.

³³ G. ANGELINI, *La Fede*, p. 179 et ss.

margins of existence bearing witness and salvation - humane and physical, as well as moral, compassionate and spiritual - for those who have never encountered the faith or who have walked away from it because of a “counter witness”³⁴.

- c) In the social media.
- d) In small charitable actions, when it is possible to have an influence in the economy, sciences, arts or politics, on the basis of Christian anthropology and ethics, putting into practice the Church’s social doctrine³⁵.
- e) In politics and public administration, as examples of honesty and loyalty. In this way *tuitio fidei* proposes to create new forms of listening, co-existence, dialogue and collaboration, the protection of human rights and rights of populations, the promotion of the weakest and safeguarding creation: these are the topics and sectors that have to be illuminated with the light of the Gospel.

³⁴ A. MATTEO, *La Chiesa di fronte all'uomo contemporaneo: le periferie esistenziali*, in COMMISSIONE EPISCOPALE PER LA CULTURA E LE COMUNICAZIONI SOCIALI DELLA CEI, *Fede, cultura, educazione*, Bologna 2014, pp. 89-102.

³⁵ F. BRANCATO, *La proposta della fede. Testimoniare il Vangelo nell'età della tecnica*, in COMMISSIONE EPISCOPALE PER LA CULTURA E LE COMUNICAZIONI SOCIALI DELLA CEI, *Fede, cultura, educazione*, pp. 155-169.

The nature and the objectives of *tuitio fidei* as a new evangelization respond to the need:

- a) To enhance the Christian identity through training and education in faith, to live a clear, strong and profound faith, according to a sound ecclesial membership. Hence the need for knowledge of and meditation on the ecclesial documents, and first of all the Catechism of the Catholic Church. This spirit belongs to the Order of St. John which will be capable of renewing its traditions, within the same Order and in the ecclesial community³⁶.
- b) To propose Christian activities, characterized by the octagonal cross, with works of mercy, of compassion and of service to the Poor and the Sick, in places of old or new Christianity, lukewarm with regards to the Christian faith, and for the faithful who have strayed from the ecclesial community and Christian values, behaving as if God did not exist³⁷.

³⁶ JOHN PAUL II, Post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Christifideles Laici*, 30 December 1988, n. 34; F. ANEKWE OBORJI, p. 166; A. FABRIS, *Educare alla fede di fronte alla frantumazione dell'umano*, in COMMISSIONE EPISCOPALE PER LA CULTURA E LE COMUNICAZIONI SOCIALI DELLA CEI, *Fede, cultura, educazione*, pp. 53-62.

³⁷ For these perspectives see in general: BENEDICT XVI, Apostolic Letter

- c) To propose activities in the Christian spirit for places that have never been Christian or in completely de-Christianised areas, with the witness and proclamation of *kerygma* to those who, in their own lands or where there are communities created by the Diaspora, are no longer believers, achieving *the civilization of love*.
- a) There are four categories to which *tuitio fidei* with *obsequium pauperum* is addressed for implanting and strengthening the Kingdom of God and extending it to every part of the land³⁸ through a new evangelization:
- b) The baptized in full communion with the Catholic Church, both members of the Order of St. John and those not belonging but brothers and sisters in faith.
- c) The baptized who have moved away from religious practice, who are indifferent, or those who have lost their faith and consider themselves to be agnostic.

in the form of *Motu Proprio Ubicumque et semper*, 21 September 2010, *Proemio*, in *L'Osservatore Romano*, 13 October 2010, pp. 4-5, establishing the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization. W. INSERO, *La Chiesa è 'missionaria per sua natura'* (AG 2), *Origine e contenuto dell'affermazione conciliare e la sua ricezione dopo il Concilio*, Roma 2007.

³⁸ Cf. *Lumen gentium*, n. 44.

- d) All the *Christifideles* who are not in full communion with the Catholic Church.
- e) Finally, *tuitio fidei* with *obsequium pauperum* is aimed at those who are distant from the faith, the non-baptized or non-believers, above all those suffering from the various forms of poverty.

Again, through the witness and proclamation of the faith, to be true Knights and Dames of the Order of St. John Baptist we have to become new people, new Christian souls, entirely new Knights and Dames with fruitful spiritual acts if we are to perform complete and true charity³⁹. It is necessary to acknowledge the love of God, contemplate him and adore him with prayer, sacrifice, offerings and silence to arouse, witness and participate with our creativity, which is prompted by centuries-old tradition, the beauty of divine life. Faith witnessed leads towards love, looking unquestionably towards God, directing everything at him, launching ourselves towards him.

³⁹ JOHN PAUL II, *Fides et ratio*, n. 56 speaks of “creative youth”. See also N. BERDJAEV, *Filosofia dello spirito libero*, pp. 394-395.

Conclusions

Some brief concluding notes:

Tuitio fidei as *diakonia* of faith in the Order of St. John Baptist must be witness, confession and proclamation of the gift that is faith: “Christians, [...], profess their faith in God’s tangible and powerful love which really does act in history and determines its final destiny: a love that can be encountered, a love fully revealed in Christ’s passion, death and resurrection”⁴⁰.

In the life and specific nature of the Order of St. John, the act of believing is a personal and relational act with God in Christ and poses the question: “Who do you say I am?”. We are talking about the place where a gift is acknowledged and a choice that concerns a Christian’s entire life, his or her existence, his or her affections, in the exercise of reason⁴¹.

Being true members of the Order of Malta means first of all acknowledging the gift of faith received and then cultivating, nurturing, protecting, defend-

⁴⁰ *Lumen fidei*, n. 17.

⁴¹ Certainly in modern times there is the risk of interpreting the act of faith by placing it only in the sphere of affection or that of feelings, where the tendency of *post-modern religion* combines with charity towards solely emotional expressions, of positive knowledge and of ethics. P. SEQUERI, *L’idea della fede. Trattato di Teologia fondamentale*, Milano 2002.

ing, witnessing and proclaiming it with a generating maturity and paternity⁴². Besides recognizing the gift of God, *tuitio fidei* passes through personal experience that is forged in the practice of communion tending towards true love. For all the *Christifideles* members of the Order, Knights, Dames and Chaplains, it is necessary to have a *consistency* of faith, that becomes tangible, agape love and ecclesial community. We have to find tangible charity in communion, letting ourselves be enveloped in *agape*, where Christ himself enters: “*whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me* (Mt 25:40).

After what has been said, the priorities for producing fruits through *tuitio fidei* clearly emerge. On one side the methodology for forming Christians, through knowledge, listening to the Word of God⁴³, the celebration of the divine mysteries (sacraments), especially the liturgy (Holy Mass)⁴⁴, together with incessant prayer combined with active participation in

⁴² SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA, *Regulations and Commentary*, Glossary, item *Tuitio Fidei*, p. 162

⁴³ See *Dei verbum*, 21-25 and *Verbum Domini* 85-86.

⁴⁴ JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical letter *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 17 April 2003.

the Order's charitable works. On the other, with full adherence to the faith and to the Catholic doctrine, one can revive the spiritual traditions of the Order so as to grow in service, in altruism and in the gift of oneself.

It is taken for granted that formation, for both the candidates and for the members of the Order, must be lifelong. It has to lead – other than to bearing witness – to the mission and the consolidation of the Kingdom of God through the new evangelization. To achieve its aim, Christian formation in the Order of St. John contains a *quid plus* with regards to that imparted to other Christian faithful, benefiting as it does from the graces and from being a member according to one's class in a religious, lay, traditionally military and chivalrous, hospitaller and traditionally nobiliary Order: the Order of St. John the Baptist. The instruments for growth of this spiritual school are the *Constitutional Charter* and the *Code, Regulations and Commentary, Journals of Spirituality* and recently the book VV AA., *Ordine di Malta. Da Gerusalemme a Roma. Itinerario storico – spirituale*, Roma 2015.

Tuitio fidei as *diakonia* and service to faith, combined with *obsequium pauperum*, are indispensable instruments for achieving the Order's rationale, as established in the aforesaid Art. 2 §1 of the *Constitutional Charter*:

The purpose of the Order is the promotion of the glory of God through the sanctification of its members, service to the faith, and to the Holy Father and assistance to one's neighbour, in accordance with its ancient traditions.

A last note: members of the Order venerate the icon of Mary Mother of God of Mount Philermos. Mary was the woman who “*advanced in her pilgrimage of faith, and faithfully persevered in her union with her Son unto the cross*” (*Lumen gentium*, 58). Mary is an example of the true attitude of faith that receives, preserves and lets the heart *mature*. Her faith cooperates maternally with the demonstration of the glory of the Son (both at Cana and under the cross, the two key moments of Christ's public action), and with the disciples, in encouraging their faith in him. Mary's attitude of belief becomes the paradigm of every Christian. Mary, walking in the growth of faith,

remaining guardian of the Word of God, meditating in her heart and interpreting the faith in God through the events that marked her life, is the model of every Christian disciple, as we all would like to be.

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THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE ORDER OF ST. JOHN

Of Topical Interest

The spirituality of the Knights of St. John is an essential dimension of the Jerusalem Hospital, which for some years now has been arousing a special interest, especially among members of the Order who continue to feel the need to espouse and intensify a Christian lifestyle following the evangelical beliefs, learnt and lived within the religious family of the Order of Malta. We can especially find this need in the proceedings of the most recent Strategic Seminars around the time of the latest General Chapters. I am referring in particular to the 2009 Venice Seminar and that of Rhodes in 2014.

This is a comforting phenomenon, because it indicates a tendency not only to focus on and define the Order's identity, but also to clarify and specify the motivations and intentions of those who have entered or want to enter a religious order. Then again the publication of the *Regulations and Commentary* has marked a new phase in the Order's inner reflection on the *Constitutional*

Charter and *Code* revised in 1997⁴⁵. The text, published in 2011 on the mandate of Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing, constitutes the Order's official spiritual directions, valid for our time, and as such represents a further step in the Order's internal reform launched after Vatican Council II and inspired by its magisterium. In his introduction, the Grand Master recommended reading it on a frequent basis, comparing the text to an authentic "rule" of the Order: "Please refer to it often – rather in the way of the monasteries of the Benedictine tradition where an extract from the Rule of St. Benedict is read every day in choir". Moreover, the *Regulations and Commentary* is the example of the reworking in a modern key of a "form of religious life" traditionally proposed by the hospital of St. John of Jerusalem as an itinerary of personal sanctification in the footsteps of Christ through the witness of the faith in the exercise of charity, tangibly expressed in hospitality⁴⁶.

⁴⁵ SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA, *Regulations and Commentary. Promulgated by H.M.E.H. Prince and Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing with the approval of the Sovereign Council, 18 February 2011*, Roma 2011.

⁴⁶ An introduction to the text could be the notes of C. GILARDI, *I Regolamenti e Commenti: Fonte di formazione iniziale e permanente. Alcuni orientamenti fondamentale "I 900 anni della Pie postulatio voluntatis. Impulsi per rinnovamento"* Roma 2013, pp. 55-69.

The modern reworking of this “form of life”, including the spiritual dimension, dates back to the years preceding Vatican Council II, after the crisis of the Order of Malta halfway through the 20th century, resolved with the election of the new Grand Master fra’ Angelo de Mojana di Cologna (1962-1988), following the *Cardinals Decision* of 24 January 1953 and the revisions of the *Constitution* of 1936, approved by Pius XII in 1956, John XIII in 1961 and Paul VI in 1965⁴⁷. Proof of the spiritual renewal inside the Order was provided by the text of the Conventual Chaplain *ad honorem* François Ducaud-Bourget (1955)⁴⁸ and the first official text of the *Regulations and Commentary* approved by the General Council in 1969⁴⁹. This latter contains the first spiritual directions and has an encompassing structure in that it covers the three classes into which both the professed and non-professed members of the Order are divided. The same layout was adopted – almost twenty-five years later – for the *Indirizzi di Vita* which does not

⁴⁷ See in particular H.J.A. SIRE, *The Knights of Malta. A Modern Resurrection*, London 2016, pp. 209-226.

⁴⁸ F. DUCAUD-BOURGET, *La spiritualité de l’Ordre de Malte (1099-1955)*, Paris 1955.

⁴⁹ *Indirizzi di vita per i membri del Sovrano Militare Ordine di Malta*, Roma 1993.

have the same official nature as *Regulations and Commentary* but offers a very brief compendium – moreover of a dogmatic nature – for members of the Second and Third Class⁵⁰. The second part (pp. 25-47), dedicated to defining and studying the “Principles of the Spirituality of the Knights of Justice”, is much more structured. It describes the religious vocation of the brothers and focuses on the specific nature of their consecration, the essential elements of their life of piety, as well as the ecclesial mission given to them by their profession.

Other publications arrived later on the initiative of Regis Barwig, fra' Leon Sireisky and John Dimech⁵¹, chaplains of the Order. They wanted to respond to the increasing need for a deeper knowledge of the Order's

⁵⁰ R. N.-J. BARWIG, *Reflections on the Spiritual Life for Members of the Sovereign Military Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes, and of Malta*, Roma 1981; L. SIREISKY, *Die Spiritualität im Souveräne Malteser-Ritter-Orden*, «Der Souveräne Malteser-Ritter-Orden in Österreich. Im Auftrag des Grosspriorates von Österreich», edited by CH. STEEB – B. STRIMITZER, Graz 1999, pp. 379-390; J. DIMECH, *Spirituality and Formation of Members and Volunteers of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta*, Malta 2006.

⁵¹ R. N.-J. BARWIG, *Reflections on the Spiritual Life for Members of the Sovereign Military Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes, and of Malta*, Roma 1981; L. SIREISKY, *Die Spiritualität im Souveräne Malteser-Ritter-Orden*, «Der Souveräne Malteser-Ritter-Orden in Österreich. Im Auftrag des Grosspriorates von Österreich», a cura di CH. STEEB – B. STRIMITZER, Graz 1999, p. 379-390; J. DIMECH, *Spirituality and Formation of Members and Volunteers of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta*, Malta 2006.

spirituality emerging among members. The authors also provided a spiritual record for the formation of these members and for those aspiring to be so. In their texts, just as in that by Ducaud-Bourget, there is a greater attention to the spiritual life of the non-professed members who are now in the majority in the Order. There were also significant contributions from the other chaplains fra' Giovanni Scarabelli⁵² and Fr. Bruno Martin. This latter, in particular, explored the more ancient sources of the Order of Malta's tradition and with critical acumen has traced the original profile of the Hospital's spirituality⁵³.

Further indications of the interest cultivated in recent years in the Order's spirituality are the creation of the Training Centre and the Institute of Spirituality (2013)⁵⁴, linked to the publishing initiative undertaken by Msgr. Angelo Acerbi, for-

⁵² Scarabelli has written numerous and varied spiritual texts but the most comprehensive and definitive is G. SCARABELLI, *Linee di spiritualità del Sovrano Militare Ospedaliero Ordine di S. Giovanni di Gerusalemme, detto di Rodi, detto di Malta*, Milano 2001.

⁵³ B. MARTIN, *La vie spirituelle des Hospitaliers*, «Studi Melitensi», XXII-XXIII (2014-2015), pp. 9-80.

⁵⁴ See: W. HENCKEL VON DONNERSMARK, *Istituto di Spiritualità e Centro di Formazione dell'Ordine di Malta*, "I 900 anni", pp. 115-123; and A. ACERBI, *L'Istituto di Spiritualità dell'Ordine di Malta*, "Introduzione alla Spiritualità dell'Ordine di Malta", Roma 2014, pp. 187-196.

mer Prelate of the Order, who in 2001 launched the “Journal of Spirituality” -informative booklets now in their 15th edition. The latest to be published is entitled *Introduction to the Spirituality of the Order of Malta* (Roma 2014)⁵⁵. It was followed by, outside the series but again at the initiative of Msgr. Acerbi, the first historical summary of the Order’s spirituality, published in 2015 with the title *Ordine di Malta. Da Gerusalemme a Roma. Itinerario Storico-Spirituale*⁵⁶. This text traces the development of the Hospital’s spiritual discipline from the first centuries of its life up to our time, relying on a greater number of sources useful for reconstructing the character, the particularity, the evolution and the topicality of the Order of Malta’s spirituality, together with the personality of its teachers.

⁵⁵ Contributors were Angelo Acerbi, Paolo Sardi, Bruno Martin, Luigi Michele de Palma, Costantino Gilardi, Natale Loda, Georg Lengerke, Duncan Gallie, Dominique de la Rochefoucauld-Montbel, Henry O’Shea and Richard J. Wolff. The book has been translated into English with the title *Introduction to the Spirituality of the Order of Malta*, Rome 2014.

⁵⁶ With contributions from Bruno Martin (*Da Gerusalemme a Rodi*, pp. 11-43); Luigi Michele de Palma, (“*Servus pauperum*” e “*miles Christi*”. *La spiritualità giovanita da Rodi a Malta*, pp. 45-88); Henry Sire (*L’Ordine di Malta a partire dal 1798*, pp. 89-107); Natale Loda (*Gli sviluppi della spiritualità dell’Ordine di Malta dall’insediamento a Roma fino al presente*, pp. 109-129).

From a historical perspective there are very few studies on the Order of Malta's spirituality compared to the vast range of research on its political, military, charitable, diplomatic and economic activities and on legal and canon law implications⁵⁷. However, a new line of historical research seems to have been inaugurated that concerns not only the hospital in Jerusalem but also other hospitaller and military orders⁵⁸. This interest travels on parallel tracks because the aforesaid recent initiatives of the Order of Malta seem to be going in an opposite direction to the secularization and laicization tendency that sometimes continues to influence some sectors⁵⁹. This more specifically religious direction is understandable because the direct heirs of the fri-

⁵⁷ On this subject see notes in SIRE, *The Knights*, p. 277.

⁵⁸ An overview of the studies on hospitaller orders can be found in numerous items in the *Dizionario degli Istituti di Perfezione* (= DIP) and in the more recent dictionary of military orders *Prier et combattre. Dictionnaire européen des ordres militaires au Moyen Âge* (= PCD), Paris 2009. For a more detailed history, with extensive bibliography, see the specialist contributions in *Gli ordini ospedalieri tra centro e periferia. Giornata di studio*, Roma, Istituto Storico Germanico, 16 giugno 2005, ed. A. ESPOSITO – A. REHBERG, Roma 2007.

⁵⁹ A significant testimony of the conflict inside the Order is given by G. SCARABELLI, *Sull'originario ed irrinunciabile carattere religioso dell'Ordine di Malta*, «Studi Melitensi», IX (2001), pp. 65-68.

ars of St. John, that is the Knights of Justice, have reason to reassert the nature of the Jerusalem Hospital as a religious order and have a complete right to maintain primary responsibility for and direction of life in the Order as a whole⁶⁰. It is undeniable that difficulties have arisen over time in a religious family with a marked heterogeneity among its members, in which the professed often find themselves subordinate to members who do not share their status of religious, but influence the life of the Order and its government⁶¹. *Regulations and Commentary* uses the metaphor of the “heart” to define the Knights of Justice and the conventual chaplains as “the core, the heart of our religious order” (XIV, *Fundamental Considerations for the First Class*). If this applies on the spiritual level, from an institutional

⁶⁰ On this subject see SIRE, *The Knights*, pp. 275-279.

⁶¹ See *ibidem*, p. 267. During the Rhodes Strategy Seminar (2014), with regards to the Knights of Justice Erich Lobkowitz (German Association) stated: «It is necessary to find good candidates; the Order doesn't need theologians (there are plenty of them outside the Order); I hope there are vocations among the 2nd and the 3rd class in Germany, and I think it is necessary to integrate the Professed Knights in the National Associations; there is no antagonism between the First and the other Classes» (*Proceedings of the Sovereign Order of Malta International Strategy Seminar. Rhodes, 14-16 February 2014, Roma 2014*, p. 23).

perspective one cannot deny – continuing to use a metaphorical language – that they are also the mind and soul of the Order, so much that the Grand Master, head of the Order, and the Grand Commander can only be selected from among the professed, as well as at least another four members of the Sovereign Council and the Grand Priories. In addition, the Knights of Justice are preferred for the other leadership and government positions, such as the regency of the sub-priories and the management of the delegations, to name but two.

In the present situation and faced with the progressive growth in vocations for the religious life and thus in the number of Knights of Justice, it is again important to have the support of the professed conventual chaplains and the chaplains who, in different positions, are members of the Order. The pastoral ministry by the Hospital clergy has played and continues to play no small part in the Order's life and spirituality. The chaplains continue to be responsible for the religious formation of the Order's members, ranging from initiation in the spiritual discipline of aspirants to the spiritual guidance of Knights and Dames.

The chaplains are also novice masters for future Knights of Justice and probation masters for obedience candidates. In addition, they are responsible for the spiritual animation of the delegations and the other groups in the Order. Thus the chaplains have the task of dispensing the contents of spiritual discipline so that it is indelibly impressed on those who want to enter the Order, as well as on those who want to bind themselves more closely to it with the promise of obedience or who want to consecrate their life through the religious profession.

Moreover, for priests, it is possible to enter the First Class and consecrate themselves to God in the service of the Order as conventual chaplains, espousing the spirituality of the Order that relates to them. The chaplains' spirituality is not very different from that of other members of the respective classes, except for what regards the priestly condition and the exercise of their ministry within the Order. Nevertheless, we have to remember that the professed conventual chaplains share the status of religious with the Knights of Justice and are considered in full-time service of

the Order⁶². Knowledge and study of the Order's spirituality are also a permanent commitment for the chaplains of the Third Class, called to perform the same ministry as the conventual chaplains, albeit without being consecrated through religious profession⁶³. The same applies for the

⁶² In the *Regulation* concerning them it is asserted that: «the professed conventual chaplains, in virtue of their perpetual vows, having been dedicated by a new and special endowment to the honour of God, to the building up of the Church, whose ministry they have joined in a particular manner, and to the salvation of the world (can. 573.2). They strive for the perfection of charity in the service of the kingdom of God and, having been made an outstanding sign in the Church, foretell the heavenly glory (can. 573.1). For the profound bond of the vows, that incorporates them in the Order as an institute of consecrated life (can. 573.2) they have to perform the priestly ministry in favour of their brothers and sisters, infusing in them love of the Holy Scriptures, the tradition of the Church, interior prayer and devotion to the Holy Virgin, so that the intentions of the Order are faithfully safeguarded and its initiatives generously supported and performed, and in favour of its specific works, with particular care and attention and concern for the poor, the sick and those who suffer (Con. C., art. 2, 1-2) as well as all those needy in body and spirit» (*Regolamento dei Cappellani Conventuali Professi*, Roma 2002, *Premessa*). For the spirituality of chaplains see the reflections of N. LODA, *Indicazioni per la spiritualità dei Cappellani dell'Ordine di Malta*, «Introduzione alla spiritualità», pp. 85-111.

⁶³ For the non-professed chaplains, the relative *Regulation* says that: «the chaplains of every rank serve God in the Church and in the Order and it is also their duty to provide for the spiritual formation of all the Order's members, to help elevate the Christian culture and to support them in their apostolate, even when it requires a personal sacrifice. According to the bond that unites them to the Order, they have to perform the priestly ministry in the works of the same Order. The chaplains must help

professed priests of other religious families who provide a useful service, although I consider their presence is anomalous. This is because under the spiritual profile it could cause a certain promiscuity and consequent confusion with spiritual disciplines that have nothing to do with the Order's own spirituality.

The most recent studies have illustrated the characteristic aspects of this spirituality and they are discussed and collected in *Regulations and Commentary*. I will return to this subject later on, but here I think it useful to describe the elements of the Order's spirituality that have been revealed in these studies.

The Spirituality of the Origins

Despite the paucity of ancient testimonies, the original experience of the Jerusalem Hospitallers, in the historical context in which it occurred, can

their brothers and sisters to deepen and live the charism of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem and to reconcile the traditions of the Order with the needs of the times and the situations in which they act (can. 576, 587, para. 4), so that their action is always a precious service for the Church of God, for the salvation of souls» (*Regolamento per i Cappellani Conventuali ad honorem e i Cappellani Magistrali*, Roma 2003, *Premessa*).

be compared to that of other fraternities of lay people voluntarily dedicated to performing a specific charitable activity, that is hospitality⁶⁴. Probably the members of the Jerusalem fraternity spent part of their day in a reception facility which gradually took the form of a *xenodochium* or hospice, first belonging to the Benedictine monastery of St. Mary Latin, and later becoming independent and dedicated to St. John the Baptist. “Like other similar pious houses (...) caring for guests it was a “fraternitas” under the direction of a “praepositus”: a handful of men concentrated only on charity, piety and the religious sentiment, without any either canonical or civil bond”⁶⁵. It is probable that the precursors of the Hospitallers shared some moments of prayer,

⁶⁴ For very detailed reconstruction of the origins of the Order of St. John see B. MARTIN, *Presentazione*, «Primi testi normativi degli Ospedalieri», ed. L.M. DE PALMA, Bari 2016, pp.11-79. The Italian edition of the book was published by the Centro Studi Melitensi of the Grand Priory of Naples and Sicily, whereas the French original was put out by the Académie Historique de l'Ordre de Malte with the title *Premiers teste normatifs des Hospitaliers*, Paris 2013.

⁶⁵ S. LENER, *Natura e prerogative del Sovrano Militare Ordine Gerosolimitano di Malta*, «La Civiltà Cattolica», 105 (1954), IV, pp. 15-28, 164-178, 422-435, 241-553, 639-655, qui p. 20. Regarding these aspects of the confraternal life refer to G.G. MEERSSEMAN, *Ordo fraternitatis. Confraternite e pietà dei laici nel medioevo*, 3 vol., Roma 1977.

keeping the monastery as the centre around which their life of piety orbited. We have no testimonies to other forms of community life, such as cohabitation.

The privilege granted by Paschal II to the Hospital – *Pie postulatio voluntatis* – demonstrates that, in 1113, the *xenodochium* founded by Gerard was a renowned charitable institution, respected and appreciated even beyond the boundaries of the Holy City. The *friars* who worked there had not formed a religious order, but performed their service under the *prepositus* Gerard⁶⁶. This was a *fraternitas* of lay *hospitalarii*, dedicated to charitable acts under the

⁶⁶ In a donation of 7 September 1101-1119 reference is made to Gerard «qui est pater ipsius domus [hospitalis], et fratribus sibi subjectis» (*Cartulaire général de l'Ordre des Hospitaliers de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem*, ed. J. DELAVILLE LE ROULX, I, Paris 1894, n. 7). He ran the hospital *de mandato abbatis et monachorum* and other brothers lived with him, probably monks or members of the monastic *familia*, in hospital service. He was head of the hospital in 1099 and after the capture of Jerusalem started the construction of a new and larger hospital joined to the Church of St. John the Baptist. For a detailed examination of historical, biographical and hagiographical elements regarding Gerard see G. DE' GIOVANNI CENTELLES, *Il fondatore degli Ospedalieri "Ego Geraldus, servus Hospitalis Sanctae Jerusalem"*, «Annali della Pontificia Accademia di Belle Arti e Lettere dei Virtuosi al Pantheon», III (2003), pp. 59-90. See also B. MARTIN, *Le Bienheureux Gérard, Raymond du Puy et les premières années de l'Hôpital*, Paris 2015, pp. 15-55.

form of hospitality⁶⁷. To enter it was not necessary to take the status of religious, albeit you lived in obedience to a superior; these hospitallers were really semi-religious⁶⁸ and shared a form of non-institutionalised religious life⁶⁹. They, like other fraternities, were un-

⁶⁷ For the monastic communities the Benedictine Rule establishes the duty to house monks, clerics (*domesticis fidei*) and pilgrims (*peregrinis*). These latter are grouped with the poor and distinguished from the rich. For them St. Benedict recommends greater care and attention – as well as the respect of a ceremony – because accepting them means accepting Christ: «Pauperum et peregrinorum maxime susceptioni cura sollicitè exhibeatur, quia ipsis magis Christus suscipitur; nam divitum terror ipse exigit honorem» (S. BENEDETTO, *La Regola*, a cura di A. LENTINI, Montecassino 1980, pp. 460-461; 466-468). On this subject see also: A. DE VOGÜÉ, *La Regola di S. Benedetto. Commento dottrinale e spirituale*, Padova 1984, pp. 358-369; K. BRUNNER, *Ospitalità*, DIP, 6, Roma 1980, col. 1014-1021; D. LE BLÉVEC, *Hospitalité*, PCD, pp. 453-455; and for other forms of hospitality H.C. PEYER, *Viaggiare nel Medioevo. Dall'ospitalità alla locanda*, Roma-Bari 1997.

⁶⁸ On this subject, Luttrell explained that «in 1113 Girardus secured an important papal privilege which recognized the Hospital's independence; its members were considered to be in some sense technically religious and they were given the power to elect their own ruler. This document did not create an "order"; indeed orders were not really defined before the thirteenth century. Nor did the privilege grant a "sovereignty", since the Hospital was always subject to the pope and even after 1113 it was still to some extent subordinate to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who was in effect its bishop» (A. LUTTRELL, *From Jerusalem to Malta: the Hospital's Character and Evolution*, «Peregrinationes. Acta et documenta», I (2000), p. 15).

⁶⁹ For the recent historical classification of the condition of the semi-religious, see K. ELM, 'Vita regularis sine regula'. *Bedeutungen, Rechtsstellung und Selbstverständnis des mittelalterlichen und frühneuzeitlichen Semireligiosentums*, «Häresie und vorzeitige Reformation im Spätmittelalter», ed.

der the direction of the *prepositus* Gerard, observed common life and poverty and very probably wore a habit but did not take vows.

It is true that Gerard had not asked the pope for approval of a new religious order, but rather the independence of the Hospital, its exemption from ecclesiastical and civil jurisdiction, the protection of its goods and the possibility of using its own oratory as well as the permission to raise funds everywhere for the Jerusalem *xenodochium*. However, the benevolence of Paschal II and the favour of the Apostolic See, validated through the *Pie postulatio voluntatis*, had prompted the Jerusalem Hospital to make a transformation by establishing a new religious order.

The Fraternity, having obtained in 1113 the protection of the Apostolic See through Paschal II's privilege and rendered independent by both the Patriarch and King of Jerusalem, became a hospitaller

F. ŠMAHEL, München 1998, p. 239-273; ID., "Vita regularis sine regula". *Significato, collocazione giuridica e autocoscienza dello stato semireligioso nel Medioevo*, «Regulae – Consuetudines – Statuta. Studi sulle fonti normative degli ordini religiosi nei secoli centrali del Medioevo» Proceedings of I and II International Study Seminar of the Italo-German Centre of Comparative History of the Religious Orders (Bari/Noci/Lecce, 26-27 October 2002 / Castiglione delle Stiviere, 23-24 May 2003)», ed. C. ANDENNA – G. MELVILLE, Münster 2005, pp. 407-421.

religious order. In those times, this canonical character meant that the initiative had a permanent nature, whereas the *protectio Sancti Petri* safeguarded the Hospital's goods from any usurpation and the election of Gerard's successor from any ecclesiastical or political interference⁷⁰.

An examination of the *Rule* of Raymond du Puy shows the lay nature of the new religious order for which it was written. Albeit there was a declared presence of ecclesiastic *fratres*, concerned with the pastoral care of the *xenodochium* guests, the *corpus* of the religious was mainly composed of lay persons⁷¹. The discipline dictated by the *Rule* – a regulation rather than an authentic rule, although the Hospitallers considered

⁷⁰ On this subject permit me to suggest L.M. DE PALMA, *La Pie postulatio voluntatis di Pasquale II in favore dell'Ospedale di San Giovanni di Gerusalemme (1113)*, «Lateranum», LXXIX (2013), pp. 469-483.

⁷¹ In *Liber Vitae*, commissioned by Abbot Giovanni di Subiaco from scribe Guittone, there is a list (the oldest in existence) of thirteen *fratres* of the Jerusalem Hospital, headed by *Raimundus prior*, successor of Gerard (the insertion dates back to the years 1075-1120, during which the code could have been written). The *fratres* «committunt se sanctis orationibus religiosorum Fratrum Sanctissimi Benedicti de Sublacu» (G. DE' GIOVANNI CENTELLES, *La "Cognatio Sancti Benedicti" dei Frati dell'Ospedale di Gerusalemme nel Codice Vallicelliano B. 24*, «Annali della Pontificia Accademia di Belle Arti e Lettere dei Virtuosi al Pantheon», II (2001), pp. 97-109; there is a photograph of the list contained in the code in Id., *Un Beato crociato per il Terzo millennio*, «Metropolis», IV (2001), n. 8, p. 34).

it such – was not directed either at the monks or the clerics, but at the laity who consecrated themselves *ad servitium pauperum* in the Jerusalem Hospital⁷². The spirituality that transpires from the dictates of the *Rule* is not monastic nor even clerical in nature; it is not for those who consecrate themselves to the Lord with a daily commitment of sanctification and prayer, and not even for those who are called to perform priestly ministry. The spirituality of the Hospitallers is simple and essential, similar but not identical to that of the majority of the faithful because it always concerns a

⁷² “The text of the Hierosolymite rule,” Andreas Rehberg observed “was used extensively in those of S. Spirito and Altopascio, which naturally excluded – except for a few residual elements – the subject of the militarization of the Knights of St. John” (A. REHBERG, *Una categoria di ordini religiosi poco studiata: gli ordini ospedalieri. Prime osservazioni e piste di ricerca sul tema “Centro e periferia”, «Gli ordini ospedalieri», p. 32*). Giuliana Albini adds that «the rule reveals, even during an initial reading, those movements that between the 11th and 13th centuries brought about an explosion of hospitaller communities, prompted also by the needs of a greater mobility of persons, which also included the pilgrimage (as well as the armed pilgrimage). The purpose of the hospitaller community was to serve the *pauperes*, and in helping their neighbour this group of people turned into a community of *pauperes*. It was no coincidence, as often stressed by studies, that the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem was the model for subsequent hospitaller rules. Thus it is not surprising to find in its chapters a great focus on voluntary poverty, in common with the intentions also of other hospitaller communities spread around the Holy Land (and of which the Knights of St. John ended up taking control)» (G. ALBINI, *La ricchezza dell'ordine di S. Giovanni*, *ibidem*, p. 105).

spirituality of the consecrated, members of a hospitaler religious order, who are in *fuga mundi* and living a common and fraternal life in the Hospital structure⁷³, so much so that the *Rule* includes numerous provisions regarding the observance of poverty, chastity and obedience together with penalties for those violating them. There are very severe penalties for the *fratres* who do not respect personal poverty, which specified fasting and corporal punishment, up to disbarment from the Order and the denial of funeral services. These are important provisions of the particular Order of Malta law, responding to an ascetic and spiritual choice of the hospitality service that aimed at reaching full identification with the poor. A preferential option in harmony with the religious and reformatory sensibility of the epoch, because of which – as Giacomo Todeschini pointed out – “during the 12th century the religious movements of a lay or semi-lay type multiplied (...) in some way anticipating aspects

⁷³ For a more detailed examination of the condition of lay people halfway through the Middle Ages, see *I laici nella «societas christiana» dei secoli XI e XII. Atti della terza Settimana internazionale di studio. Mendola, 21-27 August 1965*, Milano 1968; and for the characteristics of their spirituality and life of piety, A. VAUCHEZ, *La spiritualità dell'occidente medioevale*, Milano 2006³.

of Franciscan religiosity (...) and so the choice of a life that, albeit involved in typical occupations of the laity, adopted a logic of possession based on *paupertas* as an economic method, was to become increasingly characteristic of the identity of a Christian, including those not of the priestly condition”⁷⁴.

Elements of the Order of Malta’s Spirituality

In other words, the spirituality of the Order of Malta comes under the heading of spirituality of special consecration because it involves a specific form of asceticism, defined through the profession of the vows of chastity, obedience and poverty pronounced before the superior of the Hospital, as well as the observance of a rule, cohabitation and fraternal communion⁷⁵. The profession of the three vows – for the first time cited together explicitly in a rule – at the time Raymond du Puy’s *Rule* was written was typical

⁷⁴ G. TODESCHINI, *I mercanti e il Tempio. La società cristiana e il circolo virtuoso della ricchezza tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna*, Bologna 2002, p. 86.

⁷⁵ Among the kinds of monks described in St. Benedict’s *Rule*, the cenobitic monk is defined as: «Primum coenobitorium, hoc est monasteriale, militans sub regula vel abbatis» (I, 1).

of the religious and had a perpetual and not temporary value.

In addition, the spirituality involved matches the hospitaller nature of the Jerusalem Order. This latter is an order of active life and proposes a kind of religious consecration to its members that would commit them to providing hospitality in a complete and not partial manner. Thus the life of piety which nourished the Order's spirituality could not be compared, in the time devoted to prayer and other devotional exercises, to that of the monks and neither to that of the canons regular. The Knights of St. John were engaged in the hospitaller service every day, and therefore any rigid programming that would regulate their time was inappropriate. In other words, service to the Poor and Sick necessitated the continuous and immediate presence of the friars in the Hospital facility and not in the choir for prayers or in church for the administration of the sacraments, divine worship and preaching.

And although the life of piety of the Knights of St. John was very similar to that of the simple faithful, it was not quite the same. It was always a life of piety of monks, that is of religious, who undertook to keep alive the

presence of God in their life and their love for the Lord fervent, as well as to share fraternal communion in the Hospital's religious family to offer themselves in service to the poor. Thus their spiritual discipline involved a greater engagement in prayer, besides the obligation of some pious practices so that prayer, the liturgy and the sacraments could become spiritual nourishment for the ministry that was performed in the Order, that is hospitality.

It is no coincidence that the spiritual personality of the Hospitaller is compared to the figure of the converso, quite common in monasteries and convents⁷⁶.

⁷⁶ On the figure of the conversos see: P. GALTIER, *Conversi*, «Dictionnaire de Spiritualité Ascétique et Mystique», 2, Paris 1953, col. 2218-2224; J. DUBOIS, *L'institution de convers ai XII^e siècle, forme dei vie monastique propre aux laïcs*, «I laici nella "societas christiana"», pp. 183-261; C.D. FONSECA, *I conversi nelle comunità canonicali*, ibidem, pp. 262-305; J. DUBOIS, *Converso*, DIP, 3, Roma 1976, col. 110-120; S. BECCARIA, *I conversi nel Medioevo. Un problema storico e storiografico*, «Quaderni Medievali», 1998, n. 46, pp. 119-156; EAD., *Primi sondaggi sui conversi certosini in area subalpina*, «Certose di montagna, certose di pianura. Contesti territoriali e sviluppo monastico (Proceedings of international conference of Villar Focchiardo - Susa - Avigliana - Collegno, 13-16 July 2000)», ed. S. CHIABERTO, Borgone di Susa 2002, pp. 117-127. The converso should not be confused with and is distinct from the oblate of the monasteries and rectories, from the donat of the military orders, especially the Jerusalem Hospital, and from the tertiaries of the mendicant convents. On these latter figures, see: *Oblato*, DIP, 6, col. 654-676; E. MARIANI, *Gli oblati olivetani fra Tre e Quattrocento: tipologie e peculiarità*, «Benedictina», LV (2008), pp. 99-130; L. TACCHIELLA, *I Donati nella storia del Sovrano Militare Ordine di Malta*, Verona 1986; G. ROCCA, *Terz'Ordine*, DIP, 9, Roma 1997, col. 1042-1050.

Conversos did not have the same instruction as the choir monks, so they attended the choral liturgical prayer passively, since they were illiterate and not in the condition to participate actively, and also because the duty of service to the community was different from that of the choristers. The conversos performed the more humble work, also outside the monasteries, which justified not only their passive participation in the liturgy but also their limited presence in the choir with respect to the other monks or canons. Unlike the choir monks or canons regular, from a legal perspective the conversos did not have the same rights and the same duties, albeit they enjoyed the same spiritual benefits. In short, they belonged to a subordinate class but were truly consecrated people and compensated for the recital of the Book of Psalms with other prayers (e.g. the Crown of Our Lord), while their spirituality was that of the religious family to which they belonged.

Instead, the community body of the Knights of St. John was more or less homogenous, mainly consisting of lay people, or rather conversos dedicated to the humblest services rendered to the poor, to pilgrims and to the sick. In the Jerusalem Hospital, the consecrated people mainly consisted of these conversos

who formed the leading class, whereas the presence of the clerics was for their spiritual assistance and the pastoral care of the *xenodochium* guests. Thus the life of piety of the conversos became an integral part of the Order's spirituality and could not be compared to the simple faithful who, in their guise as volunteers, devoted only a part of their free time to charitable work in the monasteries, convents, charges, chapels and oratories of the confraternities. For the Jerusalem brothers, the constant exercise of hospitality, corresponding to a spirituality of service (*obsequium pauperum*), was the response to a divine vocation, as well as the main reason for their vocation. Love for the Poor led to their identification with Christ. To love them signified loving Christ.

The dynamic nature of the friars' spirituality was also demonstrated in the historical circumstances in which the Order was involved in the Holy Land. Some decades after the foundation of the Hospital and above all after approval by the Order of Solomon's Temple – that is the first military religious order⁷⁷ – to

⁷⁷ The origins, history and legend of the Templars are still the subject of a sometimes excessive and not always rigorous journalism. See instead the reliable studies (and bibliographic references) by A. DEMURGER, *Vita e*

meet the needs of hospitality the Hospitallers started to militarize their service, until they became one of the most important military powers in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem⁷⁸. Consequently, despite the resistance within the Order by some friars, the original spirituality of *servus pauperum* was united with the spirituality of the *miles Christi* or better, of the *novum militiae genus*. According to Bernardo of Clairvaux, this represented the idea of an authentic Christian chivalry that was to have replaced the old idea of chivalry imbued with worldliness and no longer practising Christian virtues⁷⁹. Also in this case, for the monks, it meant em-

morte dell'Ordine dei Templari 1118-1314, Milano 1987; F. CARDINI, *I poveri cavalieri del Cristo. Bernardo di Clairvaux e la fondazione dell'ordine templare*, Rimini 1994; B. FRALE, *L'ultima battaglia dei Templari. Dal "codice ombra" d'obbedienza militare alla costruzione del processo per eresia*, Roma 2001; EAD., *I Templari*, Bologna 2004; EAD., *L'interrogatorio ai Templari nella provincia di Bernardo Gui: un'ipotesi per il frammento del Registro Avignone 305*, «Dall'Archivio Segreto Vaticano. Miscellanea di testi, saggi e inventari», I, Vatican City 2006, pp. 199-272; EAD., *La leggenda nera dei Templari*, Bari-Roma 2016; *I Templari. Grandezza e caduta della 'Militia Christi'*, ed G. ANDENNA – C.D. FONSECA – E. FILIPPINI, Milano 2016.

⁷⁸ There is a vast range of studies on the history of the military orders. For a brief but detailed overview see in particular A. DEMURGER, *I Cavalieri di Cristo. Gli Ordini religioso-militari nel medioevo. XI-XVI secolo*, Milano 2004; and N. MORTON, *Gli ordini religiosi militari*, Bologna 2014.

⁷⁹ In the text by St. Bernard *Liber de laude novae militiae* – written between 1129 and 1136, before the Second Crusade – see the introduction, translation (with Latin text alongside) and commentary edited by C. D. Fonseca in the

bracing a new form of asceticism and religious consecration, for which any kind of worldly ambitions were spurned, the strict discipline of military obedience was embraced and, as a *miles Christi*, the readiness to witness the faith even up to the final sacrifice for love of Christ in the fight against the enemies of the cross (*tuitio fidei*).

In the Templar rule, the spiritual discipline of the *miles Christi* had been elevated to the theory of a religious *forma vitae*⁸⁰. Its main particularity was

volume *Opere di San Bernardo*, ed. F. GASTALDELLI, vol. I, Milano 1984, pp. 438-482. Instead, Isacco della Stella had an absolutely negative opinion: «Huic simile et eadem ferme tempestate, cuiusdam novae militiae obortum est monstrum novum – cuius, ut lepide ait quidam, ordo de quinto evangelio est –, ut lanceis et fustibus incredulos cogat ad fidem, et eos qui Christi nomen non habent, licenter exspoliet et religiose trucidet; si qui autem de eo in depopulatione talium ceciderint, Christi martyres nuncupent. Nonne et isti futuro illi perditionis filio contra christianos crudelitatis suae auctoritatem nutriunt? Quomodo ei obicietur Christi mansuetudo et patientia et forma praedicandi? Quare non faciet libenter quod factum reperiet licenter? Quomodo non dicit: Qualia fecit Ecclesia, talia facite illi?» (*Sermo* 48, 8).

⁸⁰ On this subject there are very acute observations by S. CERRINI, *I templari: una vita da frates, ma una regola anti-ascetica; una vita da cavalieri, ma una regola anti-eroica*, «I Templari, la guerra e la santità», ed. S. CERRINI, Rimini 2000, pp. 19-48. See also R. GRÉGOIRE, *La spiritualità templare*, «I Templari. Una vita tra riti cavallereschi e fedeltà alla Chiesa. Atti del I convegno “I Templari e San Bernardo di Chiaravalle”, Certosa di Firenze 23-24 October 1992», ed. G. VITI, Certosa di Firenze 1995, pp. 201-215; and B. VETERE, *Il “monachus miles” nell’epoca crociata*, «Verso Gerusalemme. Il convegno internazionale nel IX centenario della I crociata (1099-1999)» (Bari, 11-13 January 1999), ed. F. CARDINI – M. BELLOLI – B. VETERE, Galatina 1999, pp. 201-244.

anti-asceticism and anti-heroism which, in certain aspects, espoused the principle of the Benedictine *discretio*, that is the “measure” of the monastic lifestyle as opposed to excess. With the approval of the Templar rule, the Council of Troyes (1129) had introduced the novelty for which some religious, that is the Templar monks, were entrusted with the ecclesial mission of fighting not their personal enemy (*inimicus*) but the public one (*hostis*). This required a conspicuous amount of courage, because it meant not only inflicting death on another man but also running the risk of losing your life for Christ, that is immediate death by the hand of the infidels, offering up yourself to please God and to obey his will. It involved, as it did for the monk, a form of imitation of Christ, although in the case of the Knight friars it could not equal the rigours of a monastic lifestyle because, for example, rest and nourishment had to be appropriate for a soldier, who needed to build up strength for armed conflict. Nor could the monk be tempted to *spontanea paupertas* by giving alms and donations greater than those prescribed, because it would have meant giving free rein to his will instead of observing the vow of obedience.

The free renunciation of his will, obedience to the rule and subordination to his superior constituted the essence of the spiritual disciple of the *miles Christi*. The Knight friar represented the model of authentic Christian chivalry. Without giving up his social status, he adopted a lifestyle that contrasted with the vices and habits of secular knighthood because it repudiated heroism, the supreme ideal of the latter. Thus he disdained the exhibitionism of jousts and tournaments and disavowed physical strength as a spiritual value, but instead moderated it by linking it to a rule and giving it an exclusively religious purpose. The Knight friar eschewed hunting because it had no connection with his religious life that was instead distinguished by simplicity together with sobriety, restraint, piety and compassion. The true *miles Christi* did not become a saint because he was a solitary hero, an adventurer in search of bold endeavours about which he could boast. He sanctified himself not for his individual prowess, but to render his action the epiphany of the *gesta Dei*.

The religious metamorphosis following the militarization of the Hospital involved, *inter alia*, the recruitment and training of friars so they would be ca-

pable of performing the Order's new mission, as well as raising the Hospitallers' average culture, coming as they did from a higher social class, the aristocracy, which was better educated than the others. The entry of new recruits specialized in the profession of arms and more cultured probably fostered the Knights' spirituality and enriched their life of piety through the use of written texts, such as the *officium parvum* of the B.V. Mary and the Office of the Dead. Also here the Knight friars' life of piety had much in common with the practices of noble or bourgeois lay people⁸¹. Nonetheless, the friars' spiritual commitment in-

⁸¹ On the origin and dissemination of this genre of liturgical books see: S. BÄUMER, *Histoire du bréviaire*, Paris 1905; H. BOHATTA, *Bibliographie der livres d'Heures (Horae B.M.V.): Officia Hortuli Animae, Coronae B.M.V., Rosaria und Cursus B.M.V. des XV und XVI Jahrhunderts*, Wien 1909; H. LECLERQ, *Livres d'Heures*, «Dictionnaire de Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie», IX/2, Paris 1930, col. 1836-1882; A. LABARRE, *Heures (Livre d'Heures)*, «Dictionnaire de Spiritualité Ascétique et Mystique», 7/1, Paris 1968, col. 410-431; *Pregare nel segreto. Libri d'Ore e testi di spiritualità nella tradizione cristiana*, ed. G. CAVALLO - B. TELLINI - A. MANODORI, Roma 1994; and more in general: M. RIGHETTI, *Manuale di storia liturgica*, 2: *L'anno liturgico. Il breviario*, Milano 1969³; C. VOGEL, *Introduction aux sources de l'histoire de cult chrétien au Moyen Âge*, Spoleto 1975²; J. PINELL, *Liturgia delle ore*, Genova 1990 (Anàmnesis, 5); *Scientia Liturgica. Manuale di liturgia*, V: *Tempo e spazio liturgico*, ed. A.J. CHUPUNGO, Casale Monferrato 1998; and also anthology *Le prière au Moyen Âge. Littérature et signification*, Aix-en-Provence-Paris 1981. For the "Proprium" of the Order see B. MARTIN, *Le Breviaire des Hospitaliers a Rhodes*, Roma 2011.

cluded fulfilling the obligations deriving from their condition as religious, with regards to both worship and prayer as well as the frequency of taking the sacraments. The Knights' spiritual discipline also had a further element which, besides the emphasis on acquiring Christian virtues – the possession of which was the sign of true nobility – aimed at increasing the exercise of patience. The friars were already risking their health by assisting the sick, the poor and pilgrims but the militarization of the Order brought additional threats from injuries and mutilations during armed conflicts as well as the great hardship and suffering of imprisonment and slavery.

An Updated Spirituality

The centuries of the modern era testify to a new development of the Knights' spirituality, a spiritual efflorescence in response to the growing secularization of society and the reform of religious life occurring also in the Hospital⁸². The Order was also suffering from

⁸² On this subject permit me to refer to L.M. DE PALMA, *Servus Pauperum et Miles Christi. La spiritualità giovanita da Rodi a Malta, «Ordine di Malta. Da Gerusalemme a Roma»*, pp. 45-88.

internal divergences caused by the spreading of Protestantism and its political connections. Despite this, most of the Knights remained loyal to the Church of Rome and counted among their ranks numerous exponents who shared the spirit and initiative of the Catholic reformers. Among these, fra' Sabba da Castiglione (1480-1554)⁸³, fra' Fabrizio Cagliola (+1655)⁸⁴ and fra' Jean Baptiste le Marinier de Cany (1645-1689)⁸⁵ stand out, authors of works which - albeit mostly unpublished - trace a clear and detailed profile of the Knights' spirituality, projecting into it the ideal of the *servus pauperum* and of the *miles Christi* incarnate and on whom they had written their works to initiate the religious life in the Hospital of St. John⁸⁶.

⁸³ For his work on the formation of the Knight of St. John and on learning the spiritual disciple of the Order see the latest edition of S. DA CASTIGLIONE, *Ricordi ovvero Ammaestramenti*, ed. S. CORTESI, Faenza 1999.

⁸⁴ Conventual Chaplain of the Order of Malta, author of *Istruzione a fracappellani gerosolimitani per poter con facilità regolare le coscienze di tutt'i Cavalieri ed altre persone soggette al Sacro Ordine Gerosolimitano* (1662 c.a.). A copy of this work is preserved in the BIBLIOTECA MAGISTRALE DEL SOVRANO MILITARE ORDINE DI MALTA ROMA (= BMR), ms. 31.

⁸⁵ Le Marinier wrote *Istruzioni intorno agli obblighi del proprio stato de Cavalieri di Malta distese dal Commendatore Fra' Giambattista le Marinier de Cany della Veneranda Lingua di Francia e ristrette in compendio per ammaestramento d'un Novizio del medesimo Sacro Ordine* (ibidem, ms. 86).

⁸⁶ I studied these authors in more detail in L.M. DE PALMA, *Il Frate Cavalie-*

Starting with Sabba da Castiglione, these masters of the Knights' spirituality had the merit of handing down the Hospital's ancient spiritual tradition to the modern age, adapting its characteristics to the religious sensibility of their time. Fra' Sabba da Castiglione contributed especially to integrate the traits of the extroverted spirituality of the Middle Ages with that typical of the *devotio moderna*, inclined to a greater internalization of the life of faith⁸⁷. Cagliola and le Marinier continued on this path and imbued their teaching with the post-Tridentine spirit floating around the Catholic milieus of the 17th century. Le Marinier in particular had painted an almost complete picture of the modern spirituality of the Knight friar, centred on the figure of the *servus pauperum* and *miles Christi*. An entirely lay-religious spirituality suited to those who, as aristocrats, embraced the religious life, keeping their social position together with the profession of arms and without undertaking the priestly ministry or acquiring the condition of a

re. *Il tipo ideale del Giovannita fra medioevo ed età moderna*, Bari 2015².

⁸⁷ On this subject see J. CHATILLON, *Devotio*, «Dictionnaire de Spiritualité Ascétique et Mystique», 3, Paris 1957, col. 702-716; e a C. EGGER, *Devotio moderna*, DIP, 3, Roma 1976, col. 456-463, with further bibliographic references.

monk. It was rooted in the very origins of the Order and kept the character of a spirituality of service, although in its modern evolution it showed clear signs of the influence exercised by the Catholic reform. Although keeping the traditional commitment to exercising charity and having lightened the penitential rigors of fasting, it insisted on the inflexibility of the Catholic profession of its monks up to martyrdom, which could be experienced either fighting against infidels and heretics or looking after the Sick. The spiritual life of the Knight friar, albeit taking into account his aristocratic status, aimed at being totally conformed to Christ, humble and obedient to death, through the observance of the vows. A further element repeatedly appeared in le Marinier's doctrine, just as it did in Cagliola's teaching, and that is the conviction of being able to effectively determine the renewal of the Hospital's religious life through the self-reformation of its friars.

The Knights' spirituality, methodically defined and described by Cagliola with le Marinier, was also inspired by other writings of an initiatory genre, authored by some Jerusalem brothers and published in

the following century⁸⁸. These works testify to the resistance of the modern spirituality of the *servus pauperum* and *miles Christi* to the new ideas that shook the Ancien Régime and spread even among the Knights of St. John, upsetting their traditional form of religious life and their identity, as well as questioning their right of citizenship in the society of the time⁸⁹.

⁸⁸ I refer in particular to: M.A. ZONDADARI, *Breve e particolare istruzione del Sacro Ordine Militare degli Ospitalari detto oggi volgarmente di Malta, e della diversa qualità di persone, e di gradi che lo compongono*, printed posthumously, in a few copies, in Paris in 1712, and then reprinted corrected in Padova in 1724; G. CARAVITA, *Trattato della povertà dei Cavalieri di Malta*, Borgonovo 1718; P.A. POUGET, *Instructions sur les principaux devoirs des chevaliers de Malte, dressées par l'Auteur du catéchisme de Montpellier, sur les mémoires d'un chevalier de Malte, a l'usage des Chevaliers, de leurs confesseurs, et de tous ceux qui veulent entrer leurs enfants dans cet Ordre. Où trouvera des veritez importantes pour toutes sortes d'Estats*, Paris 1712 (and in Italian translation: *Istruzioni sopra gli obblighi più principali de' cavalieri di Malta, opera d'uno di essi della Veneranda Lingua di Francia, tradotta dal francese in lingua italiana ad uso de' medesimi cavalieri, de' loro confessori, e di quei che volessero entrare o far entrare i loro figli in questa Sacra Rel. e di ogni sorta di persone*, Malta 1758); L. DE BOYER D'ARGENS, *Reflexions politiques sur l'état et les devoirs des chevaliers de Malthe*, La Haye 1739; whereas *Riflessioni di un Cavaliere di Malta religioso dell'Ordine Militare degli Hospitalieri di San Giovanni di Gerusalemme sopra la grandezza e doveri del suo stato* (1754) by Giovanni Maria de Nobili was never published (BIBLIOTECA MAGISTRALE SOVRANO MILITARE ORDINE DI MALTA ROMA, ms. 67); see also G. SCARABELLI, *L'Ordine di Malta nel Settecento: un dibattito tra polemica e apologia*, «Studi Melitensi», VI (1998), pp. 89-143. For a more general view of studies on the history of the Order of St. John between the 16th and 18th centuries, albeit limited to the Italian area, see A. SPAGNOLETTI, *Per una introduzione alla storiografia sulla Lingua d'Italia dell'Ordine di San Giovanni di Gerusalemme in età moderna*, *ibidem*, X (2002), pp. 131-148.

⁸⁹ For greater information on this spirituality it would be helpful to compare

The 18th to 19th centuries marked a setback, caused by the long period of uncertainty following the loss of Malta, the extinction of the convent, the closing of the Holy Infirmary, the economic crisis and, above all, the vacant seat of the Grand Master and the precipitous drop in the number of monks⁹⁰.

it with the spiritual literature on the Teutonic Order, another military order surviving until the 20th century and then clericalizing itself. Another interesting subject is the spirituality of the nuns of St. John of Jerusalem, still existing in Spain and Malta, whose nature should not be confused with that of the *servus pauperum* and *miles Christi*. For the female branch of the Order, hitherto rarely studied, see: L. RANGONI MACHIAVELLI, *Le monache Ospitaliere dell'Ordine Gerosolimitano*, «Rivista del Sovrano Militare Ordine di Malta», I (1937), n. 3, pp. 19-20; M. BEGUER MINYOL, *El Real Monasterio de Santa María de la Rápita de la Sagrada y Soberana Milicia Hospitalaria de San Juan de Jerusalén (Orden de Malta)*, Tortosa 1948; A. FOSCHINI, *Le religiose Gerosolimitane dell'Ordine dei Cavalieri di Malta e la chiesa di San Giovanni Battista nella città di Penne*, «Rassegna Abruzzese», II (1949), n. 2, pp. 1-12; L. ZAMMIT, *The Sisters of the Hospital at Valletta*, «Annales de l'Ordre Souverain Militaire de Malte», XXI (1963), n. 1-2, pp. 17-22; P. GARCÍA BARRUSO, *Commendatrici di San Giovanni di Gerusalemme o di Malta*, DIP, 2, Roma 1975, col. 1254; G. ROCCA, *Ordine di Malta*, «La Sostanza dell'Effimero. Gli abiti degli Ordini religiosi in Occidente», ed. G. ROCCA, Roma 2000, pp. 274-275; G. AQUILINA, *Le monache gerosolimitane. La Chiesa e il monastero di S. Orsola alla Valletta*, Malta 2005; A. BROGINI, *Traditions et modernités. L'Ordre de Saint-Jean et les femmes à Malte au début de l'époque moderne*, «Nobildonne, monache e cavaliere dell'Ordine di Santo Stefano. Modelli e strategie femminili nella vita pubblica della Toscana granducale. Convegno Internazionale di Studi. Pisa, 22-23 maggio 2009», ed. M. AGLIETTI, Pisa 2009, pp. 369-382; *La Cavalleria al femminile: il contributo delle donne negli Ordini Militari*, ed. A. GIORGI, Pontedera 2010; L.M. DE PALMA, *Il Consiglio e le Costituzioni di fra' Leonardo Bonafedi per le Giovannite di Firenze (XIV sec.)*, Bari 2010.

⁹⁰ In 1895 there were 46 Knights of Justice, whereas in 1955 their number had dropped to 13 in solemn vows and 3 in simple vows. The fall in

At the beginning of the 20th century, there were only sixteen Knights of Justice. A very slow increase in vocations then continued, but it was only at the end of the millennium that the Justice Class revived and increased.

As mentioned earlier, some publications on the spirituality of the Order of Malta started to appear from the mid fifties of the last century, but in the meantime numerous institutional reforms had taken place, radically changing the Order's organ-

the numbers of the professed was mainly due to the impossibility of the Order, its assets depleted, to support the monks financially. «Despite these disadvantages, the growing numbers of Knights of Justice should be noted, even in the countries where no grants had ever been provided for them. America had its first Knights of Justice, four in number all emigrating from Europe, admitted between 1963 and 1975: they were the predecessors of the ten who are now present today on this continent. In Great Britain, Fra'Andrew Bertie became a Knight of Justice in 1977, the first British candidate since 1940, and immediately had numerous companions, including Fra' Matthew Festing, who initiated his novitiate in 1986. This rendered possible, in 1993, the restoration of the Grand Priory of England, with seven professed members, the only priory founded to date outside the Order's centres in Italy and Austria-Hungary. There are now sufficient professed members for foundations to be set up in both America and France, where there are nine Knights of Justice. To date there is a total of 55 Knights of Justice in the Order, the highest number since the mid 19th century» (H.J.A. SIRE, *L'Ordine di Malta a partire del 1798*, «Ordine di Malta da Gerusalemme a Roma. Itinerario storico-spirituale», Roma 2015, p. 104-105). Currently there are also six professed conventual chaplains, three in Italy and one each in Austria, Germany and Switzerland.

ism, structure and management. The new figure of the Knight of Obedience had been introduced with particular duties in substitution of the Knights of Justice⁹¹. In the meantime, the idea of a greater integration into the Order of the non-professed and Second and Third Class members was gaining ground, developing the debate on their presence in the Hospital as well as on the spirituality that was to animate them.

There were numerous voices and opinions expressed on this matter, mainly to ensure that the figure of the Knight of Obedience had a sound basis, since his profile had not gone beyond the sim-

⁹¹ The introduction of the Obedience Class is described in ID., *The Knights*, pp. 222-226. Sire adds: «It seems that the idea of the Knights of Obedience was linked to Cardinal Canali's original plan to unite the Order of Malta with that of the Holy Sepulchre, abolishing the Knights of Justice and making the Obedience Class the governing element of this unified order. This would explain why the Knights of Justice class was rather neglected in the 1961 reform. There were effectively some changes, such as abolition of the 10-year obligation for temporary vows before the solemn profession. The minimum period for temporary vows was now five years – or three for applicants aged over 40 – and the maximum nine years. Also abolished was the practice whereby the Knights could remain of justice for an unlimited period without taking the vows, as long as they remained celibate» (ID., *L'Ordine*, p. 103). On the event in which card. Nicola Canali was a leading player, including the reform of the Constitutional Charter, see ID., *The Knights*, pp. 209-226.

ple listing of the principles that would have justified the introduction of this class, without precedence in the Order's history and spirituality⁹². I think that, despite all the attempts to clarify it, the promise of obedience - which would place the non-professed Knight between the Knights of Justice, that is the friars, and the members of the Third Class (deemed equivalent to the oblates of the monasteries or members of Third Orders) - is still vague and imprecise, especially from the perspective of the Order's spirituality. This is mostly because the spiritual sphere of those who make the commitment of obedience is left undefined, so that it can seem almost superfluous⁹³. Although there is a large space devoted to the Knights and Dames in Obedience in *Regulations and Commentary*, I do not consider that their spirituality has been sufficiently studied.

⁹² On the creation of the Obedience Class and on some comments regarding their spirituality, see the notes of C. GILARDI, *Cavalieri e Dame in Obbedienza*, «Introduzione alla Spiritualità», pp. 63-83.

⁹³ For more detailed information on the promise of obedience in analogy with the vow of obedience in the context of the religious life and religious orders see the item *Obedience (vow)*, DIP, 6, col. 494-552 (with specific bibliographic references); as well as the texts in *Oboedientia. Zu Formen und Grenzen von Macht und Unterordnung im mittelalterlichen Religiosum*, ed. S. BARRET – G. MELVILLE, Munster 2005.

The Order's internal publications on the Second and Third Classes are sometimes sketchy, pedantic and repetitive, often reflecting highly questionable opinions⁹⁴, but the most recent studies on the spirituality of the Knights of St. John have made up for this and also remedied the imprecision regarding the First Class. The Knights of Justice are the only heirs and direct descendents of the Jerusalem Hospitallers in a seamless continuation. Their spirituality was born and perpetuated as a spirituality of religious, that is of consecrated people, and could not be otherwise⁹⁵, albeit amended in its form it cannot be changed in substance. At the most it can be enriched and updated, but not betrayed or disavowed, otherwise it would no longer be the spirituality of the Knight of St.

⁹⁴ There are those, for example, who have likened the Order, in its lay-religious consecration status, to a secular institute, but the comparison is inappropriate. It should not be forgotten that the Hospital was considered an authentic *Religio*, that is a religious order, and its monks are authentic religious and not lay people who do not change their canonic status by professing vows. Anyway, apart from the anachronism of the comparison, unlike the secular institutes, the Knights' spirituality has always included in its discipline the *contemptus mundi*, and the profession of vows has always been understood exclusively as a religious consecration.

⁹⁵ For more information on this subject see L.M. DE PALMA, *La spiritualità del Giovannita: un ministero di consolazione*, «I 900 anni della *Pie postulatio voluntatis*. Impulsi per un rinnovamento», Roma 2013, pp. 71-80.

John, but just the style of a Catholic association⁹⁶.

Regulations and Commentary, the Order's modern spiritual guidelines published in 2011, is an attempt to review this spirituality by taking into account the current triple division of members and proposing to live it according to the canonical status of each. Its programme has adopted a gradual preparation leading to full learning of the Order's spiritual discipline

⁹⁶ In this regard there is a significant passage in the address of Benedict XVI for the Order's pilgrimage to St. Peter's Basilica on 9 February 2013: «And by faith, down the centuries, the members of your Order have given themselves completely, firstly in the care of the sick in Jerusalem and then in aid to pilgrims in the Holy Land who were exposed to grave dangers: their lives have added radiant pages to the annals of Christian charity and protection of Christianity. In the nineteenth century, the Order opened up to new and more ample forms of apostolate in the area of charitable assistance and service of the sick and the poor, but without ever abandoning the original ideals, especially that of the intense spiritual life of individual members. In this sense, your commitment must continue with a very particular attention to the religious consecration – of the professed members – which constitutes the heart of the Order. You must never forget your roots, when Blessed Gérard and his companions consecrated themselves with vows to the service of the poor, and their vocation was sanctioned by the privilege *Pie Postulatio Voluntatis*. The members of the newly created institute were thus configured with the features of religious life: commitment to attain Christian perfection by profession of the three vows, the charism for which they were consecrated, and fraternity among the members. The vocation of the professed members, still today, must be the object of great attention, combined with attention to the spiritual life of all. » (*Teachings of Benedict XVI*, vol. IX, Vatican City 2013, p. 199-202, qui pp. 200).

for admission to the last rank, that is the religious consecration in the First Class⁹⁷.

We are talking about a modern project for the theoretical revision of the Hospital's spirituality that, however, waits to be tested to verify its real applicability together with the results achieved. This is an initiative that demonstrates the Order's vitality and its desire to promote and transmit the patrimony referred to in can. 578 of the Code of Canon Law. The *Regulations and Commentary* "aim to reaffirm the normative structure of the Order and shall serve as a handbook for spiritual guidance to all Members of the Order. Therefore it should be considered not only as a juridical manual but also having a doctrinal and exhortative character" (*Preamble*, 2). However,

⁹⁷ In the *Regulations and Commentary* it is explained that «on the basis of religious status, the first place in the document would appertain to the First Class. The order of the present document however starts with the Third Class, which is the largest, followed by the Second and the First Classes. This follows the chronological order of the admission to the Third Class which precedes Membership to the other two Classes» (*Preamble*, c). The choice of inverting the order is explained by the fact that the previous edition (1969) «went about the other order, which made it more difficult to read and understand». But it does not explain why the more logical order of the previous text would make it difficult to read and understand, whereas it confirms that the First Class should have priority of treatment.

there is nothing to stop new ideas being added so that its proposal can be enriched and amendments and corrections made to its programme. The direct experience will be able to provide further suggestions for reflection and further study, but the final purpose remains that of progressing along the path of personal sanctification that the Order's spirituality continues to trace.

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REGULATIONS AND COMMENTARY: INSTRUMENT OF FORMATION AND PATH OF SPIRITUAL PROGRESS

In his presentation to *Regulations and Commentary*, published in 2011, H.M.E.H. Fra' Matthew Festing compared this text to the rule of a religious order, adding that the members of the Order “*need to have a work of reference which they can use to regulate their lives*”⁹⁸. He recommended that they refer to it often, “*rather in the way of the monasteries of the Benedictine tradition where an abstract from the Rule of St. Benedict is read every day*”. This testifies to the importance of the text as an expression of the Order’s profound identity, an initial instrument for training but also a path to follow for spiritual progress.

To understand better the scope of this text, the circumstances of its drafting and the documents preceding it should be briefly recalled. The title *Regulations and Commentary* was first given to a document

⁹⁸ *Regulations and Commentary*, Rome 2011 (henceforth R&C), p. 3.

promulgated by the Extraordinary General Chapter of October 1969⁹⁹. The constitutional revisions between 1956 and 1961, and above all the need to implement the decrees of Vatican Council II on *updating* religious life, had prompted a collection of texts commenting on and clarifying the articles of the *Code* regarding the various classes of membership in the Order, hence the title *Regulations and Commentary*. The document – relatively short (forty or so pages) – established subjects according to the articles of the *Code* without providing a global presentation. But it did introduce a very important element. *Regulations for Members of the Third Class*, §1, noted that all the members called to enter the Order in one or other categories of this class, although not religious like the professed Knights or bound by a promise like the members in obedience, were anyway “members of a religious order” for all intents and purposes.¹⁰⁰ The fact that all the members of the Order, whatever class or rank they might belong to, are all essentially “members of a religious order” was also reflected in a

⁹⁹ SMOM, *Regulations and Commentary approved by the Extraordinary Chapter General*, Rome, 1969, p. 96.

¹⁰⁰ p. 15.

short chapter entitled “*Spiritual Guidelines for all Members of the Order*”.¹⁰¹ It states that members are “bound to live a profoundly Christian life, not merely formal and superficial, but sincere and substantial”. Regarding this commitment to Christian life, *Directions for Living for Members of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta* was also published in 1993 under the aegis of the servant of God Fra’ Andrew Bertie¹⁰². This short document set out the religious and moral obligations of the various classes of members of the Order, the simple members, those in obedience and professed members.

In the “Strategic Seminars” in Malta in 2004 and Venice in 2009, the conclusions of the various working groups demonstrated the need to provide new guidelines and specific directions, especially for the Order’s spiritual life. A “Spirituality Committee” was set up to draft a document along these lines. Over time, the original intention to write a short text was extended until the publication, in February 2011, of the latest version of *Regulations and Commentary*; the

¹⁰¹ pp. 44-48.

¹⁰² SMOM, *Indirizzi di vita per i membri del Sovrano Militare Ordine di Malta*, Roma 1993, p. 47.

original text was drawn up in Italian and English and then immediately translated into French, so one can say that the original edition is a triple Italian, English and French one. Subsequently *Regulations and Commentary* was gradually translated into the various European languages.

Regulations and Commentary: expression of the Order's identity

I repeat this point. Before venturing into practical indications, *Regulations and Commentary* is an instrument for training new members and those who aspire to become such and firstly offers a very clear illustration of the Order's identity. This is reflected in the structure of the work and in the plan adopted. The 1969 edition of *Regulations and Commentary* followed the order of the Code articles without a real organizational logic, but anyway starting with the novices and professed. The 2011 edition adopted a stricter plan that is already the expression of the Order's identity. The starting point is "*the universal vocation of the people of God*," that is an appeal to the sanctity of each baptized person and the specific answer to this appeal: "*the special vocation in the Sover-*

eign Order of Malta”¹⁰³. This is not an empty formula; it means that the vocation in the Order is inserted inside the Church, inside the call to sanctification that is the vocation of every baptized person. There is already a very eloquent comment in Article 2, § 1 of our *Constitutional Charter* that recalls the purpose of the Order – first of all charitable, which is not an end but a means – is, as we said, “*the glory of God through the sanctification of its members*”. If we understand this well, we immediately understand that you do not enter the Order to “perform” charity but to grow in holiness, remembering that charitable actions and defence of the faith are, for the members of the Order, the privileged means for sanctification. I would also like to stress that this point treats one of the extremely important aspects of the teaching of Vatican Council II. I am speaking of chapter V of the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, “*the universal call to holiness in the church*”. One could say that chapter I of *Regulations and Commentary* has the sole purpose of applying Chapter V of *Lumen Gentium* to the Order of Malta.

¹⁰³ R&C, chap. I.

This single appeal to holiness is however expressed in a different manner in the Order – and this is the great originality and, I believe, an element of its enduring “modernity”. I have already said that I think the fundamental contribution of the 1969 *Regulations and Commentary* is that of having very explicitly expressed that all the members of the Order, whatever class they belong to, are truly members of a religious order, albeit in different ways. The 2011 edition has stressed and developed this aspect in treating the Order of Malta’s charism (chapter II) and treating in detail the “*Fundamental Considerations for all Members of the Order*” (chapter III). Finally, the following chapters deal with the Third, Second and First Class in that order. The order in which the different classes are dealt with is not arbitrary. The 1969 *Regulations and Commentary* started, as I said, with the novices and professed. This order could seem logical from a canonical perspective since the Order’s only true religious are those who have taken the three vows. But this could give the idea of a certain diminution that distances us from the First Class, in that those in obedience are members of the Order but a little less than the professed, the members of the Third Class

less still. In canonical terms this is exact. However it makes us forget the chronological order of membership in the Order of Malta. As things stand at present, you cannot be admitted to the novitiate prior to profession if you have not been a member of the Order for at least a year (*Code*, Art. 9, §1); the same applies for admission to obedience (Art. 95). This loses sight of the essential idea that membership in the Order opens an authentic path in the faith for those who want to be guided by the spirit of God and to be formed through the spiritual traditions of the Order of Malta. Naturally not everyone is called to become professed nor to enter in obedience, but the very existence of the professed and members in obedience helps the Order to rise towards an ideal of religious consecration and life in the Holy Spirit. It is also because of this that members of the Third Class are allowed to read the chapters consecrated to the members in obedience and the professed! Besides the guidelines common to all members detailed in chapter III, each of the following chapters also includes a paragraph entitled “*Fundamental Considerations*”, for all members of every class. In these various guidelines there is only a difference of accent

or intensity, but no difference in nature. There is no different spirituality for each class of the Order, they are all called to the same baptismal sanctity, but each according to his or her status.

An initial approach of *Regulations and Commentary* in training candidates thus states: “*Do not content yourselves with just reading chapters I to IV that concern you. You should not only know that the subsequent steps – obedience and profession – exist because, even if you don’t feel called to them, you can understand what the Order truly is only if you have a idea of what it signifies from a spiritual perspective.*” Only members in obedience take a “special promise of obedience”. But the very existence of this promise teaches all the members of the Order what it means to have a truly religious spirit of compliance, of promptness in carrying out what could be asked of them, of a truly confident and filial attitude when obedience is involved. Only the professed add the vows of chastity and poverty to obedience but the very existence of these vows, taken by some, demonstrates the spirit in which all are called to follow the evangelic counsels of purity of heart and detachment from worldly goods. The

venerated Pope Benedict XVI admirably expressed this in his speech to the members of the Order during the celebrations for the 900th anniversary of *Pie postulatio voluntatis*:

“In this sense, your commitment must continue with a very particular attention to the religious consecration – of the professed members – which constitutes the heart of the Order. You must never forget your roots, when Blessed Gérard and his companions consecrated themselves with vows to the service of the poor, and their vocation was sanctioned by the privilege Pie Postulatio Voluntatis. The members of the newly created institute were thus configured with the features of religious life: commitment to attain Christian perfection by profession of the three vows, the charism for which they were consecrated, and fraternity among the members. The vocation of the professed members, still today, must be the object of great attention, combined with attention to the spiritual life of all”.

The growth of the “the spiritual life of all” anticipated by Benedict XVI must be based on an increas-

ingly vivid awareness of the “roots” of the identity of the Order as a “religious order” whose “heart” is constituted by those who have professed the three vows, But we must be also aware that the commitment following this charism, that of *tuitio fidei* and of *obsequium pauperum*, constitutes for all the members of the Order an authentic “fraternity”, a real bond of communion. This is clearly evident in the structure itself of *Regulations and Commentary*, an element to be stressed once again.

Regulations and Commentary: a training instrument

Regulations and Commentary, as the title indicates, is a composite text. An important part consists of a legislative text. It provides the authentic interpretation and the rules for applying a certain number of provisions of the *Code* and *Constitutional Charter*. These strictly regulatory parts are distinguished in the text by a banner in the margin, with the word “Regulation”. Obviously, particular attention must be paid to these requirements which must be scrupulously respected in both letter and spirit. Other parts concern the *commentary*, that is the developments of

a “doctrinal and exhortative character”.¹⁰⁴ Since my plan is to explain in detail how *Regulations and Commentary* offers an instrument for the training of applicants and new members, we can further examine – at the risk of repeating myself – what is presented in the first chapters.

Chapter II is dedicated to the *charism* of the Order of Malta. This is contained in a marvellous formula, existing since the Statute of 1498: *tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum*. This formula – that says it all in four words – is in a certain way commented in history in various paragraphs of this chapter. I would point out that when it has been necessary to translate the Latin word *tuitio* in all its richness, the commission had to use three terms: *nurturing, witnessing and protecting*” (“*fortifier la foi, la défendre et en témoigner*” in the French text, “*alimentare, testimoniare e difendere*” in the Italian text”). Each of these three terms could be the subject of an extensive commentary. *Tuitio fidei* today no longer indicates the armed defence of Christianity, but sets before the member of the

¹⁰⁴ R&C, Introduction, p. 17.

Order the triple requirement to nurture his or her faith, to be its witness with words and deeds and to protect it effectively if necessary. *Obsequium pauperum* is easier to translate as service in all its dimensions (the first texts of the Order spoke instead of *servitium pauperum*). During the course of history *tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum* have been practised with specific characteristics. *Regulations and Commentary* examines in detail these specific traits - those of a “*a hospitaller, lay, sovereign and, by tradition, at the same time military, chivalrous and nobiliary order*”: these are the words of the first article of the *Constitutional Charter* and each of them is the subject of a brief comment. The text then deals with the spiritual patronage of the Order: the Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Philermos, St. John the Baptist and the saints of the Order who, after Blessed Gerard, have embodied this charism. A special paragraph (n. 6) is dedicated to that cross which is not only the universally recognised symbol of the Order but is a reference to the spirituality of the Beatitudes. Returning to the theme I had initiated earlier, par. 7 clearly shows how the charism of the Order’s foundation can be seen in a different manner by each of us through the three classes of membership, according

to their different statuses, without this diversity compromising the unity of the Order of Malta:

“These three classes enable the members to pursue the mission of the Order together but in different ways according to their class of membership and their personal vocation. There are three specific and complementary responses to the call given by God to the Order of Malta”¹⁰⁵.

I want to point out that each of these items is presented in a very condensed form but – and this applies to all the text of *Regulations and Commentary* – numerous footnotes give references that help us to develop a particular aspect of interest. This also makes *Regulations and Commentary* an authentic instrument, moreover completed by a glossary and important bibliographic indications. It would be appropriate to update it as noteworthy contributions for the history and spirituality of the Order have appeared since 2011. A suggestion could be to insert a regular feature in the future editions of our *Journal of Spirituality*.

¹⁰⁵ R&C, chap. II, p. 34.

Chapter III returns to these two fundamental elements of the charism, translating them into *Fundamental Considerations for all Members of the Order*. These guidelines are not advice or appeals but instead come under the heading of *rules*: those who start their journey in the Order must be well aware of the commitments they make with regards to witnessing the faith and to service. *Tuitio fidei* assumes a strong will to deepen the faith and to nurture it before witnessing it. The rules dwell on two specific points: *knowledge of the Word of God*, in contact with the Bible and, better still, through the texts of the daily liturgy, because in the liturgy we have contact with the Bible as read in the Church; *to deepen familiarity with the faith* through its authentic expression, tradition and teachings. Special attention should be paid to “*sentire cum Ecclesia*” as members of the Order of Malta must distinguish themselves by complete fidelity to the teachings of the Church. The particular history, spirituality and traditions of the Order also have a place in this process which, as we shall see, is not only an initial formation but becomes an authentic “lifelong education”. Finally, the issue of *spiritual life* is addressed. What use is it to the members of the Order to have a theoretical approach to faith if this is not supported by living this

faith? It is a fact that personal prayer and the regular practice of the sacraments are fundamental.

In the same way *obsequium pauperum* assumes a real and personal commitment from all members:

*“This service demands a personal commitment by every individual, in order to enter into a concrete relationship with those in need. This relationship must not be condescending, but must be marked by friendship and real respect for those being assisted, for their own sake. Service to the needy must have priority in the works of the Order. Although the tasks can vary according to the nature of the work as well as the training and abilities of the members, the personal relationship to those being served should never be absent”*¹⁰⁶.

And a little further on:

*“It is always insufficient to describe the charism of *obsequium pauperum* in words. In its deep and real sense it can only be experi-*

¹⁰⁶ R&C, chap.III, p. 37. The note clearly specifies: “There are countless possibilities, e.g., visiting sick or lonely elderly people, caring for homeless or terminal ill people, helping children in distress, assisting (illegal) immigrants”.

enced during and in service. It is alive *in the Order and in the members only insofar as it is implemented*¹⁰⁷.

Finally, particularly important indications are given in the *Way of Life* chapter. In a certain way these depict an ideal portrait of the Knight of Malta. I give an outline: exemplary conformity with the teachings of the Church, clear and open witness to faith, awareness of being a member of an Order and promoting the image of this Order with their behaviour, awareness of belonging to the same religious “family” in which disputes can only be overcome from above with benevolence, mutual respect and obedience.

These elements are treated more exhaustively in chapter V, *Fundamental Considerations for the Members of the Third Class*. More than a simple rule, this is really an ideal conception of the life required of those who apply to enter the Order. These are the main traits:

¹⁰⁷ *Idem.*

- Regular sacramental life: Eucharist, penance, spiritual retreat, spiritual guidance. The life of prayer should also include the Liturgy of the Hours, or at least parts of it.
- Ecclesial life: although the Order is the natural context of the Christian life of members, it must not take them from the life of their dioceses and parishes.
- A life of effective service: whether in the works of the Order or outside, it is expected that members have an effective presence with the Poor and the Sick.
- A real apostolate, that includes being role-model citizens (appropriate to their social position but with a constant effort at moderation and charity); through setting an example of love and fidelity in their own family; through the Christian influence exercised in their living environment¹⁰⁸.

Learning these fundamental considerations is a bounden duty of members of the Order's various structures, and especially of new ones. This concept

¹⁰⁸ R&C, chap. V, pp. 48-50

is perfectly expressed in chapter VII of R&C:

“The different ways of formation (initial formation for candidates and permanent formation for Members) have to be provided by the Priors and Associations.

Therefore suitable priests are to be selected who are familiar with the history, the spirituality, the works and today’s challenges of the Order. Members of the First and Second Class should be involved in this duty of formation. It is of great importance that the Order’s own unmistakable profile in the areas of spiritual life *and service should be brought to expression. This proprium must be revealed and intensified with reference to the sources and tradition of the Order and in the light of contemporary challenges*”¹⁰⁹.

In this passage we note the need to have qualified and trained chaplains and the cooperation of the professed and in obedience members, if possible.

¹⁰⁹ R&C, chap..VII, p. 55.

The previous chapter (VI) clearly spells out the content of these training courses which also refer to article 109 of the *Code*¹¹⁰. Although the national bodies are given extensive freedom for their organization there are some elements imposed as dictated by the “regulation”: an initial formation of at least two days, consecutive or separate, a personal retreat for each candidate, and the participation of candidates in the Order’s spiritual and charitable activities and, insofar as possible, in the pilgrimage to Lourdes. A draft programme is provided that covers the essential teaching of the Church on the lay apostolate as well as the *proprium specificum* of the Order, statute, traditions, spirituality and activities¹¹¹.

We only have to read attentively the chapters of the general introduction and the section devoted to the Third Class to understand all the elements that

¹¹⁰ *Code*, art. 109: “The reception of Knights, Dames and both male and female Donats must be preceded by a preparatory period of one year during which the candidate becomes acquainted with the history of the Order and participates in its works and programs.”

¹¹¹ R&C, chap. VI, n°2, pp. 52-53

are necessary in the formation, both initial and life-long, of the members of the Order. It is evident that much is expected of the chaplains for this formation, both with regards to spiritual accompaniment and doctrinal training as well as discovering, even more specific, everything about the Order's particular charism and tradition.

It could be appropriate to recall what *Regulation for Chaplains* specifies on various occasions. Under article 5 § 2, the duties of the chaplains include: "Deepening the specific spirituality of the Order, as well as encouraging the celebration of feast days and memories of the saints belonging to the Order, using the *Messale proprio* of the Order, *servatis servandis*; organizing annual or biannual courses of religious culture and spiritual formation for the Knights and Dames, and also for those who, without being members of the Order, cooperate in its works." Article 6 of the same *Regulation* continues: "one of the main duties of the chaplains is that of knowing the history, traditions, customs and laws of the Order, since their mission is to assist and enlighten the members of the Order».

Regulations and Commentary: spiritual progress course

As said in the first part, by highlighting the fact that all the members of the Order of Malta, whatever class they might belong to, are truly members of a religious order, *Regulations and Commentary* offers them an authentic course of spiritual progress. Here below are some brief comments on a few aspects.

The introduction to the section dedicated to the Second Class – the members in obedience – recalls that its establishment in 1956 was dictated by the need to find qualified members for supporting the Order's works, in full development, and to be responsible for them should there not be sufficient professed members. This “functional” vision remains very necessary and has evolved over time. The current edition of *Regulations and Commentary* effectively covers this evolution, stressing that “*the institution of the Second Class has extended the possibility for “non-professed members” to follow a path of Christian perfection in the spirit of the Order’s charism*”¹¹². The text continues

¹¹² R&C, introduction to the Second Class, p. 59.

by identifying the commitment of the Second Class in its highest spiritual reason, that is the obedience of Christ to his Father's will:

“Knights and dames who wish to enter into obedience should be resolved to fulfil more generously their baptismal promise, and to deepen their commitment and fidelity in the Order. They freely commit themselves to embrace more seriously the Christian call to holiness by a more binding obedience to their superiors. Thus they imitate our Lord, Jesus Christ, who ‘humbled Himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross’ (Phil 2:8). The first generations of the Order had conceived this deeply and even included it in the statute of the Chapter General of Margat: ‘All the brothers of the hospital, contemplating Jesus Christ, have to obey their Master’¹¹³. This wonderful statute identifies the most profound reason of obedience in the imitation of the obedience of Christ and does not refer only to human, disciplinary or military reasons”¹¹⁴.

¹¹³ “At fratres omnes Hospitalis, contemplatione Jesu Christi, suo Magistro obedire tenuntur”. Statute of Margat (1204-1206).

¹¹⁴ R&C, p. 60.

Not everyone takes the commitment of obedience, but this promise makes all the members – lay and possibly married – understand that the “evangelical counsels”, obedience but also poverty and chastity, are addressed to all. This is what can be read in the *Fundamental Considerations for the Second Class*: “The three evangelical counsels (poverty, chastity and obedience), in their multiplicity, are proposed to every disciple of Christ. They have to be put in practice by each Christian according to his vocation. While the religious follow these counsels according to the vows, the other faithful should follow the spirit of the counsels: Poverty as a free and non-possessive relationship towards temporal goods; Chastity as a way of love that does not use the other person’s body and soul for one’s own desires or passions; and Obedience as the decision to accept God’s word that became flesh in Jesus Christ. It is the profession of these counsels, in a steady state of life acknowledged by the Church, which characterizes the life consecrated to God”¹¹⁵.

This passage is very interesting because it views the vocation of all the Order’s members from the per-

¹¹⁵ R&C, chap. VIII, p. 61.

spective of these three vows that only the professed pronounce but which define the spirit in which every member of the Order has to live his or her commitment. This is one of the reasons why the professed have an essential role, not so much for what they do, or perform, not only for those functions reserved to them, but for who they are. They define the horizon towards which all members must aim with their commitment – each according to their status. I refer to the fine paragraph in which the meaning of the religious professions is expressed:

“The Knight of Justice, called by God, lives the divine gift of his vocation in faith and charity. By his consecration and by taking on the practice of the Evangelical Counsels, with the Three Vows, the Knight of Justice detaches himself from all earthly interests through the love of Christ (cf. Mk 10:28) and desires, as the only necessary thing, the perfect love of God, to which nothing is to be preferred. To conform ever better to his vocation, the Knight of Justice unites himself with the sacrifice of Christ, in which he consecrates himself to the Father in the grace of the Holy Spirit.

He renews this consecration and deepens it at every Eucharist. The three Evangelical Counsels of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, chosen and embraced by the Knight of Justice with Solemn Vows, bind him canonically to their observance in complete dedication to the Sick and the Poor. His life of Profession of the Evangelical Counsels must be lived as a consecration to God and to mankind in union with the love the Father through the Son and the souls saved by Him in His unique and eternal sacrifice”¹¹⁶.

Regulations and Commentary give all the useful and necessary indications for the professed who have to accompany the members of the Order along the path of discernment in view of their profession, and also for the accompaniment and training of the novices and young professed. Two sections in particular can be highlighted, chapter XVI dedicated to the *Spiritual Life* and chapter XX dedicated to *Formation*. The titles alone demonstrate that they provide a complete programme. For the spiritual life there is the divine

¹¹⁶ R&C, c. XV, p. 84.

office, the sacrament of penance, private prayer, annual spiritual exercises and the other devotions. For formation there is the liturgy, the Holy Scriptures, the Magisterium, an introduction to the *Rule*, to the history and the spirituality of the Order, to Canon Law and to psychology, to personal prayer, and in addition the experience of community life and the practice of *obsequium pauperum* and *tuitio fidei*. This is a vast programme that should not be seen as the exclusive dominion of the professed but, once again, as an horizon towards which all should aim. In what has just been said about both the spiritual life and doctrinal formation, there is nothing that is reserved for the professed and forbidden to others. Everyone can aspire to these requirements of a spiritual life and this formation programme, again according to his or her status.

You will have noticed that the *Rule* has been mentioned in the foregoing. H.M.E.H the Grand Master expressly asked that the original text of the *Rule* of Raymond du Puy be included in the latest edition of *Regulations and Commentary*. This is not an archaeological curiosity but rather a way to meet the requests of Vatican Council II, taken up in the Code of Canon Law of

1983, that asks religious institutes to faithfully preserve their patrimony¹¹⁷. We must not reinvent the Order's charism at every generation. We must renew our way of living, but we have to be careful to remain faithful to the spirit of our origins. This spirit is defined in the very first article of the *Rule* of Raymond du Puy: he asserts two constituent and permanent elements of the Order: the religious vows – this Rule is one of the oldest attestations of the poverty/chastity/obedience triad as definition of the religious life – and the expression “*the brothers who consecrate themselves to the service of the poor*”, *fratres ad servitium pauperum venientes*. These two elements constitute the specific charism of the Order: religious order and hospitaller order (it is during the 15th century that the words *et ad tuitionem fidei* are added to the original text to achieve the combination that identifies the Order, *obsequium pauperum/tuitio fidei*).

Permit me to refer to my contribution on these permanent aspects of the *Rule* of Raymond du Puy pub-

¹¹⁷ “All must observe faithfully the mind and designs of the founders regarding the nature, purpose, spirit, and character of an institute, which have been sanctioned by competent ecclesiastical authority, and its sound traditions, all of which constitute the patrimony of the same institute” CIC, 578.

lished in the *Journal of Spirituality*¹¹⁸. I also point out that in 2013 the Académie Historique of the Order of Malta's French Association published, with the coordination of Fra' Emmanuel Rousseau, the *Rule* and other early texts, on which I make a substantial commentary. These *Premiers textes normatifs des Hospitaliers* have recently been translated into Italian by the Grand Priory of Naples and Sicily and by the Centro Studi Melitensi of Taranto¹¹⁹. In the preamble to *Regulations and Commentary* it is recalled that the history of the Order proves its fidelity to the *patrimonium* of its origins down through the centuries. Nine centuries separate the *Rule* of Raymond du Puy from *Regulations and Commentary*. May the manner in which we put into practice the regulations of today attest to this fidelity to the spirit of the origins and lead all the members of the Order on a true path of sanctity.

Padre Bruno Martin

Conventual Chaplain ad honorem

¹¹⁸ B. MARTIN, *Some Current Aspects of Raymond du Puy's Rule*; *Journal of Spirituality*, n. 11, pp. 7-19.

¹¹⁹ Académie historique de l'Ordre de Malte, *Premiers textes normatifs des Hospitaliers*, Paris, 2013, p. 147; Centro Studi Melitensi, *Primi testi normativi degli Ospedalieri*, Ecumenica editrice, Bari, 2016, p. 19.1



CHAPLAINS AND THE LITURGICAL LIFE OF THE ORDER

Introduction

On December 4, 1963, the day of the promulgation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council, Blessed Pope Paul VI gave an address to the Council Fathers, in which he reviewed the work of the Second Session of the Council. He expressed great joy at the work of the Council and, in particular, at the promulgation of its first document, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. In that regard, he observed:

[F]or in the way things have gone we note respect for a right scale of realities and duties. God must hold first place; prayer to him is our first duty. The liturgy is the first source of the divine communion in which God shares his own life with us. It is also the first school of the spiritual life. The liturgy is the first gift we must make to the Christian

people united to us by faith and the fervor of their prayers. It is also a primary invitation to the human race, so that all may lift their now mute voices in blessed and genuine prayer and thus may experience that indescribable, regenerative power to be found when they join us in proclaiming the praises of God and the hopes of the human heart through Christ and the Holy Spirit.¹²⁰

The words of Pope Paul VI make clear the unchanging nature of the Sacred Liturgy, the gift of God to us by which we offer to Him due worship

¹²⁰ "Animadvertimus enim hoc in negotio aequum rerum officiorumque ordinem esse servatum; cum hoc professi simus, Deo summum locum esse tribuendum; nos primo eo officio teneri Deo admovendi preces; sacram Liturgiam primum esse fontem illius divini commercii, quo ipsa Dei vita nobiscum communicatur; primam esse animi nostri scholam; primum esse donum a nobis christiano populo dandum, nobiscum fide precationemque studio coniuncto; primam denique humani generis invitationem, ut mutam suam linguam solvat in beatas veracesque preces, utque ineffabilem illam vim sentiat, animum veluti recreantem, quae sita est in canendis nobiscum Dei laudibus hominumque spe, per Iesum Christum et in Spiritu Sancto." Paulus PP. VI, Allocutio "Ad Patres Conciliares habita, altera exacta Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani secundi sessione," 4 Decembris 1963, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 56 (1964), 34. English translation: Paul VI, "Address to the Fathers at the end of the second period of Vatican Council II, excerpt on the liturgy, 4 December 1963," *Documents on the Liturgy 1963-1979: Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts*, ed. International Commission on English in the Liturgy (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1982), p. 27, no. 132.

and, at the same time, express most perfectly our communion with Him.

Noting the Council's intention that the sacred rites be simplified, in order to be better understood by the faithful and to be more fitting to the language of our time, he expressed an important caution in these words:

Still, the Council in no way intends thereby to lessen the importance of prayer, nor to subordinate it to other concerns of ministry or activity. Neither is there any intent to deprive liturgical prayer of its expressive power or ancient beauty. The purpose rather is to make the liturgy purer, truer to the marks of its own nature, closer to the sources of its truth and grace, readier to serve as a spiritual treasury for the faithful.¹²¹

Indeed he went further to express his will that none of the rules of the public prayer of the Church be neglected by introducing private changes or singu-

¹²¹ "[C]onsilium nostrum eo certe non spectat, ut precandi momentum minoris pendatur, neve ceteris sacri muneris pastoralisque navitatis curis postponatur, neve quid de eius significantissima vi atque vetusta artis elegantia detrahatur; sed ut sacra Liturgia purior reddatur, ut suis veritatis et gratiae fontibus si propior, ut denique facilius in spiritualem se vertat populi thesaurum." *Ibid.*, 35. English translation: *Ibid.*, p. 28, no. 134.

lar rites; that no one usurp the power of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* by his own will, before fitting and certain norms in the matter had been given, and any changes had been legitimately approved.¹²² He concluded by underlining the universal nature of the Sacred Liturgy and by warning against any abuse of the liturgical rites:

Let this preeminent prayer of the Church,
then, resound in harmony throughout the
world; let no one distort or pervert it.¹²³

The understanding of the Roman Pontiff regarding the discipline which should govern the reform of the Sacred Liturgy could not have been expressed more clearly.

Reading his words in the light of the history of the canonical discipline pertaining to the Sacred Liturgy, which followed the promulgation of the Constitution, one is struck by the fact that seemingly, at least in many places, they fell on deaf ears. In fact, in many respects, the entire sense of canonical liturgical discipline seemed to be more or less gradually

¹²² Cf. *Ibid.*, 35.

¹²³ "Haec igitur praeclara Ecclesiae precatio concordī modulatione per totum resonet orbem terrarum: nemo eam perturbet, nemo violet." *Ibid.*, 35. English translation: *Ibid.*, p. 28, no. 135.

abandoned after the promulgation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. For that reason, I thought it appropriate, at the beginning of my presentation, to reflect upon the nature of canonical discipline in what pertains to the Sacred Liturgy.

Canon Law at the Second Vatican Council

A fundamental challenge to the development and application of Canon Law regarding the Sacred Liturgy is owed to the Council's lack of any particular treatment of the place of Canon Law in the life of the Church. The documents of the Council contain frequent references to the norm of law, to power granted by the law, to the liceity of certain acts, to common and particular law, but in no place is the irreplaceable service of Canon Law articulated, including the obligation to obey its norms.

I think, for example, of the exposition in the Encyclical Letter of Pope Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis Christi*. Contemplating the union of the faithful who belong to the one Body of Christ, he wrote:

Now since its Founder willed this social body of Christ to be visible, the cooperation of all its members must also be externally manifest

through their profession of the same faith and their sharing the same sacred rites, through participation in the same Sacrifice, and the practical observance of the same law. Above all, it is absolutely necessary that the Supreme Head, that is, the vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, be visible to the eyes of all, since it is He who gives effective direction to the work which all do in common in a mutually helpful way towards the attainment of its proposed end. As the Divine Redeemer sent the Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth, who in His name should govern the Church in an invisible way, so, in the same manner, He commissioned Peter and his successors to be His personal representatives on earth and to assume the visible government of the Christian community.¹²⁴

¹²⁴ "Quoniam vero ... sociale eiusmodi Christi Corpus ex Conditoris sui voluntate adspectabile esse debet, conspiratio illa membrorum omnium extrinsecus etiam sese manifestet opus est, cum per eiusdem fidei professionem, tum per eorundem communionem sacrorum, per eiusdemque participationem sacrificii, tum denique per actuosam earundem legum observantiam. Idque praeterea omnino necessarium est, ut in oculis omnium conspicuum adsit supremum Caput, a quo mutua invicem adiutrix omnium opera ad propositum assequendum finem efficienter dirigatur: Iesu Christi dicimus in terris Vicarium. Quemadmodum enim divinus Redemptor Paraclitum misit ve-

Later on, he further elaborated the place of law within the whole richness of the life of the Christian in the Church. He wrote:

But lest we be deceived by the angel of darkness who transforms himself into an angel of the light, let this be the supreme law of our love: to love the Spouse of Christ as Christ willed her to be, and as He purchased her with His blood. Hence, not only should we cherish exceedingly the Sacraments with which holy Mother Church sustains our life, the solemn ceremonies which she celebrates for our solace and our joy, the sacred chant and the liturgical rites by which she lifts our minds up to heaven, but also the sacramentals and all those exercises of piety by which she consoles the hearts of the faithful and sweetly imbues them with the Spirit of Christ. As her children, it is our duty, not only to make a return

ritatis Spiritum, qui suas partes agens, arcanam sumeret Ecclesiae gubernationem, ita Petro eiusque Successoribus mandavit, ut suam in terris gerentes personam perspicibilem quoque christianae reipublicae moderationem agerent.” Pius PP. XII, *Litterae Encyclicae Mystici Corporis Christi*, “De mystico Iesu Christi corpore deque nostra in eo cum Christo coniunctione,” 29 Iunii 1943, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 227. [Hereafter, MCC]. English translation: http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_2906194, p. 17, no. 69. [Hereafter, MCCEng].

to her for her maternal goodness to us, but also to respect the authority which she has received from Christ in virtue of which she brings into captivity our understanding unto the obedience of Christ. Thus we are commanded to obey her laws and her moral precepts, even if at times they are difficult to our fallen nature; to bring our rebellious body into subjection through voluntary mortification; and at times we are warned to abstain even from harmless pleasures. Nor does it suffice to love this Mystical Body for the glory of its divine Head and for its heavenly gifts; we must love it with an effective love as it appears in this our mortal flesh – made up, that is, of weak human elements, even though at times they are little fitted to the place which they occupy in this venerable body.¹²⁵

¹²⁵ “Ne autem a tenebrarum angelo decipiamur, transfigurante se in angelum lucis, haec sit amoris nostri suprema lex, ut nempe Christi Sponsam, qualem eam Christus voluit suoque sanguine acquisivit, diligamus. Non modo igitur sacramenta, quibus Ecclesia pia Mater nos alit; non modo solemnia, quibus nos solacio laetitiaque afficit, ac sacra cantica et liturgici ritus, quibus mentes nostras ad caelestia erigit, carissima nobis sint oportet, sed et sacramentalia, quae dicimus, atque varia illa pietatis exercitia, quibus eadem fidelium animos Spiritu Christi suaviter imbuunt et consolantur. Nec solummodo officium nobis est maternam eius erga nos pietatem, ut filios addecet,

A similar exposition is not found in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, even though it was later insistently provided in the teaching of Pope Paul VI.¹²⁶

rependere, sed acceptam etiam a Christo auctoritatem eius revereri, quae in captivitatem redigit intellectus nostros in obsequium Christi; atque adeo eius legibus eiusque de moribus praeceptis, nonnumquam naturae nostrae a primaeva innocentia lapsae durioribus, obtemperare iubemur; itemque rebellans, quod gerimus, corpus voluntaria castigatione compescere; quin immo interdum a iucundis etiam rebus, neque iis noxiis, abstinere admonemur. Nec satis est mysticum hoc Corpus diligere, divino Capite caelestibusque dotibus insigne; sed actuoso etiam amore idem prosequi debemus, prouti in mortali manifestatur carne nostra, ex humanis nempe infirmisque elementis constans, etsi minus eadem nonnumquam ei loco congruunt, quem in venerando illo Corpore occupant.” MCC, 238. English translation: MCCEng, p. 23, no. 92.

¹²⁶ Cf. Paulus PP. VI, Allocutio “Ad E. mos Patres Cardinales et ad Consultores Pontificii Consilii Codici Iuris Canonici recognoscendo,” 20 Novembris 1965, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 57 (1965), 985-989; “Ad Praelatos Auditores, Officiales et Advocatos Tribunalis Sacrae Romanae Rotae, novo litibus iudicandis ineunte anno coram admissos,” 25 Ianuarii 1966, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 58 (1966), 152-155; “Ad Praelatos Auditores, Officiales et Advocatos Tribunalis Sacrae Romanae Rotae, novo litibus iudicandis ineunte anno coram admissos,” 27 Ianuarii 1969, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 61 (1969), 174-178; “Ad Praelatos Auditores et Officiales Tribunalis Sacrae Romanae Rotae, a Beatissimo Patre novo litibus iudicandis ineunte anno coram admissos,” 29 Ianuarii 1970, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 62 (1970), 111-118; “Ad Praelatos Auditores, Officiales et Advocatos Tribunalis Sacrae Romanae Rotae, novo litibus iudicandis ineunte anno coram admissos,” 28 Ianuarii 1971, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 63 (1971), 135-142; “Ad Praelatos Auditores et Officiales Tribunalis Sacrae Romanae Rotae, a Beatissimo Patre novo litibus iudicandis ineunte anno coram admissos,” 28 Ianuarii 1972, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 64 (1972), 202-205; “Ad Praelatos Auditores et Officiales Tribunalis Sacrae Romanae Ro-

Pope John Paul II pursued with vigor the revision of the 1917 Code of Canon Law, which had been announced by Pope Saint John XXIII on the same occasion as he announced the convocation of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and of a Synod for the Diocese of Rome.¹²⁷ As a Father of the Second Vatican Council, Pope John Paul II had no question about the Council's desire to address the perennial discipline of the Church to the present time. Clearly, the Council's desire regarding Church discipline did not intend the abandonment of her discipline but a new appreciation of it in the context of contemporary challenges. In the Apostolic Constitution *Sacrae Disciplinae Leges*, with

tae, a Beatissimo Patre novo litibus diudicandis ineunte anno coram admissos," 8 Februarii 1973, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 65 (1973), 95-103; "Ad Praelatos Auditores, Advocatos et Officiales Tribunalis Sacrae Romanae Rotae, a Beatissimo Patre novo litibus iudicandis ineunte anno coram admissos," 31 Ianuarii 1974, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 66 (1974), 84-88; "Ad Tribunalis Sacrae Romanae Rotae Decanus, Praelatos Auditores, Officiales et Advocatos, novo Litibus Iudicandis ineunte anno, de protectione iustitiae perfectiore reddenda," *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 69 (1977), 147-153; and "Ad Tribunalis Sacrae Romanae Rotae Decanum, Praelatos Auditores, Officiales et Advocatos, ineunte anno iudiciali," 28 Ianuarii 1978, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 70 (1978), 181-186.

¹²⁷ Cf. Ioannes PP. XXIII, Solemnis Allocutio, "In coenobio monachorum Benedictinorum ad S. Pauli Extra Moenia, post Missarum sollemnia, quibus Beatissimus Pater in Patriarchali Basilica Ostiensi interfuerat," 25 Ianuarii 1959, *Acta Apostolica Sedis* 51 (1959), 68-69.

which he, the Supreme Legislator in the Church, promulgated the 1983 Code of Canon Law, he wrote:

Turning our minds today to the beginning of this long journey [of the revision of the Code of Canon Law], to that January 25, 1959 [“when my predecessor of happy memory, John XXIII, announced for the first time his decision to reform the existing *corpus* of canonical legislation which had been promulgated on the feast of Pentecost in the year 1917”] and to John XXIII himself who initiated the revision of the Code, I must recognize that this Code derives from one and the same intention, the renewal of Christian living. From such an intention, in fact, the entire work of the council drew its norms and its direction.¹²⁸

¹²⁸ “Mentem autem hodie convertentes ad exordium illius itineris [ad Codicem Iuris Canonici recognoscendum], hoc est ad diem illam XXV Ianuarii anno MCMLIX [“qua Decessor Noster fel. rec. Ioannes XXIII primum publice nuntiavit captum abs se consilium reformandi vigens Corpus legum canonicarum, quod anno MCMXVII, in sollemnitate Pentecostes, fuerat promulgatum”], atque ad ipsum Ioannem XXIII, Codicis recognitionis initiatore, fateri debemus hunc Codicem ad uno eodemque proposito profluxisse, rei christianae scilicet restaurandae; a quo quidem proposito totum Concilii opus suas normas suumque ductum praesertim accepit.” Ioannes Paulus PP. II, Constitutio Apostolica *Sacrae Disciplinae Leges*, 25 Ianuarii 1983, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 75,

These words point to the essential service of canon law in the work of a new evangelization, that is, the living of our life in Christ with the engagement and energy of the first disciples and the first missionaries to our native places.

The saintly Pontiff described the nature of canon law, indicating its organic development from God's first covenant with His holy people. He recalled "the distant patrimony of law contained in the books of the Old and New Testament from which is derived the whole juridical-legislative tradition of the Church, as from its first source."¹²⁹ In particular, he reminded the Church how Christ Himself declared that He had not come to abolish the law but to bring it to completion, teaching us that it is, in fact, the discipline of the law which opens the way to freedom in loving God and our neighbor. He observed: "Thus the writings of the New Testament enable us to understand even better the importance of discipline and make us see

Pars II (1983), viii (cf. vii). [Hereafter, SDL]. English translation: Canon Law Society of America, *Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition*, New English Translation (Washington, DC: Canon Law Society of America, 1998), p. xxviii (cf. p. xxvii). [Hereafter, SDLEng].

¹²⁹ "... longinqua illa hereditas iuris, quae in libris Veteris et Novi Testamenti continetur, ex qua tota traditione iuridica et legifera Ecclesiae, tamquam a suo primo fonte, originem ducit." SDL, x. English translation: SDLEng, p. xxix.

better how it is more closely connected with the saving character of the evangelical message itself.”¹³⁰

Pope John Paul II then articulated the purpose of canon law, that is, the service of the faith and the economy of grace, and of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and charity. He noted that, far from hindering the living of our life in Christ, canonical discipline safeguards and fosters our Christian life. He declared:

[I]ts purpose is rather to create such an order in the ecclesial society that, while assigning the primacy to love, grace and charisms, it at the same time renders their organic development easier in the life of both the ecclesial society and the individual persons who belong to it.¹³¹

As such, canon law can never be in conflict with the Church’s doctrine but is, in the words of Pope

¹³⁰ “Sic Novi Testamenti scripta sinunt ut nos multo magis percipiamus hoc ipsum disciplinae momentum, utque ac melius intellegere valeamus vincula, quae illud arctiore modo contingunt cum indole salvifica ipsius Evangelii doctrinae.” *SDL*, x-xi. English translation: *SDLEng*, p. xxix.

¹³¹ “Codex eo potius spectat, ut talem gignat ordinem in ecclesiali societate, qui, praecipuas tribuens partes amoris, gratiae atque charismati, eodem tempore faciliorem reddat ordinatam eorum progressionem in vita sive ecclesialis societatis, sive etiam singulorum hominum, qui ad illam pertinent.” *SDL*, xi. English translation: *SDLEng*, pp. xxix-xxx.

John Paul II, “extremely necessary for the Church.”¹³²

The teaching of the Church, in fact, is translated into discipline by the canonical tradition.¹³³ He indicated four ways in which the Church’s discipline is a necessary complement to Her doctrine, declaring:

Since the Church is organized as a social and visible structure, it must also have norms: in order that its hierarchical and organic structure be visible; in order that the exercise of the functions divinely entrusted to it, especially that of sacred power and of the administration of the sacraments, may be adequately organized; in order that the mutual relations of the faithful may be regulated according to justice based upon charity, with the rights of individuals guaranteed and well-defined; in order, finally, that common initiatives undertaken to live a Christian life ever more perfectly may be sustained, strengthened and fostered by ca-

¹³² “... Ecclesiae omnino necessarius est.” SDL, xii. English translation: SD-LEng, p. xxxi.

¹³³ Cf. SDL, xi.

nonical norms.¹³⁴

Because of the essential service of canon law to the life of the Church, Pope John Paul II reminded the Church that “by their very nature canonical laws are to be observed,” and, to that end, “the wording of the norms should be accurate” and “based on solid juridical, canonical and theological foundations.”¹³⁵

Antinomianism and the Hermeneutic of Rupture and Discontinuity

A second essential context in which to understand the liturgical legislation after the Second Vatican Council is the penetration of a cultural antinomianism into the Church. Pope Paul VI, in his homily on the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul in

¹³⁴ “Cum ad modum etiam socialis visibilisque compaginis sit constituta, ipsa normis indiget, ut eius hierarchica et organica structura adspectabilis fiat, ut exercitium munerum ipsi divinitus creditorum, sacrae praesertim potestatis et administrationis sacramentorum rite ordinetur, ut secundum iustitiam in caritate innixam mutuae christifidelium necessitudines componantur, singulorum iuribus in tuto positos atque definitis, ut denique communia incepta, quae ad christianam vitam perfectius usque vivendam suscipiuntur, per leges canonicas fulciantur, muniantur ac promoveantur.” *SDL*, xii-xiii. English translation: *SDLEng*, p. xxxi.

¹³⁵ “... canonicae leges suapte natura observantiam exigent...accurate fieret normarum expressio...in solido iuridico, canonico ac theologico fundamento inniterentur.” *SDL*, xiii. English translation: *SDLEng*, p. xxxi.

1972, reflected at some length upon the situation of the Church in the world during the years immediately following upon the close of the Second Vatican Council. Using an image with a clear reference to the Sacred Liturgy, he spoke of his sense that “through some fissure the smoke of Satan has entered into the temple of God.”¹³⁶ He spoke of a pervasive doubt, uncertainty, restlessness, dissatisfaction and dissent, and of a loss of trust in the Church, coupled with a ready placement of trust in secular prophets who speak through the press or social movements, seeking from them the formula for a true life.¹³⁷ He noted how the state of uncertainty prevailed within the Church Herself, observing that after the Second Vatican Council it was believed that “a day of sunlight had dawned upon the Church,” while, in fact, “a day of clouds, storms, darkness, wandering and uncertainty” had

¹³⁶ “... da qualche fessura sia entrato il fumo di Satana nel tempio di Dio.” Paulus PP. VI, “Per il nono anniversario dell’Incoronazione di Sua Santità: «Resistite fortes in fide», 29 giugno 1972,” *Insegnamenti di Paolo VI*, Vol. 10 (1972) (Città del Vaticano: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1973), p. 707. [Hereafter, HomilyPaulVI]. English translation by author.

¹³⁷ Cf. HomilyPaulVI, pp. 707-708.

arrived.¹³⁸ He commented that the Church seemed to plumb the abysses rather than to seek to fill them.¹³⁹

Having lived the years of the Council and those immediately following upon it in the minor and major seminary, I recall well the euphoria which accompanied the work of the Council and of the reforms which the Council was said to mandate. The effects of the euphoria were perhaps most evident in the reforms introduced into the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy. The difference in the approach to the Sacred Liturgy from my first days in the seminary in the Fall of 1962 to the time of the post-Conciliar reforms was, to say the least, extreme, if not violent.

I think, for instance, of what happened to the music employed in sacred worship. Upon entering the minor seminary, I was issued a personal copy of the *Liber Usualis*. During my first years in the seminary, some hours were devoted each week to perfecting the singing of Gregorian Chant, especially to learning the

¹³⁸ “... una giornata di sole per la storia della Chiesa...una giornata di nuvole, di tempesta, di buio, di ricerca, di incertezza.” HomilyPaulVI, p. 708. English translation by author.

¹³⁹ Cf. HomilyPaulVI, p. 708.

proper chants for each Sunday and Feast. Within five years, the *Liber Usualis* was suddenly and totally abandoned, and Gregorian Chant was replaced, in great part, by songs developed according to the standards of popular music and accompanied by the guitar and percussion instruments. I have recounted at some length my experience of the radical change in Sacred Music after the Council in my contribution to the Proceedings of the Third Fota International Liturgical Conference in July of 2010.¹⁴⁰ What happened to Sacred Music happened also to the very Rite of the Mass, to the other sacred rites, and indeed to every aspect of the Sacred Liturgy.

What was the cause of such a radical, even violent, change? There was a sense that what had gone before the Council had been a gradual corruption of the purity of the Church in the first centuries of Her existence. What Pope Benedict XVI described as the battle between the hermeneutic of discontinuity and

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Raymond Cardinal Burke, "The new evangelization and sacred music: the unbroken continuity of holiness, beauty and universality," *Benedict XVI and Beauty in Sacred Music*. Proceedings of the Third Fota International Liturgical Conference, 2010, ed. Janet Elaine Rutherford (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2012), pp. 24-26.

rupture, and the hermeneutic of reform or continuity ensued. In other words, the liturgical reform was viewed as the repudiation of centuries of liturgical practice, in order to establish a new practice which was said to recapture the purity of the practice of the early Church. What the Conciliar teaching requested, however, was a reform within the unbroken continuity of the Tradition.

In his first Christmas address to the Roman Curia, in December of 2005, which also marked the fortieth anniversary of the close of the Second Vatican Council, Pope Benedict XVI reflected at length upon the struggle between the two interpretations of the Council, the “hermeneutic of discontinuity and rupture,” and the “hermeneutic of reform.”¹⁴¹ The hermeneutic of discontinuity and rupture, in the words of Pope Benedict XVI, “risks ending in a split between the pre-conciliar Church and the post-concil-

¹⁴¹ “... ermeneutica della discontinuità e della rottura ... ermeneutica della riforma.” Benedictus PP. XVI, Allocutio “Ad Romanam Curiam ob omnia natalicia,” 22 Decembris 2005, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 98 (2006), 46. [Hereafter, Allocutio2005]. English translation: Pope Benedict XVI, “Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Roman Curia Offering Them His Christmas Greetings,” 22 December 2005, *L'Osservatore Romano* Weekly Edition in English, 4 January 2006, p. 5. [Hereafter, Allocutio2005Eng].

iar Church” and, thereby, justifies an interpretation of the Council not based upon the texts approved by the Council Fathers but upon what is called “the true spirit of the Council,” which is discovered “in the impulses toward the new that are contained in the texts.”¹⁴²

The fruit of the “hermeneutic of discontinuity and rupture” is described by Pope Benedict XVI in these words:

The nature of a Council as such is therefore basically misunderstood. In this way, it is considered as a sort of constituent that eliminates an old constitution and creates a new one. However, the Constituent Assembly needs a mandatory and then confirmation by the mandatory, in other words, the people the constitution must serve. The Fathers had no such mandate and no one had ever given them one; nor could anyone have given them one because the essential constitution of the

¹⁴² “... rischia di finire in una rottura tra Chiesa preconciliare e Chiesa postconciliare ... il vero spirito del Concilio ... negli slanci verso il nuovo che sono sottesi ai testi.” *Allocutio*2005, p. 46. English translation: *Allocutio*2005Eng, p. 5.

Church comes from the Lord and was given to us so that we might attain eternal life and, starting from this perspective, be able to illuminate life in time and time itself.¹⁴³

In the years following the Second Vatican Council, the hermeneutic of rupture was manifested, in a most striking way, in the betrayal of the liturgical reform which had been ordered by the Council by means of a manipulation of the divine action of the liturgy to express the individual personality of the celebrant and of the congregation, and even to advance various human agenda completely alien to the divine action of the Sacred Liturgy.

Already, in 1972, Pope Paul VI had the sense that some foreign, indeed diabolically hostile element, had entered into the very sanctuaries of the Church. Pope

¹⁴³ “Con ciò, però, si fraintende in radice la natura di un Concilio come tale. In questo modo, esso viene considerato come una specie di Costituente, che elimina una costituzione vecchia e ne crea una nuova. Ma la Costituente ha bisogno di un mandante e poi di una conferma da parte del mandante, cioè del popolo al quale la costituzione deve servire. I Padri non avevano un tale mandato e nessuno lo aveva mai dato loro; nessuno, del resto, poteva darlo, perché la costituzione essenziale della Chiesa viene dal Signore e ci è stata data affinché noi possiamo raggiungere la vita eterna e, partendo da questa prospettiva, siamo in grado di illuminare anche la vita nel tempo e il tempo stesso.” *Allocutio2005*, p. 46. English translation: *Allocutio2005Eng*, p. 5.

Paul VI's earlier mentioned lament pointed to a rupture in the Church, caused by the failure to see the organic nature of her life, which receives from Christ, faithfully down the centuries, the gift of "worship in spirit and truth."¹⁴⁴ The rupture is embodied in the perception that everything which had happened in the Church from the time of the first disciples was somehow a corruption and that the Church must, therefore, be created *ex novo* by returning to the purity of life of the early ecclesial community.

This way of thinking is profoundly naïve, for it fails to take account of the grave internal struggles which the Church experienced from the beginning and about which Saint Luke, in the *Acts of the Apostles*, and Saints Paul, John, Peter and James, in their letters, give ample testimony. In short, the rupture is caused by an abandonment of the discipline which permits us to see how the Holy Spirit has been unceasingly at work, throughout the Christian centuries, enabling man to offer true worship to God, that is, the worship which God Himself teaches us to offer in the Church.

¹⁴⁴ Jn 4:24.

The post-Conciliar period and accompanying euphoria manifested a general disdain for the Church's perennial discipline. There quickly developed the sense that a new age of freedom and love had been granted to the Church, in which it would be incongruous to insist upon the application of canon law and, in specific, of liturgical law. The matter was further complicated by the announcement of the reform of the Code of Canon Law which Pope John XXIII made at the same time when he announced the convocation of the Second Vatican Council and of a Synod for the Diocese of Rome.¹⁴⁵ Clearly, the actual work of the revision of the Code of Canon Law had to wait upon the work of the Council.

In the meantime, the cultural revolution dramatically manifested by the student riots of 1968 in Paris and profoundly characterized by a general distrust of and rebellion against all forms of authority also had its effect upon the Church, fueling a disdain for the perennial discipline of the Church. In any case,

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Ioannes PP. XXIII, *Solemnis Allocutio*, "In coenobio monachorum Benedictinorum ad S. Pauli Extra Moenia, post Missarum sollemnia, quibus Beatissimus Pater in Patriarchali Basilica Ostiensi interfuerat," 25 Ianuarii 1959, *Acta Apostolica Sedis* 51 (1959), 68-69.

there developed the sense that much of the Church's discipline in force up to the time of the Council was no longer relevant and that, until a new Code of Canon Law would be promulgated, a great deal of freedom could be exercised in the various aspects of the Church's life. Given the radical reform of the liturgical rites, a certain antinomian mentality easily led to a great deal of liturgical experimentation which was completely divorced from the discipline which had formerly governed the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy.

Fundamental to a deeper understanding of the Sacred Liturgy, the ultimate source and highest realization of the Christian life,¹⁴⁶ is the study of its juridical structure, that is, of its place in the right relationship between God and man. Given the just-described antinomian culture, a culture which has also exercised a profound influence within the Church, such a study may seem completely foreign or, at least, esoteric. Yet, without a proper appreciation of the juridic structure of the Sacred Liturgy, the Church's

¹⁴⁶ Cf. *Sacrosanctum Concilium Oecumenicum Vaticanum II*, *Constitutio Sacrosanctum Concilium*, "De Sacra Liturgia," 4 decembris 1963, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 56 (1964), 102, n. 10. [Hereafter, SC].

greatest treasure is subject to misunderstanding and even abuse. To speak of liturgical law in the mission of the Church is to address perhaps the humblest aspect of the Sacred Liturgy, but which is, at the same time, irreplaceable in man's worship of God.

Here, I note once again the importance of the notion of *ius divinum*, which I discussed in my presentation for the Fourth Fota International Liturgical Conference in July of 2011.¹⁴⁷ For an extended treatment of the questions, which I now address, I recommend a recently published volume by a young Italian canonist, Daniele Nigro, who has devoted himself, in particular, to the study of liturgical law within the context of the *ius divinum*. The first fruit of his study, which, I anticipate, will continue and develop, is the volume entitled *I diritti di Dio: La liturgia dopo il Vaticano II*.¹⁴⁸ As I note in the Preface to the volume, the author not only addresses the

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke, "Ius Divinum and the sacred liturgy," *Benedict XVI and the Roman Missal*. Proceedings of the Fourth Fota International Liturgical Conference, 2011, ed. Janet Elaine Rutherford and James O'Brien (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2013), pp. 21-39. [Hereafter, Fota IV].

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Daniele Nigro, *I diritti di Dio. La liturgia dopo il Vaticano II* (Milano: Sugarco Edizioni, 2012). [Hereafter, Nigro].

failure of Church discipline but the effective remedy of it:

Experiencing both the benefits and the deficits of the liturgical reform after the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, the author has wished to understand the causes which have contributed to the lack of observance of liturgical law in the post-Conciliar time and therefore to the neglect of the *ius divinum*. The author, however, has not limited himself to understand simply the causes of such lack of observance, but has devoted himself, at the same time, to discover the most apt ways to carry out the desired reform in the Conciliar magisterium according to the demands of the *ius divinum*.¹⁴⁹

The volume in question provides many helpful references to the Magisterium and to pertinent theological and canonical texts and studies.

¹⁴⁹ "Sperimentando i benefici e le deficienze della riforma liturgica dopo il Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano II, l'autore ha voluto capire le cause che hanno contribuito all'inosservanza del diritto liturgico nel tempo postconciliare e perciò alla trascuratezza dello *ius divinum*. L'autore, però, non si è limitato semplicemente a capire le cause di tale inosservanza, ma si è dedicato allo stesso tempo a scoprire le vie più adatte per adempiere la riforma voluta nel magistero conciliare secondo le esigenze dello *ius divinum*." Nigro, p. 21. English translation by author.

Development of Liturgical Law in the Post-Conciliar Period

The Second Vatican Council repeated the constant teaching on the exclusive authority of the Church for the right discipline of the Sacred Liturgy, distinguishing two parts of the liturgy: “unchangeable elements divinely instituted” and “elements subject to change,” which “not only may be changed but ought to be changed with the passage of time, if they have suffered from the intrusion of anything out of harmony with the inner nature of the liturgy or have become less suitable.”¹⁵⁰ Regarding the elements susceptible to change, the Council enunciated clear rules, namely:

22. (1) Regulation of the sacred liturgy depends solely on the authority of the Church, that is, on the Apostolic See, and, as laws may determine, on the bishop.

(2) In virtue of power conceded by law,

¹⁵⁰ “...parte immutabili, utpote divinitus instituta, et partibus mutationi obnoxiiis, quae decursu temporum variare possunt vel etiam debent, si in eas forte irrepserint quae minus bene ipsius Liturgiae intimae naturae respondeant, vel minus aptae factae sint.” SC, 105-106, n. 21. English version: *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery, O.P., p. 9, no. 21. [Hereafter, SCEng].

the regulation of the liturgy within certain defined limits belongs also to various kinds of bishops' conferences, legitimately established, with competence in given territories.

(3) Therefore no other person, not even a priest, may add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy on his own authority.¹⁵¹

The Sacred Liturgy is the worship owed to God, as He Himself has instituted it. It cannot, as the Church has always taught, be reduced to the activity of any individual, not even a priest, but must be governed, with respect for the divine right, by the law of the Church, by the supreme authority, that is, by the Roman Pontiff and by the Bishops in communion with him.

The conciliar legislation introduces a new element into the development of liturgical law, namely, the possibility of the exercise of governance of the

¹⁵¹ "22. § 1. Sacrae Liturgiae moderatio ab Ecclesiae auctoritate unice pendet: quae quidem est apud Apostolicam Sedem et, ad normam iuris, apud Episcopum. § 2. Ex potestate a iure concessa, rei liturgicae moderatio inter limites statutos pertinet quoque ad competentes varii generis territoriales Episcoporum coetus legitime constitutos. § 3. Quapropter nemo omnino alius, etiamsi sit sacerdos, quidquam proprio Marte in Liturgia addat, demat, aut mutet." SC, 106, n. 22. English version: SCEng, pp. 9-10, no. 22.

Sacred Liturgy by the Conference of Bishops. The element is not only new from the point of view of discipline, but also of doctrine, for, while the Roman Pontiff and the Bishops exercise jurisdiction over the Sacred Liturgy by divine law, the Conference of Bishops is an institution of positive law. Since the governance of the Sacred Liturgy is intimately connected with the teaching office of the Bishop, there enters the question of the divinely-given authority of the Roman Pontiff and the Diocesan Bishop to teach and to sanctify. At the same time, especially in the case of a large Conference of Bishops, the exercise of power in matters regarding the Sacred Liturgy has brought serious difficulties with it. It is not possible here to enter into the complex question of the authority of the Conference of Bishops with respect to the authority of the Roman Pontiff and the authority of the Diocesan Bishop in communion with him, but it must certainly be duly considered in any serious study of liturgical law after the Second Vatican Council.¹⁵²

¹⁵² For a general discussion of the question, cf. Ignatius Gordon, *Liturgia et potestas in re liturgica* (Roma: Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, 1966), pp. 137-147.

What also must be noted is the development of an unfortunate tendency to qualify certain liturgical laws, which, in the climate of antinomianism which sadly coincided with the closing of the Council, tended to undermine the very directives and to lead to grave liturgical abuses. For example, regarding the use of Gregorian Chant in the Sacred Liturgy, the Council legislated:

The Church recognizes Gregorian chant as being specially suited to the Roman liturgy. Therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services.¹⁵³

Immediately following the legislation regarding the use of Gregorian Chant in the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy, provision is made for the use of other music:

Other kinds of sacred music, especially polyphony, are by no means excluded from liturgical celebrations so long as they accord with the spirit of the liturgi-

¹⁵³ "Ecclesia cantum gregorianum agnoscit ut liturgiae romanae proprium: qui ideo in actionibus liturgicis, ceteris paribus, principem locum obtineat." SC, 129, n. 116. English translation: SCEng, p. 32, n. 116.

cal action as laid down in Article 30.¹⁵⁴

The legislation in question is followed by three norms in the matter, one pertaining to the edition of the official books of Gregorian Chant,¹⁵⁵ and the other two to the fostering of popular or local missionary musical forms.¹⁵⁶ While no one contests the fittingness of using sacred music, other than Gregorian Chant, during liturgical rites, the placement of the two norms within the same legislation, in fact, led practically, in many places to the almost total abandonment of the use of Gregorian Chant, contrary to the clear intention of the Conciliar legislation.

A similar observation can be made regarding the Conciliar legislation on the use of the Latin language in the Sacred Liturgy, especially by clerics. The legislation begins with a clear provision for the preservation of the use of Latin:

¹⁵⁴ "Alia genera Musicae sacrae, praesertim vero polyphonia, in celebrandis divinis Officiis minime excluduntur, dummodo spiritui actionis liturgicae respondeant, ad normam art. 30." SC, 129, n. 116. English translation: SCEng, p. 33, no. 116.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. SC, 129, n. 117.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. SC, 129-130, nn. 118-119.

The use of the Latin language, with due respect to particular law, is to be preserved in the Latin rites.¹⁵⁷

There is no further articulation regarding the use of Latin in the norm but rather three paragraphs on the use of the vernacular language.¹⁵⁸ Once again, while no one should contest the need of norms regarding the use of the vernacular, the placement of the norms immediately following a generic norm on the use of Latin, without further specification, seems to relativize the content of that norm. In fact, in many places, especially in what pertains to the formation of the clergy, there was little effort to preserve the use of Latin in the years following the Council.

One thinks also of the post-Conciliar legislation regarding the distribution of Holy Communion under both species¹⁵⁹ and regarding concelebration.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ "Linguae latinae usus, salvo particulari iure, in Ritibus latinis servetur." SC, 109, n. 36, § 1. English translation: SCEng, p. 13, no. 36, (1).

¹⁵⁸ Cf. SC, 109-110, n. 36, §§ 2-4. English translation: SCEng, p. 13, no. 36, (2)-(4).

¹⁵⁹ Cf. Sacra Congregatio pro Cultu Divino, *Instructio Sacramentali Communioni*, "De ampliore facultate Sacrae Communionis sub utraque specie administrandae," 26 Iunii 1970, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 62 (1970), 664-667.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Sacra Congregatio pro Cultu Divino, *Declaratio In celebratione Missae*, "De concelebratione," 7 Augusti 1972, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 64 (1972), 561-563.

While the legislation in question articulated the discipline to be followed in both matters, in many places, the practices were introduced without respect for the norm of the legislation.

In fact, the Third Instruction on the Correct Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, issued by the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship on September 5, 1970, openly recognized a certain confusion caused by a lack of respect for the relationship of the authority of the Apostolic See and of the Diocesan Bishops in the discipline of the Sacred Liturgy. Commenting on the implementation of the Conciliar liturgical reforms, the Instruction observed:

There were those who, for the sake of conserving ancient traditions, were unwilling to accept these reforms. There were others who, concerned with urgent pastoral needs, felt they could not wait for the definitive reform to be promulgated. As a result some individuals, acting on private initiative, arrived at hasty and sometimes unwise solutions, and made changes, additions or simplifications which at times went against the basic

principles of the liturgy. This only troubled the faithful and impeded or made more difficult the progress of genuine renewal.¹⁶¹

The Instruction acknowledged the early request of the intervention of the Holy See to deal with the situation but stated that such intervention “was not deemed advisable while the Consilium was engaged in bringing about and guiding the work of renewal.”¹⁶² According to the thinking of the Sacred Congregation, once the work of the Consilium was completed, namely in 1970, the Instruction could be

¹⁶¹ “Alii enim, veteris servandae traditionis causa, huiusmodi reformationes aegre acceperunt; alii vero, instante pastoralis necessitate, nihil esse expectandum censuerunt, dum ultimae instaurationes promulgarentur. Ex quo factum est, ut quidam ad privata incepta, ad festinatas compositiones, quandoque inconsultas, ad inventiones et additiones vel ad ritus simpliciores devenerint, quae haud raro praecipuius Liturgiae normis essent contraria; itemque fidelium conscientiam perturbarent atque ipsi rectae renovationis causae obessent vel eam difficiliorem redderent.” *Sacra Congregatio pro Cultu Divino, Instructio tertia Liturgicae instaurationes*, 5 Septembris 1970, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 62 (1970), 693. [Hereafter, LI]. English translation: Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, Third Instruction *Liturgicae Instaurationes*, “On the Correct Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy,” 5 September 1970, *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, Revised Edition, ed. Austin Flannery (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Company, 1992), p. 210. [Hereafter, LIEng].

¹⁶² “... fieri visum non est, dum «Consilium» Liturgiae instaurationem efficiebat ac navabat,” LI, 694. English translation: LIEng, p. 210.

given. The Instruction proceeds to offer a series of directives, including a directive regarding ongoing liturgical experimentation.¹⁶³

The last directive addresses the reality of the Sacred Liturgy in the universal Church, declaring:

The present reform offers liturgical prayer as it should be, flowing from centuries of living, spiritual tradition. The work of the whole people of God, structured in its variety of orders and ministries, should be visible in the way the reform is carried out. For only in this unity of the whole body of the Church can the liturgy's efficacy and authority be guaranteed.¹⁶⁴

The directive concludes by emphasizing the irreplaceable office of the pastors of the Church in safeguarding and promoting the unity of the Sacred Liturgy, in accord with the living tradi-

¹⁶³ Cf. LI, 703, n. 12.

¹⁶⁴ "Praesens instauratio liturgicam precem proferre contendit, e viva et vetustissima spirituali traditione exortam. Et cum profertur, ipsa manifestanda est ut opus totius populi Dei, in suis diversis ordinibus et ministeriis constituti. Tantummodo enim in hac totius compaginis ecclesialis unitate certa servatur vis et authenticitas." LI, 703-704, n. 13. English translation: LIEng, p. 221, no. 13.

tion, “far from a secularism and arbitrary attitude which would seriously threaten the liturgical reform.”¹⁶⁵

Time does not permit a commentary on the struggle in restoring a sense of liturgical discipline in the almost two decades which intervened between the closing of the Second Vatican Council and the promulgation of the revision of the Code of Canon Law, in accord with the teaching of the Council, by Pope John Paul II on January 25, 1983. In short, the struggle which *Liturgicae Instaurationes* noted and with which it attempted to deal continued. At various points, the Apostolic See intervened to discipline situations of liturgical abuse, but there was need to define once again, for the universal Church, the authority of the Roman Pontiff and the Bishops in communion with him in what pertains to the right ordering and discipline of the Sacred Liturgy.

In can. 838, the 1983 Code of Canon Law enunciates the norm regarding the discipline of the Sacred Liturgy formulated by the Second Vatican Council.

¹⁶⁵ “... a formis saecularibus et arbitriis, quae graviter eam [instaurationem liturgicam] imminuant, sit aliena.” LI, 704, n. 13. English translation: LIEng, 221, no. 13.

The second part of the canon reads:

It is for the Apostolic See to order the sacred liturgy of the universal Church, publish liturgical books and review their translations in vernacular languages, and exercise vigilance that liturgical regulations are observed faithfully everywhere.¹⁶⁶

The responsibility of the Diocesan Bishop is defined in can. 392 of the 1983 Code. His responsibility, in general, is articulated in the first paragraph of the canon: “to promote the common discipline of the whole Church and therefore to urge the observance of all ecclesiastical laws.”¹⁶⁷ The second paragraph of the canon further specifies the responsibility, especially in what pertains to the Sacred Liturgy. It reads:

¹⁶⁶ “Apostolicae Sedis est sacram liturgiam Ecclesiae universae ordinare, libros liturgicos edere eorumque versiones in linguas vernaculas recognoscere, necnon advigilare ut ordinationes liturgicae ubique fideliter observentur.” *Codex Iuris Canonici auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II promulgatus*, 25 Ianuarii 1983, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 75, pars II (1983), p. 153, can. 838, § 2. [Hereafter, CIC-1983]. English version: *Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition*, New English Translation, ed. Canon Law Society of America (Washington, D.C.: Canon Law Society of America, 1998), p. 276. [Hereafter, CIC-1983Eng].

¹⁶⁷ “...disciplinam cunctae Ecclesiae communem promovere et ideo observantiam omnium legum ecclesiasticarum urgere tenetur.” CIC-1983, p. 71, can. 392, § 1. English version: CIC-1983Eng, p. 128.

He is to exercise vigilance so that abuses do not creep into ecclesiastical discipline, especially regarding the ministry of the word, the celebration of the sacraments and sacramentals, the worship of God and the veneration of the saints, and the administration of goods.¹⁶⁸

This norm of the 1983 Code corresponds to the norm found in can. 1257 of the Pio-Benedictine Code. The text of can. 392, § 2 of the 1983 Code, corresponding to can. 1261 of the 1917 Code, clearly underlines the native concern of the Bishop for everything which pertains to the Sacred Liturgy, and to the life of prayer and devotion which flows from participation in the Sacred Liturgy and leads the faithful to the same participation.

The discipline in the 1983 Code must be viewed in the light of the manner in which the post-Conciliar reform was implemented. The situation of the liturgical reform was strongly in the mind of the Supreme

¹⁶⁸ "Advigilet ne abusus in ecclesiasticam disciplinam irrepant, praesertim circa ministerium verbi, celebrationem sacramentorum et sacramentalium, cultum Dei et Sanctorum, necnon bonorum administrationem." CIC-1983, p. 71, can. 392, § 2. English version: CIC-1983Eng, p. 128.

Legislator. For example, in 1980, Pope John Paul II devoted his second Holy Thursday Letter to Bishops, *Dominicae Cenae*, to the consideration of the relationship of the priesthood to the Sacred Liturgy, above all, to the Most Blessed Sacrament. In the last part of *Dominicae Cenae*, he expressed concern regarding the erosion of the universal nature of the Church's worship through "a certain 'creative' freedom."¹⁶⁹ He declared:

We can follow the path of this pluralism (which arises in part from the introduction itself of the various languages into the liturgy) only as long as the essential characteristics of the celebration of the Eucharist are preserved, and the norms prescribed by the recent liturgical reform are respected.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹ "...liberae «creatici» cuidam operae, ..." Ioannes Paulus PP. II, Epistula *Dominicae Cenae*, "De Ss. Eucharistiae Mysterio et Cultu," 24 Februarii 1980, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 72 (1980), 143, n. 12. [Hereafter, DC]. English translation: Pope John Paul II, *On the Mystery and Worship of the Eucharist*, *Dominicae Cenae*, February 24, 1980 (Boston: St. Paul Editions, nd), p. 30, no. 12. [Hereafter, DCEng].

¹⁷⁰ "Qua in pluralismi via, ut aiunt (qui ceterum iam exortus est ex variorum linguarum usu in liturgiam inducto), eatenus tantum progredi licet, quatenus necessariae proprietates celebrationis Eucharistiae non tollantur quatenusque obtemperetur legibus recentiore liturgica renovatione praestitutis." DC, 143, n. 12. English translation: DCEng, p. 30, no. 12.

Referring to the Mystery of Faith entrusted to the Church, he reminded Bishops and priests of the nature of their liturgical service:

Every priest who offers the holy Sacrifice should recall that during this Sacrifice it is not *only* he with his community that is praying but the whole Church, which is thus expressing in this sacrament her spiritual unity, among other ways by the use of the approved liturgical text. To call this position “mere insistence on uniformity” would only show ignorance of the objective requirements of authentic unity, and would be a symptom of harmful individualism.

This subordination of the minister, of the celebrant, to the *Mysterium* which has been entrusted to him by the Church for the good of the whole People of God, should also find expression in the observance of the liturgical requirements concerning the celebration of the holy Sacrifice.¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ “Singuli sacerdotes, qui Sanctum offerunt Sacrificium, meminerint proinde non se *solos* huius Sacrificii tempore precari cum propria communitate, verum totam simul precari Ecclesiam, quae sic atque etiam

Although Pope John Paul II does not explicitly refer to the *ius divinum* which underlies all liturgical discipline, he carefully describes it. It is the Mystery of Faith to which Saint Paul refers in his account of the institution of the Holy Eucharist, when he declares with humility and confidence: “For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, ...”¹⁷²

Dominicae Cenae was followed by the Instruction of the then Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship, *Inaestimabile Donum*. While noting positive aspects of the post-Conciliar liturgical reform, the Instruction expresses

concern at the varied and frequent abuses being reported from different parts of the Catholic world: the confusion of roles, especially regarding the priestly ministry and

per *usum liturgici textus approbati* aperiat hoc in Sacramento unitatem suam spiritalem. Si quis hanc rationem appellat «nimum uniformitatis studium», ostendit tantummodo se ignorare obiectivas postulationes germanae unitatis idque signum est nocentis individualismi, quem dicunt.

Quod autem minister sive celebrans ita subicitur ipsi «Mysterio», quod ab Ecclesia illi concreditum est in commodum totius Populi Dei, id elucere debet etiam in observatione liturgicarum normarum ad Sancti Sacrificii celebrationem attinentium.” DC, 144, n. 12. English translation: DCEng, p. 31, no. 12.

¹⁷² 1 Cor 11, 23.

the role of the laity (indiscriminate shared recitation of the Eucharistic prayer, homilies given by lay people, lay people distributing communion while the priests refrain from doing so); an increasing loss of the sense of the sacred (abandonment of liturgical vestments, the Eucharist celebrated outside church without real need, lack of reverence and respect for the Blessed Sacrament, etc.); misunderstanding of the ecclesial character of the liturgy (the use of private texts, the proliferation of unapproved Eucharistic Prayers, the manipulation of the liturgical texts for social and political ends).¹⁷³

¹⁷³ “... de sollicitudine, quacum perquam multiplices et crebros pravos usus advertimus, qui e variis partibus orbis catholici nuntiantur: confusio munerum, praesertim quod ad minsiterium sacerdotale attinet et ad officium laicorum (recitatio precis eucharisticae, quae sine discrimine et coniuncte fit, homiliae a laicis habitae, laici sacram communionem distribuentes, dum sacerdotes ea dispertienda se abstinere); augescens defectus sensus illius, quo sacrum percipitur (derelictus usu vestium liturgicarum, sacrae celebrationes pro more extra ecclesias sine vera necessitate habitae, deficiens reverentia et observantia sanctissimi Sacramenti hisque similia); neglectio indolis ecclesialis, quae liturgiae est propria (usus textuum privatorum, amplificata inductio precum eucharisticarum non approbatarum, detorta adhibitio textuum liturgicorum quatenus finibus socialibus-politicis servire iubentur).” Sacra Congregatio pro Sacramentis et Cultu Divino, *Inaestimabile donum*, “De

Quoting a text from the *Summa Theologica* of Saint Thomas Aquinas, the Instruction declared:

In these cases we are face to face with a real falsification of the Catholic liturgy: “One who offers worship to God on the Church’s behalf in a way contrary to that which is laid down by the Church with God-given authority and which is customary in the Church is guilty of falsification.”¹⁷⁴

The Instruction then provides 27 norms for the celebration of the Holy Mass and of Eucharistic Worship outside Mass.

The Instruction concludes by observing that the difficulties encountered in the implementation of the liturgical reform mandated by the Second Vatican Council “stem from the fact that neither priests

quibusdam normis circa cultum mysterii eucharistici,” 3 Aprilis 1980, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 72 (1980), 332-333. [Hereafter, ID]. English translation: Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship, Instruction *Inaestimabile Donum* on Certain Norms Concerning Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery (Vatican City: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanae), 1980, p. 4. [Hereafter, IDEng].

¹⁷⁴ “Huiusmodi in casibus vera deprehenditur adulteratio liturgiae catholicae: «vitium falsitatis incurrit qui ex parte Ecclesiae cultum exhibet Deo contra modum divina auctoritate ab Ecclesia constitutum et in Ecclesia consuetum».” ID, 333. English translation: IDEng, p. 4. Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 93, a. 1.

nor faithful have perhaps been sufficiently aware of the theological and spiritual reasons for which the changes have been made, in accordance with the principles laid down by the Council.”¹⁷⁵ It insists that “[p]riests must acquire an ever deeper understanding of the authentic way of looking at the Church, of which the celebration of the liturgy and especially of the Mass is the living expression.”¹⁷⁶ Clearly, fundamental to the understanding of the Church and her Sacred Liturgy is the understanding of the *ius divinum* and of the irreplaceable service of liturgical law.

In my presentation at the Fourth Fota International Liturgical Conference in July of 2011, I described the concern of Pope John Paul II for the authentic reform of the Sacred Liturgy from the beginning of his pontificate and, with particular insistence, at the end of his pontificate.¹⁷⁷ His teaching and its continuation under the pontificate of Pope Benedict

¹⁷⁵ “... ex eo profluit quod nonnulli sacerdotes et fideles non satis sibi exploratas et cognitatas habuerunt ipsas rationes theologicas et spirituales, ob quas res secundum principia a Concilio statuta sunt mutatae.” ID, 340. English translation: IDEng, p. 11.

¹⁷⁶ “Sacerdotes oportet altius percipiant sincerum modum Ecclesiam considerandi, cuius vivum quasi documentum, est celebratio liturgica, potissimum vero Missa.” ID, 341. English translation: IDEng, p. 11.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Fota IV, pp. 36-38.

XVI make clear that the right attention to liturgical norms does not constitute a sort of legalism or rubricism, but an act of profound respect and love for our Lord who has given us the gift of divine worship, an act of profound love which has as its irreplaceable foundation the respect for the divine right.

The legislation regarding the use of what is now known as the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite merits a particular mention. Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Letter given *motu proprio*, *Ecclesia Dei*¹⁷⁸, and the earlier Letter *Quattuor abhinc Annos*¹⁷⁹ of the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship permitted, to some degree, the celebration of the form of the Roman Rite in use before the post-conciliar reforms. Pope Benedict XVI further defined and developed the discipline regarding the two forms of the one Roman Rite by his Apostolic Letter given *motu proprio* *Summorum Pontificum*,¹⁸⁰ together with the accompa-

¹⁷⁸ Cf. Ioannes Paulus PP. II, Litterae Apostolicae motu proprio datae *Ecclesia Dei adflicta*, 2 Iulii 1988, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 80 (1988), 1495-1498.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Sacra Congregatio pro Cultu Divino, Epistula *Quattuor abhinc annos*, "De usu Missalis Romani iuxta editionem typicam anni MCMLXII," 3 Octobris 1984, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 76 (1984), 1088-1089.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Benedictus PP. XVI, Litterae Apostolicae motu proprio datae *Summorum Pontificum*, "De usu extraordinario antiquae formae Ritus Romani," 7 Iulii 2007, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 99 (2007), 777-781.

nying Letter to the Bishops,¹⁸¹ and the subsequent Instruction *Universae Ecclesiae* of the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*.¹⁸² In his just-mentioned Letter to the Bishops, Pope Benedict XVI made clear that the celebration of the two forms of the Roman “can be mutually enriching.”¹⁸³

Later, in the letter, employing the hermeneutic of reform or continuity, he made clear that the celebration of both forms of the Roman Rite is an expression of the necessary continuity of the two forms. He wrote:

There is no contradiction between the two editions of the Roman Missal. In the history of the liturgy there is growth and progress, but no rupture. What earlier generations held as sacred, remains sacred and great for us too, and it cannot be all of a sudden entirely forbidden

¹⁸¹ Cf. Benedictus PP. XVI, Epistula “Ad Episcopos Catholicae Ecclesiae Ritus Romani,” 7 Iulii 2007, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 99 (2007), 795-799. [Hereafter, Epistula]

¹⁸² Cf. Pontificia Commissio *Ecclesia Dei*, *Instructio Universae Ecclesiae*, “Ad exsequendas Litteras Apostolicas *Summorum Pontificum*,” 30 Aprilis 2011, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 103 (2011), 413-420.

¹⁸³ “... possono arricchirsi a vicenda: ...” Epistula, 797. English translation: Benedict XVI, *Summorum Pontificum* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 2007), p. 24. [Hereafter, EpistulaEng]

or even considered harmful. It behooves all of us to preserve the riches which have developed in the Church's faith and prayer, and to give them their proper place.¹⁸⁴

One must observe that, through the faithful application of the juridical norms contained in *Universae Ecclesiae* and through their development and perfection over time, the reform desired by the Second Vatican Council will be carried out in fidelity to the Tradition.

Sacred Liturgy and the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Malta

The liturgical fonts for the Order of Malta are *ab immemorabili*. They can be divided into two types: 1) those regarding the liturgy connected with the ceremonies of reception into the Order; and 2) those concerning the liturgical life of the members of the

¹⁸⁴ "Non c'è nessuna contraddizione tra l'una e l'altra edizione del *Missale Romanum*. Nella storia della Liturgia c'è crescita e progresso, ma nessuna rottura. Ciò che per le generazioni anteriori era sacro, anche per noi resta sacro e grande, e non può essere improvvisamente del tutto proibito o, addirittura, guidicato dannoso. Ci fa bene a tutti conservare le ricchezze che sono cresciute nella fede e nella preghiera della Chiesa, e di dar loro il giusto posto." Epistula, 798. English translation: EpistulaEng, p. 26.

Order. I concentrate my attention on the second type of font, making reference to the first type of font in what regards the reception of priests.

Since the Order of Malta is a military religious institute, the liturgical dispositions foreseen for religious orders have always applied to the Order but with the necessary modifications owed to the nature of the activities of the Order, for example, the state of war, life at sea, and difficulties of logistics.

Proper Calendar and Collection of Proper Masses

In the ten centuries of its history, the Order which draws upon the Rule of Saint Benedict, has had its own proper calendar in the universal Church, having, from ancient times, proper feasts that she observed with particular solemnity. Therefore, there has never been a Proper Missal understood as containing a Proper Rite of the Order, although, within the universal calendar there has been given a greater status to certain memorials or solemnities, for example the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist (24 June) or the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary venerated under the title of Our Lady of Philermos (8 September).

It is therefore incorrect to say that the Order has

a Proper Missal. It is correct to affirm that the Order has a Collection of Proper Masses. On July 4, 1987, in fact, with the Decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship, signed by the Cardinal Prefect Paul Augustine Mayer, O.S.B., in response to the explicit request of the then Prelate of the Order, Monsignor Mario Brini, a Collection of the Masses according to the Calendar which the Order considered proper was approved. The Proper Calendar was attached to the same decree. This disposition was supplemented by the Decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, dated April 22, 2005, and signed by Cardinal Francis Arinze, which added to the list of Calendar of the Order the newly inscribed in the List of the Beatified from 1987 to then, that is, Blessed Guglielmo (Wilmos) Apor, Blessed Ildefonso Schuster, Blessed Pope John XXIII, and Blessed Karl of Austria.

In the annotations (*Adnotanda*) attached to the Calendar, it is ordained that it should apply to all of the churches of the Order (n. 1), that each priest of the Order, outside of the churches of the Order, could *ad libitum* celebrate the memorials contained in the Collection of Proper Masses on days when

such celebration is not impeded, that on feasts and obligatory memorials, the Calendar can be followed in Masses without a congregation (n. 2b, IGMR, nn. 353-355), so that it could be celebrated if a group of the members of the Order gather in a church which is not of the Order (n. 3; cfr. SCCD, Instruction *Actio Pastoralis*, 15 May 1969, n. 2d). Moreover, the practice of reciting the Prayer of the Knights “*sicubi mos est*” after the Prayer after Holy Communion and before the Final Blessing is affirmed (n. 4). The offering of Holy Masses for vocations and for the deceased members of the Order is commended.

These decrees of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments have received the *exsequatur* of the Grand Master. In the first Magistral Decree, dated September 8, 1987, Fra’ Angelo de Mojana di Cologna recalled how for many centuries manuscripts of Calendars and other liturgical manuscripts have been handed down in the Order. These manuscripts provide for certain celebrations, and it was therefore right that such a liturgical patrimony be updated in the light of the reform flowing from the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council.

Having, as I recalled above, supplemented the Calendar in accord with can. 838, §2, of the Code of Canon Law, the Grand Master Servant of God Fra' Andrew Bertie issued a new Decree of Execution (June 24, 2005), with which he published the text of the Proper Masses which is still in force.

In the text of the Proper Masses, after the Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Saints and Blesseds of the Order, there are two Masses with prayer texts especially written for them: 1) the Mass for the Grand Master, above all on the Anniversary of His Election; and 2) the Mass for Vocations. After these there follow the Masses for the Dead in which the prayer texts make explicit reference to membership in the Order. It includes the General Intercessions and the Prayer of the Knights which, if recited outside of the Holy Mass, carries with it a partial indulgence (cfr. *Enchiridion Indulgentiarum*, n.1).

After the *Editio typica* in Latin, there followed translations in Italian and English, and perhaps in other languages.

Finally, even if in the Order of the Mass contained in the Collection of Proper Masses no pertinent rubric is given, it is an established practice that,

in the celebrations in which a Knight of Justice is present, he completes the Rite of Peace, that is, once he has received silently the sign of peace according the practice of the Priest Celebrant, the same Professed Knight (if there are present more than one, than the Professed Knight who is oldest in profession or in age) performs the part of the Rite usually reserved to the Deacon and says to the faithful: "Let us offer each other a sign of peace." This is the case, even if a deacon is present.

This tradition is from time immemorial. In former times, the peace was communicated by means of the Instrument of Peace. The fact that the Professed Knight receives directly from the Celebrant the peace and communicates it to others is another indication of the religious character of the Order.

In the same way, it belongs to the Professed Knights or, in their absence, to the most worthy Knight in Obedience to recite the Prayer of the Knights at the conclusion of the Holy Mass.

The Divine Office

While there exists a Collection of Proper Masses of the Order, there is not a Proper Breviary, which

is quite anomalous, since usually the Missal and the Liturgy of the Hours go together. In reality, the lack of a Proper Breviary can probably be traced to the lack of the obligation of common life for the Professed Knights of the Order (Constitutions, art. 1, par. 2), and therefore the lack of need of a common Office. The spiritual life of the Professed, thus, is considered *uti singulis* (cfr. Code, art. 86).

But there is the question of the Professed Chaplains who, as clerics, are held by universal law to the recitation of the *Liturgia horarum* (cfr. can. 276 CIC). What book must they then follow? In fact, they recite the Divine Office following the text of the Psalter promulgated for the universal Church. It would thus be most desirable that, through the good offices of the Prelate who is the superior of the religious of the Order (cfr. art. 19 Cost.; cfr. art. 160 Codice), a definitive text of the Breviary be approved by the Apostolic See and promulgated, or, at least, a special *Addendum* to help the Knights follow the Calendar of the Order.

While praiseworthy from the point of view of personal piety, especially on those days which are not memorials or are not Vigils of Solemnities, the

practice of reciting in common only the Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary is not proper, because it is important that the members of the Order, especially the Professed, pray the Hours of the Church with the Church, that is, following the Calendar of the universal Church. This applies even more so to the Professed Chaplains and to the Nuns of the Order of Salinas de Añana and of Zamora in Spain, and of Saint Ursula in Malta. Such would increase the religious practice but would also constitute a great deepening of the hagiography of the Order, often unknown to many.

The constant use of the Latin language in the Order is most praiseworthy (cfr. can. 928 CIC; *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 36; Benedict XVI, Postsynodal Apostolic Exhortation *Sacramentum Caritatis*, 62). It should be safeguarded and promoted also for reason of the international nature of the Order. Thus the Order has a common expression of the one Faith.

It is the responsibility of the Chaplains to form the other members of the Order in the beauty of the Sacred Liturgy. They have the responsibility to help the members of the Order to know and love all of the profound catechesis inherent to the Sacred Liturgy.

Chaplains

The chaplains of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta are divided into three categories, one of the First Class and two of the Third Class. They are thus: 1) Professed Conventual Chaplains (First Class *pleno iure*), 2) Conventual Chaplains *ad honorem* (Third Class), and Magistral Chaplains (Third Class).

All three categories promote the sacred rites for the Order, organize courses of adult catechesis and spiritual retreats, and provide spiritual helps for the members of the Order (cfr. art. 162 Code).

The Professed Chaplains take the vow of Obedience (cfr. art. 62 Codice) to the Supreme Pontiff and to their Superiors in the Order.

Article 110 of the Code treats the reception of priests into the Order.

The Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church are not Chaplains but have the rank of Bailiff Grand Cross of Honor and Devotion (cfr. art. 110, par. 3, art. 130, par. 2 Code).

Those who are awarded the decoration *Pro Merito Melitensi* are not Chaplains of the Order (cfr. art. 111 Code).

The Professed Conventual Chaplains are equivalent, *congrua congruis referendo*, to Knights of Justice, since they make, to all effects, the three religious vows in the hands of their Superiors. In this regard, it is helpful to recall that, in accord with the requirements of the *Formula professionis Cappellanorum Conventualium et Oboedientiae*, religious priests are not admitted to the rank of Professed Conventual Chaplains because they are already bound by vows to another religious institute.

There are three other subjects related to the Chaplains in the Order which it would be well to treat but which time does not permit me to do so: Insignia, Choir Dress and Use of the Coat-of-Arms. Regarding the question of Choir Dress, it is important to note that the privileges of the Choir Dress pertain only to the proper ceremonies of the Order and are for exclusive use in functions strictly connected to membership in the Order. In no case is it licit for Chaplains of the Order to wear the Choir Dress outside of the mentioned contexts, since it is not a question of a personal privilege but of a privilege *ratione officii*.

Conclusion

It is my hope that these reflections will be of assistance to you in providing for the proper and indeed beautiful celebration of the Sacred Liturgy for the members of the Order and in giving important liturgical catechesis to the members of the Order. As a premier institute of the Church, the Order should strive to foster in all of its members a true liturgical piety. For members of the Order, it should be ever more evident that the Sacred Liturgy is the highest and most perfect expression of a Christian's life in Christ and, therefore, of a member of the Order's union with Christ in the defense of the Faith and in the care of the poor, especially of the infirm.

I urge you, in a particular way, to make the Proper Calendar of the Order better known among all members, so that the proper memorials of the Order may be celebrated, when appropriate, and so that the members may be inspired by the example of the many Saints and Blesseds of the Order and may seek their intercession for the Order and for their own life as a member of the Order. The Collection of Masses of the Order is a great gift. It would be good to have it published also in the form of a hand missal which

could be used during the Holy Mass but also for private devotion.

In conclusion, I thank you, dear brothers in the Holy Priesthood and in the Order, for your irreplaceable service of the Order and, thus, of the universal Church. I assure you of my prayers for your intentions, even as I ask you, please, to remember me in your prayers.

Thank you for your kind attention. God bless you and all your priestly labors.

✠ Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke
Cardinalis Patronus



THE ROLE OF THE ORDER'S CHAPLAINS WITH YOUNG VOLUNTEERS

The Mandate from the Order

One of the fruits of the meeting of the last General Chapter was the establishment of the 2050 Group – encouraging Youth engagement, which was launched in 2013 with the support of the Grand Master, under the auspices of the Grand Magistracy.

Vision 2050 has brought together hundreds of young members and volunteers through Order activities, events, fundraisers and conferences across the globe to share their experiences, open up their activities to international participation, and to work to encourage youth engagement throughout the Order.

The following priorities of the youth have been recognised:

- **Chaplains and Formation** – having dedicated chaplains for the work of the youth and encourag-

ing a practice of prayer and learning around the works of the Order

- **Active engagement** – encouraging National Associations to support youth engagement by joining national or international works
- **Vision 2050 website** – encouraging the use of the international Vision 2050 website, which allows the sharing of ideas, activities, and employment and volunteer opportunities
www.orderofmaltavision2050.com
- **Vision 2050 liaisons** – linking young members and volunteers to drive partnerships between different bodies of the Order
- **Vision 2050 collaborations** – encouraging young members and volunteers to meet, discuss and collaborate in their activities and events around the world. Such as retreats, international summer camps, Lourdes, International Holiday Camp.

At the Priors, Sub-priors, Regents and Presidents' Meeting, in Rome, 21st February 2015 and the Hospitallers' Conference, Ehreshoven, March 14th 2015, the following Proposals were presented:

Chaplains and Formation:

- Each National Association or Priory could identify a Chaplain, to be dedicated to the formation of the youth.
- A universal practice of prayer and learning about the Order could be put in place around works of the Order.
- Establishment of a Formation Steering Group, providing a sound understanding of the Catholic doctrine and the traditions of the Order of Malta.
- The National appointment of a dedicated chaplain or Professed Member.
- The development of materials, available via the e-academy and forthcoming website Action point:
- Fra' Duncan Gallie to lead on the establishment of the Formation Steering Group, and to advise on the materials available.

Active Engagement – Dedicated Youth Activity:

The role of the youth group:

- To conduct hospitaller works;
- To live and learn the charism of the Order of Malta;
- To be a resource for the deepening of faith and knowledge of Catholic teachings under the guidance of a dedicated chaplain;

- To become a major pool from which to select future candidates for membership in the Order for all classes;
- Open to anyone between the ages of 18 and 35 active in the Order.

The mentors, who have worked steadily to support and develop Vision 2050, have been impressed by the personal commitment of those involved in Vision 2050 and the desire of the young to maintain a spiritual focal point, with particular focus on the spirituality and charism of the Order.

Being a Young Volunteer in the Order of Malta

So there is clearly a mandate from the Order, to the Chaplains and Associations and Priories, to *“have dedicated chaplains for the work of the youth and encouraging a practice of prayer and learning around the works of the Order”*.

Very few Orders or Catholic organisations in my experience have such a large number of young people involved in their works. In Great Britain, the “Order of Malta Volunteers” (www.omv.org.uk) and the “Companions of the Order of Malta” (www.orderofmalta.org.uk) are well-tried and tested struc-

tures enabling young people to experience the Charism of the Order. They are 18-35 so not really young as in “youth”, but young adults, and they need to be taken seriously, as they, like the apostles, ask the question “*Rabbi, where are you staying?*” And Jesus answers: “*Come and see*” (Jn 1:38). They are volunteers and not Members of the Order. They are seekers at an early stage of their journey who have witnessed something of the Lord within our Order.

“Above all the Gospel must be proclaimed by witness. Take a Christian or a handful of Christians who, in the midst of their own community, show their capacity for understanding and acceptance, their sharing of life and destiny with other people, their solidarity with the efforts of all for whatever is noble and good. Let us suppose that, in addition, they radiate in an altogether simple and unaffected way their faith in values that go beyond current values, and their hope in something that is not seen and that one would not dare to imagine. Through this wordless witness these Christians stir up irresistible questions in the hearts of those who see how they live: Why are they like this? Why do they live in this way? What or who is it that inspires them?”

Why are they in our midst? Such a witness is already a silent proclamation of the Good News and a very powerful and effective one”¹⁸⁵.

This early relationship with the Order, which Pope Paul describes in the context of evangelisation as “pre-evangelisation”, can enable young people to experience the Order without feeling under pressure to join. Like the Apostles, a “question” is being raised in the heart of the young person. They are asking the question: “Why are they like that?” and this of course can be taken both ways!

So How Does a Young Person Come to Be Involved in the Order?

It may be through the experience of a member of the Order, family or friend. “It is something we have always done in our family”: the question might be asked, if is this connected to the charism of defence of the faith and service of the poor?

It may be through the experience of a work of the

¹⁸⁵ PAUL VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Decembr 8th, 1975, n. 21.

Order; “I like helping people” but is there a sense of defending the Catholic faith?

It may be through an experience of the traditions of the Order, “I like the way they do things”, but are they simply attracted to exterior elements of the life of the Order?

It does not really matter what the journey is that brings a young person to the threshold of the Order. What matters is the response they receive from the Order when they make their approach. Pope John XXIII said, “*in order for the Church to attract it must be attractive!*”

The Order is attractive, but it must be attractive for the right reason, and this is embodied in the two-fold charism. ***Tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum.***

Family history, doing good works, social enhancement, love of history and ceremony are where a young person may start; the serious responsibility of those charged with formation in the Order, that is the Chaplains, is to ensure that this is not where they finish!

I ask you to try and remember what you were like when you entered the seminary; your hopes and fears, your romantic ideals, they were all shaped and changed and strengthened by the wisdom of teach-

ers and spiritual directors. We entered the seminary with generous hearts, but it was the wisdom of the system and the example of our formators that shaped us “*in the image of Christ*”.

As Chaplains of a Religious Order, we have clear guidance from **The Regulations and Commentary** regarding the basis for formation for those aspiring to join the Order in the Third Class, and this is a good place to start when considering formation for the young.

So, whilst our young people are not members of the Order, and may not go on to be so, the work of formation of the young is an important part of the ministry of a Chaplain. At the very least, our young people will grow in their Christian faith, and at the best they may, through prayer and service be able to discern God’s will in their lives regarding serving Him as a member of the Order. This is a firm foundation that is essential for the health and future of the Order.

The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life: Directives on formation in religious institutes reminds us that:

“The proper renewal of religious institutes depends chiefly on the formation of their members. Religious life brings together disciples of Christ who should be assisted in accepting “this gift of God which the Church has received from her Lord and which by his grace she always safeguards.” This is why the best forms of adaptation will bear fruit only if they are animated by a profound spiritual renewal. The formation of candidates, which has as its immediate end that of introducing them to religious life and making them aware of its specific character within the Church, will primarily aim at assisting men and women religious realize their unity of life in Christ through the Spirit, by means of the harmonious fusion of its spiritual, apostolic, doctrinal, and practical elements”¹⁸⁶.

The Promotion of the Glory of God Through the Sanctification of Its Members

In our Constitutional Charter, it is stated that:

“The purpose of the Order is the promotion of the glory of God through the sanctification of its

¹⁸⁶ CONGREGATION FOR INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE, *Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, 1990, n. 1.

*Members, service to the faith and to the Holy Father, and assistance to one's neighbor"*¹⁸⁷.

This sanctification is based on a life of prayer and Christian formation, as stated in the *Regulation and Commentary* in regard to the Third Class: "Prayer has to be complemented by Christian formation and the reading of the Word of God. The Second Vatican Council 'earnestly exhorts laymen – each according to his own gifts of intelligence and learning – to be more diligent in doing what they can to explain, defend, and properly apply Christian principles to the problems of our era in accordance with the mind of the Church', terms in which one would have no trouble recognizing the **tuitio fidei** dear to the Order. The protection and witness of the faith concerns all Members of the Order of Malta [...] The Apostle Peter exhorts: 'always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope you have' (1Pt 3:15)"¹⁸⁸. **Regulations and Commentary IV:3**

¹⁸⁷ SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA, *Constitutional Charter and Code. Promulgated 27 June 1961 revised by the Extraordinary Chapter General 28-30 April 1997, Rome 1998, Art. 2 § 1, p. 10.*

¹⁸⁸ SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA, *Regulations and Commentary. Promulgated by H.M.E.H. the Prince and Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing and approved by the Sovereign Council on February 18, 2011, p. 47.*

Why We Do What We Do

Young people have great energy and drive, they want to do something, and an Order that serves the Sick and Poor is a great vehicle for the goodness that is in the heart of every young person. Yet without the “**Why**” of “**What**” we do, our good works can become dry, and eventually lead to a person walking away, and passing to the other side of the road.

Formation helps us to understand “why we do what we do”, for Jesus commands us that: “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.*” The second is this, ‘*You shall love your neighbour as yourself.*’ There is no other commandment greater than these”¹⁸⁹, and we shall ask:

“Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did

¹⁸⁹ Mk 12:30-31.

it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me' ”¹⁹⁰.

The **why** is our personal relationship with Jesus Christ. In our personal relationship with the Lord we change; Blessed John Henry Newman said, “*to live is to change, to be perfect is to have changed often*”.

Formation in the faith for the young, when their faith has been confirmed in their life, involves helping them to deepen that which has been given them by parents, teachers and priests. Through prayer, the truth that sets them free and a radical generosity of heart they can change and become the person that God has created them to be.

This is the road to sanctification, and we need saints in our Order and saints in the Church today. Let me repeat again the purpose of the Order: “*The purpose of the Order is the promotion of the glory of God through the sanctification of its Members, service to the faith and to the Holy Father, and assistance to one’s neighbour*”¹⁹¹. Prayer, the truth of the Word of God and the Apostolic Tradition, and radical generosity, change us.

¹⁹⁰ Mt 25:37-41.

¹⁹¹ *Ibidem*.

The Challenges of Ministering to This Generation

The framework for working with young people I would suggest is the discernment of the personal vocation, helping the young person to seek the will of God in their lives, helping them to navigate the modern world. In the document **“In Verbo Tuo, New Vocations for a New Europe”**, it states that young people find themselves “with so much **information** but with so little **formation**”

The challenge for priests is to begin their ministry with the young, understanding the worlds in which they live at this present time. Saint John Paul II called for priests who are *“Experts in humanity, who share the hope and the joys the fears and the tribulations of the men and women of today”*. Our expertise will mean that we have to understand the situation in which the young live today, which is so very different from the world and the culture of our own upbringing.

The right to choose

In a recent survey on attitudes to abortion, the results showed a minority were either pro-abortion or pro-life, but the clear majority were “pro-choice”.

We have become a society in which “choice” and self-defined identities are stronger than once-common values and traditional beliefs. But this shift is not a simple advance for freedom. The re-positioning of “choice” above all else is re-engineering the human person and society as a whole. If you can choose anything, what then is the basis of my choice? In a recent article the Swedish Jesuit Fredrick Heiding, S.J. writes:

“Sweden has been at the forefront in terms of questioning moral values, but not necessarily always for the better. In recent decades, Sweden has taken the lead in liberalism; people have been able to choose... almost anything, without boundaries or limits. What we are experiencing now is a counter-reaction to this liberalism, a reaction that may surface in other countries too”.

In current popular thinking, freedom is understood to mean the capacity to do whatever one pleases, without moral or physical restraints. A recent report on children in the UK reflects on the “excessive individualism” of parents:

“Our evidence showed clearly how stressful life has become for many children in all social classes. We identified a common thread in these problems, which is the excessive individualism in our culture. This needs to be reversed, and children to learn that being of use to others is ultimately more satisfying than an endless struggle for status”¹⁹².

Excessive Individualism – Reflections from “In Verbo Tuo”

“In a Europe, which is culturally complex and deprived of fixed points of reference, the current society model seems to be “man without vocation”. This culture tends to produce young people possessing an incomplete and weak identity with consequent chronic indecision in the face of vocational choices. In addition, many young people do not possess the “elementary grammar” of existence, they are nomads: they move around without stopping either at the geographical, affective, cultural or religious level; they are “trying things out”!

¹⁹² Good Childhood Report 2009.

In the midst of such a great quantity and diversity of information, but with so little formation, they appear lost. Accordingly, they are afraid of their future, they experience anxiety in the face of definite commitments and they question their very being. If on the one hand they are looking for autonomy and independence at all costs, on the other, as a refuge, they tend to be very dependent on the trends and fashions of the time, seeking immediate gratification of the senses: in what 'I like' on what 'makes me feel good' in an emotional world that is made to measure. It is a great sadness to meet many young people, even intelligent and talented, who have no will to live, to believe in something, to work towards great ends, to hope in a world which can become better even thanks to their own efforts. They feel superfluous to the game or drama of life".

Freedom is given to us so that we may voluntarily embrace the true human good. "Behold I stand at the door and knock" (Rev 3:20). God respects our freedom so much that he allows us to reject it by turning away from him and acting against his will for us. "You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (Jn

8:32). Freedom for what? To become the person God has created me to be. “*For me to be saint means to be myself*” (Thomas Merton).

Discovering our Spiritual DNA & Fingerprints

Every vocation as a stable and definitive choice of life opens in three directions: In relation to Christ, every vocation is a sign, a particular way of revealing the face of the Lord Jesus. In relation to the Church, every vocation is ministry, a gift to the community for the common good, each person is called and enabled to love in relation with others, in an attitude of loving service, according to the freedom of the Spirit. In relation to the world, every vocation is mission. It is life lived to the full because it is loved for others - like Jesus and therefore it is life given for: “life generates life”. It defines the gift and contribution of each person to God’s plan, in the image and likeness of Jesus.

The role of the Chaplains of the Order with young volunteers is to help them discern the will of God in their lives.

This engagement principally in formation can enable a life of prayer and love of the Holy Mass and

the sacraments, finds true freedom in the truth that sets them free, and develops a greatness of heart that will help them serve “Our Lords the Sick” and all who are in need.

Monsignor John Armitage

Magistral Chaplain

Rector, National Shrine of Our Lady

Walsingham, England



THE CHRISTIAN MEANING OF VOLUNTEER WORK

I. A Generous Heart: Foundation of the Service to the Poor and the Sick¹⁹³

On a superficial level, to affirm that a generous heart is necessary for serving the Poor and the Sick might seem obvious, a cliché. But when our Grand Hospitaller suggested to me these two words, “generous heart” as the introductory theme of this conversation, they clearly appeared to me as characterizing the service which, as Members of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Malta, we are called to provide to those whom we dare call *our Lords*, the Poor and the Sick: an expression which is, exactly, the contrary of a cliché.

It is precisely true that the spirituality of our family is a spirituality of action, as opposed to a theoretical or speculative elaboration; our source of inspira-

¹⁹³ Chapter 1 corresponds to the text of the speech given by H.E. the Prelate Msgr. Jean Laffitte on March 11th 2016 in Malta, on the occasion of the XXIV^o European Hospitallers’ Conference.

tion is the lived experience, from the engagement of those who preceded us, and particularly in this place, Malta, which is so very evocative. There are, though, some actions that are honorable and legitimate but do not, necessarily, presume a generous heart. In a time when, concerning vague humanitarian values or indefinite solidarities, a certain cultural confusion does exist, a generous heart invites one to distinguish, within an authentic gift, that which goes well beyond the moral sphere of altruism.

The word *heart* is not difficult. In the majority of cultures, and especially in the Christian tradition, the *heart* refers to the person in his entirety, but considered in his inwardness, his feelings, and his will: the heart is the center of affectivity as well as the place where moral decisions are taken. The Books of Wisdom, Proverbs and the Psalms, often exalt a firm heart, a rightful heart, a loving heart, and a merciful heart. The second term, the adjective *generous*, is worth a little attention in its evolution. In Latin, the word *generositas* refers first of all to nobility, a high birth. The Church Fathers were the ones who started using it in a derivative meaning, a spiritual one, of a nobility of the soul. From Latin, the word passed on

to the French “généreux”, and then became in English “generous”, and it continued to be used in its primary meaning of “a noble lineage” until the 16th century. Only during the 17th century, “generous” begins to characterize a moral or spiritual quality, some profusion in one’s acts of kindness, style and behaviour, in short a quality that everybody can nurture notwithstanding one’s personal birth. In this sense, it gets confused with *munificence*, while when it is applied to qualities of indulgency, patience, mercy, it is closer to *magnanimity*.

What does it mean, then, to serve with a generous heart Our Lords the Poor and the Sick? How does one recognize a generous service? I believe that to understand this, we must distinguish between, on the one hand the satisfaction of an accomplished good, and on the other, the joy of giving.

The existence of a minimal justice as well as the existence of some moral fundamental principles, acknowledged by everyone, can be identified in every human being. From this comes the famous saying: *Bonum facendum est, malum vitandum est*, which exhorts one to accomplish the good and to avoid its contrary. In a person normally gifted with a moral

conscience, doing a good deed for one's neighbour produces a feeling of satisfaction. In this sense, a peaceful conscience is like a reward for one's good deeds. Man is a *political animal* – we know this from Aristotle – which explains the existence in the human person of some propensity towards altruism. In the more general and common use of the word, *altruism* (from *alter*, other) indicates a moral quality characterized by the concern shown by someone for the good of someone else. Altruism is a specifically human attitude, when actions in favor of another are not influenced by a logic of trade; on the contrary, they are selfless and completely free of charge.

For all that, the generosity to which we are called is not limited to simple selflessness. A generous attitude, in a positive sense, takes the name of *gift*, and it existed already in Greek philosophy, in the concept of *kharis* (χάρις). As shown by its derivative verb, *kharrein* (χαίρειν), which means *to be glad*, the word *kharis* (χάρις) refers to a reason for joy and, by extension, to a favor, a gift. A gift is what gives joy to its recipient and, if it is truly generous, this joy returns to the giver. He who gives generously is joyful. Joy always

exceeds satisfaction, and for this reason, a generous gift exceeds what is strictly due in terms of justice. The *kharis* (χάρις) of the Greeks becomes the *gratia* of the Latins, used in a profane as well as a sacred sense.

As you know, a tendency of modernity aims to deny the possibility of a generous gift, as understood by the Christian tradition. In gifting, a relationship of solidarity between those who give and those who receive is certainly a reality; but there is also a suspicion of a relation of superiority of the donor against the beneficiary (see, e.g., Marcel Mauss, *Essai sur le Don*, 1929). Many prefer to remain within the boundaries of a strictly human justice. Here, we have a vision, that, in the end, denies the true capacity of the human being to be able to be generous by means of a truly gratuitous and overabundant gift.

In our Christian tradition, *gratia* expresses the gift of God toward His creature. The word means not only the spiritual capacity conferred to the human soul, rendered able to want and to do what pleases God (spiritual grace), but also the Gift which God makes of Himself, the Holy Spirit. What is most interesting here is that the beauty of the gratuity of a

generous gift, which knows it cannot be repaid, has been taught and handed over to us through Revelation.

Divine selflessness cannot be measured by the ordinary criteria of simple human justice: proportion, measure, and ratio. A sentence of St. Augustine comes to mind: *the measure of love is to love without measure.*

The teaching and public actions of Jesus show perfectly this distinction. The actions of the Master are of two sorts: the healing of the Sick and the forgiving of sins. Notwithstanding the importance of those parts of the Gospels where health is restituted to the Sick, the two acts of healing and of forgiving, even if usually connected, must not be considered on the same level. Healing is the act that makes public and visible Jesus' authority and His power over life and death. Forgiveness, the perfect gift, offers the real essence of salvation. Forgiveness goes beyond the relief of physical pains. The act of forgiving is accompanied by a visible sign so that the authority of the Lord to absolve sins becomes manifest to everybody. In this sense, in the Gospel, the restitution of one's health by Jesus evokes the salvific action of God, and His

divine will that men are saved by means of the salvation accomplished by the person of Jesus. The generous quality of the acts of service to the Sick and the Poor, accomplished by the Members of our Order, fits into the line of the true witness made by genuine disciples of Christ to salvation. For this reason, the hospitaller and charitable works carried out all over the world require a true opening and availability of the heart, which properly belong to a noble and generous heart.

In the Synoptic Gospels, there are no less than 47 episodes where the miracles that is, the thaumaturgic actions of Jesus are described, often through the verb *thaumazein* (θαυμαζειν). The healings often concern physical ailments, and psychic and spiritual illnesses. Let us consider the example of the paralytic of Capharnaum¹⁹⁴. The action takes place in front of a crowd, gathered because of the miracles made by Jesus all around Galilee. The first words of Jesus to the paralytic are not to heal him but to announce to him that his sins have been forgiven. The healing, which happens after Jesus has perceived the grumbling of

¹⁹⁴ Mk 2:1-12.

the Scribes in attendance, is the paradoxical manner which He chooses in order to insist on His power to absolve sins.

Jesus' interventions express His compassion. In Him, we find the two attributes of mercy: compassion and mercy in its strict sense. Compassion is the behavior of one who pities those who are in need, in a material sense (*oiktirmos* – οἰκτιρισμός); mercy is aimed toward sinners, victims of a spiritual misery. The merciful is the one who exercise mercy in its wider meaning: doing good and forgiving. In Greek, the term *eleemon* (ἐλεεμεν) is used exclusively for God, the only one Who can cure the disease of sin, often described as a leprosy. It is used only once for a man, in the *Letter to the Hebrews*, where it is attributed to the person of Christ, true God, and thus able to be, at the same time, compassionate and merciful: Christ acts with generosity towards men, not only healing them, but also forgiving them.

Generosity is then a divine gift. In order to serve his Lords in a dignified way and through them his Lord, the Knight drinks from the divine source of mercy. In the *Code*, this is how Article 236 elucidates

service to the Poor: “In search of a tangible response to the love of Christ, the first members of the Order recognized the Lord and served Him in sick pilgrims in the Holy Land. *Obsequium pauperum* has its origin in the divine compassion for the misery of the world, which obliges the members of the Order to serve Jesus Christ, who is present in the Sick (§ 1)”. On this point, the document *Regulations and Commentary* quotes Pope Benedict XVI: “[All Members] need a ‘formation of the heart’: they need to be led to that encounter with God in Christ which awakens their love and opens their spirits to others. As a result, love of neighbour will no longer be for them a commandment imposed, so to speak, from without, but a consequence deriving from their faith, a faith which becomes active through love (cf. Gal 5:6)” (*Deus Caritas Est*, 31)¹⁹⁵.

In the Scripture, we often read of honorable characters, who have not yet undertaken that definitive step of true generosity, to which Christ calls His own. The young rich man has done a lot, and Jesus pays tribute to him: but when Jesus invites him to a true perfection, the man moves away, all saddened. There

¹⁹⁵ SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER OF SAINT JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA, *Regulations and Commentary*, Rome 2011, pp. 38-39.

is also the eldest son in the parable of the Prodigal Son, who cannot come to terms with the fact that his younger brother is reestablished in his position and in his rights within the paternal house, and therefore the elder brother is unable to take part in his father's generosity and to partake in his joy. Many other such examples fill each of the Gospel's narrations.

My dear Confreres, all those who have governed and guided the Order, till today, have never ceased to connect the service and the works to be accomplished to a personal conduct where the spiritual life is nourished by one's frequent contemplation of the Word of God and of a fruitful participation in the Church's Sacramental Life, especially the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Besides being perfectly apt for the members of the Christian family, this is proof that a truly generous heart cannot exist without a living connection with divine generosity. The heart of a Knight of the Order is configured according to the Heart of Christ.

In one of the most ancient statutes of the Hospitallers, the *Statutes* of Roger des Moulins of 1181, we read: "*At the seventh article he ordered that wherever hospitals for the Sick had been established, the Commanders*

of the houses had to serve the Sick with all their heart and provide them with what they would need. Furthermore they had to put themselves at their service without complaint and without recrimination, so that by this act of generosity (in Old French: *par cest benefice desservissent part à avoir en la gloire dou ciel*) they would take part in the Glory of Heaven". Hence, though the word generous was not yet employed within this text, the reality that this text describes was already well there.

May our faithfulness be always recognized, in our service, by the joy of a generous heart.

II. Christian Sense of Volunteer Work¹⁹⁶

How good it is to gather together during these two days, to refocus on the essential core that enlivens us and inspires our engagement within the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem: service to men and women in need, and especially to our Lords, the Sick and the Poor.

We met one year ago in Malta; in a certain way, it was a return to our roots. On that occasion, our

¹⁹⁶ Chapter 2 corresponds to the text of the speech given by H.E. the Prelate Msgr. Jean Laffitte on March 17th 2017 in Paris, on the occasion of the XXV^o European Hospitallers' Conference.

Grand Hospitaller, His Excellency Dominique de la Rochefoucauld, wished for us to reflect deeply on the true meaning and inner pull of our commitment: a generous heart. Our reflection continues this year, on a theme that is fundamental for us as members of the Order, inasmuch as we are members of a Catholic Order: the meaning of Christian volunteer work. I would like very much to thank the Grand Hospitaller for this new opportunity to meet: in fact, also for the Prelate, to meet the Hospitallers and to listen to the witness of their commitment is a unique way to understand better the meaning of his own service within our Order.

What is Christian volunteer work? Does it simply involve the charitable works accomplished by an institution – being the Church in this case – that would compel it to share in a humanitarian responsibility, in the noblest sense of this word, with other institutions? Or is there Christian volunteer work that is specifically Christian? An altruistic action towards the needy that is shaped by Christian faith? Of what does a humanitarian action done in the name of Christ consist? Our reflection is intended first to

examine what, in human nature, is inherent to every voluntary action, and then to deepen the specific nature of Christian volunteer work.

The Relational Nature of Man

It is often said that man is a relational being: this expression identifies one of the qualities of the human being, one which leads him to enter into contact with other people. Within each person, there is a desire to communicate, to develop different forms of relations with others in exchanges at various levels, spanning from simple exterior relationships to the most intimate communion. This banal observation refers to the need within each spiritual creature to have interpersonal relationships. These interpersonal relationships express not only the fact that two or more human beings are in contact with one other. It concerns a relationship where each element acts humanly as a person and is treated thus as a person. An interpersonal relationship must exclude exploitation of the other and seeks to ban all forms of manipulation. A harmonic relationship between two human beings is characterized by a personalization always greater than the relationship itself, due to a

quality inherent within every human being: his irreducible dignity.

The corollary of these fundamental criteria is that each person aspires to being treated as a person, that is, as a unique being. We can realize this at times by the painful experience that happens within each of us when we are treated without any consideration to who we are at a personal level. It is not by chance that in our works, the Order's tradition encourages us always to accompany our action with the utmost respect for those we serve, and by gestures of attentiveness that personalize our relationship with them.

Therefore, it is easy to understand how we cannot put up with indifference directed to ourselves – or better, to be more objective – with an undifferentiated approach perceived as the negation of our personal *mystery*.

In *Love and Responsibility*, the philosopher Karol Wojtyla described analytically the terms that define a being in relation: he distinguished the *citizen* (member of the community *state*), the *parent* (member of the community *family*), and the *believer* (member of the community *religious*). Human beings are mem-

bers of various communities at the same time, and it is understood that being a member of a community of interest or of destiny is just a first level within the relationship. There is a way forward towards a more intimate reality: the moment that allows us to recognize our neighbour in the other. By contrast, how can we fail to recall the answer of Cain to God Who was questioning him: “Am I my brother’s keeper?”

To acknowledge one’s neighbor in the other means to accept a certain responsibility towards him or her. Emmanuel Lévinas called this feeling *responsibility for the other: the bond with the other that is built only on responsibility, whether it be accepted or refused; regardless whether one knows how to assume it or not; notwithstanding whether or not one is able to do something concrete for the other*. This author expressed the nature of the other by his *face*, which he defined as *the expressive in the other, that which orders me to serve him* (*Ethics and Infinity*, chapter 8: *Responsibility for the Other*). There is no better way to express the unicity of the human person. How many times have we experienced that our serving was “in obedience” to the call of a face!

The first implication of what we have just examined is that people are not interchangeable. Those

who have had the experience of serving the Sick – in Lourdes, in example, or anywhere else – are well aware of the importance of small gestures that personalize the care given to people who are suffering. We also know very well the joy of some of the Malades when, from one year to the next, they realize that we remember them, and they feel welcomed as friends.

In the end, what – who – is a neighbour? It is he or she to whom we feel close, and whom we acknowledge as being close to us. It is about acknowledging familiarity, a community of nature, and of acknowledging a richness that is gifted to us.

All volunteer work rests upon the conviction of the value and dignity of mankind, and of the willingness to help those who are in need of help among us. This conviction implies that quality about which we spoke last year: altruism. It generates all forms of the gift of self; and I will not revisit what we already have said concerning the gratuity of gift, nor on the philosophical or political currents that negate the possibility of an authentic gift.

The Meaning of Christian Volunteer Work

The term *gift of self* is central to Christian thought.

We call to mind the statement from the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* of the Second Vatican Council: “Man, who is the only creature on earth which God willed for itself, cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself”¹⁹⁷. This sentence is one of the fundamental principles of Christian anthropology, which considers man not as a neutral, indifferent creature who would arbitrarily choose on his own to do good or to refuse to do it. On the contrary, when a volunteer does good to his neighbour, he acts in conformity to his nature.

The Gospel shows how love for neighbour has inspired and provoked each and every one of Jesus’ actions during the course of His public ministry: the attention paid towards the Sick, on whom He laid hands and whose miseries He alleviated, often while healing their illnesses; the personal encounter with those who were on the fringes of society, either based on their birth or because of their activities: Samaritans, Publicans, Syro-Phoenicians, tax collectors, and even transgressors of the Law, sinners and, lest we

¹⁹⁷ II VATICAN COUNCIL, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, December 7th 1965, n. 24.

forget, those who were possessed by evil spirits. In the person of Christ, compassion (vis-à-vis material poverty) and mercy (vis-à-vis spiritual poverty – that is, sin) converge.

Christian volunteers are not always able to heal the Sick as Jesus had the power to do, but they have the power to care for others, and to care lovingly as Jesus did. They do not have the power to absolve sinners of their sins, but they have the power to guide those whom they help, discreetly and tactfully, toward the sacramental source of mercy. In Lourdes, certain associations help to organize celebrations of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. Christian volunteers are aware that the Sick and the Poor also have spiritual expectations – beyond those material needs they try to relieve – that are not always expressed openly. If such volunteers are also men or women of prayer, familiar with the things pertaining to life with the Lord, they will be sensitive to the possibility of these spiritual expectations and will be able to recognize them, as they know of them as well in their own lives. True compassion leads to true mercy.

At the heart of Christian volunteer work, service is also an encounter with the suffering Christ. The

word of Jesus praising the offering of a simple glass of water made *in His name* is truly inspiring: even the smallest act that provides solace to the Poor does not remain hidden in front of God. Even better: Jesus alludes to the possibility of a reward. The Christian volunteer can accomplish actions similar to those accomplished by every man of good will; besides, there are works that our Order carries out in cooperation with other entities that are not specifically Christian.

Nevertheless, even if this is not expressed in words, the quality of personal attention provided to those for whom we care, and the awareness we have that their needs concern not only material care but more often than not also one's inner life, give our actions a special quality that can be understood only in light of the active love of Jesus.

Yet there is an even more radical reason, which we know only because it has been revealed to us: Jesus literally has identified Himself with those whom we serve: *whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me* (Mt 25:40). For the Christian volunteer, serving the Poor and the Sick is a service to Jesus Himself, Who made Himself poor and long-

suffering. The Love of Jesus impels us to serve the Poor and the Sick with love, and loving them is the best way to serve the Lord with love. The tradition in our Order of referring to them as *our Lords the Sick* reveals the immense respect that all generations of Knights and Dames have felt for their brothers in need; but the term itself invites us to go even further: yes, they are *our Lords*, but within each and every one of them, above all it is our Lord Who is made present. Let us recall that episode from the life of Saint Catherine of Siena, recounted by her biographer and confessor Raymond of Capua: welcoming a pilgrim, she offered him some clothing as well as the cross of her rosary. In that moment, Jesus revealed Himself to her: He had disguised Himself in the poor pilgrim. And the story continues in saying that He gave back to her the cross she had offered Him!

The acts of solidarity and service accomplished by Christians within actions of volunteer work have another name, charity, a term so criticized by the modern mentality, which tends to set charity and social justice against one another. However, it must be said that this word has no pejorative sense: “charity” re-

fers to an action that, first of all, involves God Himself, Who, in His benevolence towards those who are little, sick and poor with regard to His divine majesty, is willing to love them, to serve them (He is the Suffering Servant), to forgive them, to save them; He communicates to them His divine life by the Gift of His Holy Spirit. In doing so, He renders them even more similar to the image of His beloved Son. By serving his brothers the poor, the sick and the suffering with love, the volunteer becomes a true disciple of Christ and participates in building up the Kingdom of God. Consequently, in this way the simplest and seemingly most insignificant of acts does not remain without reward by the Master of the Kingdom of God.

The Church encourages her children in this direction, never hesitating to make charitable works the driving force of the servants of the Kingdom. Allow me to draw from the great richness of the Church's teaching on this subject and to cite some texts that can nurture our meditations.

The first is the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity of the Second Vatican Council, better known by its Latin title *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (18 November

1965). “The action of the baptized, members of the Church, mystical Body of Christ, is to direct the world towards Christ, participating thus in the growth of this Body. The right (and the duty) of the Christian to act in this manner stems from his union with the Person of Christ, by virtue of his baptism”¹⁹⁸. Two aspects within this text are of the utmost importance for us: first of all, this apostolate consists of *helping to improve and to transform the temporal order* that, as the Decree remarks, possesses among all of its elements a unique value given by the Creator. Here are some of the elements delineated: the goods of life and of family; culture; economy, knowledge and occupations; political institutions; and the world of international relations¹⁹⁹ (AA 7). The second aspect describes such commitment that rightly is identified with charitable work: this is an expression of the gift that Christ made to His Church, of the Eucharistic Last Supper. The Christian volunteer is united to the action of the Lord by a bond that the text calls a *supernatural solidarity*.

¹⁹⁸ *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, nn. 2-3.

¹⁹⁹ *Idem*, n. 7.

The second text is the Encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* by Pope Saint John Paul II. Dedicated to the harmonic development of peoples, this text alludes to the obstacles to justice among nations. Within a theological vision, it traces the causes of injustice and extreme poverty back to the sin of man and the structures resulting from it. From this remark, the Pope goes on to mention the need at the individual level to free consciences from evil. He also brings to mind that solidarity and service to the most destitute are a witness to personal conversion: the freedom through which Christ has set us free (Gal 5:1) drives us to conversion, in order to become the servants of all. Thus, the process of development and liberation becomes concrete in the practice of solidarity, that is of love and service to neighbor, and especially to those who are the poorest: “*For where truth and love are missing, the process of liberation results in the death of a freedom which will have lost all support*”²⁰⁰ (CDF, Instruction *Libertatis Conscientia* 24, March 22, 1986).

²⁰⁰ CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH, Instruction *Libertatis Conscientia*, March 22, 1986, n. 24.

It is the same idea of freedom that is at the heart of the discourse delivered by Pope Benedict XVI on the occasion of the Meeting with Volunteer Associations in Vienna on September 9, 2007: “To say ‘yes’ to volunteering to help others is a decision which is liberating; it opens our hearts to the needs of others, to the requirements of justice, to the defense of life and the protection of creation. Volunteer work is really about the heart of the Christian image of God and man: love of God and love of neighbor. Dear Volunteers, Ladies and Gentlemen. Volunteer work reflects gratitude for, and the desire to share with others, the love that we ourselves have received. In the words of the fourteenth-century theologian Duns Scotus, *Deus vult condiligentes* – God wants persons who love together with him (*Opus Oxoniense* III d.32 q.1 n.6)”²⁰¹.

Finally, Pope Francis takes personal witness from the Testament of Saint Francis of Assisi, in his meeting with the sick and disabled children of the Seraphic Institute in Assisi on October 4, 2013: “*The Lord granted me, Brother Francis, to begin to do penance in this*

²⁰¹ BENEDICT XVI, *Address at the Meeting with the Volunteer Associations*, Wien, September 9, 2007.

way: *While I was in sin, it seemed very bitter to me to see lepers. And the Lord Himself led me among them and I had mercy upon them. And when I left them that which seemed bitter to me was changed into sweetness of soul and body*" (FF 110)²⁰².

Dear Confreres and Consoeurs Hospitallers, may the intercession of Saint John the Baptist, Our Lady of Mount Philermos and Blessed Gerard help us to become servants *who love with Christ*.

✠ **Jean Laffitte**

Titular Bishop of Entrevaux

Prelate of the Order

²⁰² POPE FRANCIS, *Address at the Meeting with the Sick and Disabled Children Assisted at the Seraphicum Institute, Assisi, October 4, 2013.*



PROMOTING VOCATIONS FOR KNIGHTS OF JUSTICE

The importance of Knights of Justice in the Order

The Order of Malta is a religious lay order. Although this term is not used in the Code of Canon Law, our Order falls into the category of an “Institute of Consecrated Life”, as the members of the First Class, the Knights of Justice, profess the religious vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. However, as we know the membership structure of the Order is unique, for whilst the majority of its members are in what we call the Third Class, and some of some of those in the Third Class have become members of the Second Class by taking the Promise of Obedience, it is the members of the First Class, that is the Professed Knights or ‘Knights of Justice’, who are the only ‘religious’ in the canonical sense, having professed these evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience. As the document *Regulations and Commentary* points out, those in the Second and Third Classes are fully members of the Order, but in

different ways and in different degrees. It is only the Professed Knights who live the evangelical counsels within the context of their vows. They are religious for all purposes of canon law and are governed by the particular rules which concern them. (Article 9 of CC).

The profession of the vows by Knights, and therefore the existence of what we would call ‘religious’, has been a characteristic of the Order from its earliest times. The vows are mentioned in the first Rule of Raymond du Puy: “Firstly, I ordain that all the brethren, engaging in the service of the Poor, should keep the three things with the aid of God which they have promised to God, that is to say, chastity and obedience, which means whatever thing is commanded them by their masters, and to live without property of their own”. The most binding degree of membership in the Order is that of the Professed, the Knights of Justice. Without the vocations of the Professed, who are canonically the only ‘religious’ in the fullest sense, the Order of Malta would quite simply cease to be a religious order. However, that is to look at it somewhat negatively. It has been rightly said that it is important to understand that the vocation of the

Professed should pervade the entire Order, and that the ideal expressed by the call to become a Knight of Justice enables all its members, whatever their level of commitment in the Order, to understand better their own vocations within the Order.

Before 1798 and the fall of Malta, the members of the Order were professed, and there were also some honorary members. Throughout the 19th century, there was a steady decline in the numbers of professed, and towards the end an increase in the number of non-professed. Today, out of 13,500 members throughout the world, there are only 60 Knights of Justice in the Order, which is not, by the way, the lowest it has ever been: the present Grand Master recalls that when he was Solemnly Professed in 1991 the number was in the low 30's, and it was lower than that in the 1950's. It is important therefore that much attention should be given to promoting the vocation to Justice, not just because we 'need more Professed' in order to ensure that we remain canonically a religious order, but rather that we need more Professed fully living their vocation, so that with their example each member will feel driven to go further along their own path of Christian life. It also follows

that the more other members of the Order live their baptismal consecration by serving their brethren in the spirit of the Order, the more the particular vocation to Knight of Justice can come forth and grow.

It is clear that we must try to do more promote and encourage vocations to the Professed. Soon after his election in 2008, the Grand Master made it very clear that we must have more candidates for Justice, and for the kind of reasons just mentioned. At the Venice Seminar in January 2009 he said, “I am resolutely determined to see an increase of properly motivated, properly instructed, enthusiastic men as Knights of Justice”. Fra’ Matthew instructed that in every Priory, Sub-Priory and Association there must be an appointed Chaplain specifically responsible for promoting and encouraging vocations to the Professed. Although several Chaplains responsible for vocations to the First Class were appointed, quite a few Associations did not do so, and I would suggest that this aspect needs to be renewed. Between 2009 and today, a group of these Chaplains from around the world has come to Rome on five occasions to meet with the Grand Master, Prelate, Grand Commander, and myself (as Director of Vocations to the

First Class). We have discussed the opportunities and problems that are encountered, and also ideas for further promoting vocations within the Order. Thanks to their efforts, together with the efforts of well-motivated Priors and Presidents, we can give thanks for a steady, if still relatively small, increase in vocations and the numbers in Justice. There has been an increase in 'younger' vocations, and in a few countries where there had never before been any Professed, such as Lebanon, Ireland, Canada, or where there had not been any for a long time, such as Portugal. (When I say 'younger', I mean between 40 and 60, as opposed to between 65 and 85!)

And yet in many associations, there are still no Knights of Justice at all. To take a few examples, at the moment there are none in Central or South America, and none in Spain, Germany, Holland, Switzerland.

What problems do we face in trying to encourage more vocations?

Lack of knowledge and understanding about the Order and its nature as a 'religious order' of the Church is undoubtedly the biggest problem. In

theory, all members should at least know of the existence of Knights of Justice, because they can read about them in the *Regulations and Commentary* and in the *Constitutional Charter and Code*. However, although there are signs of improvement, in too many countries, the Preparatory Year is still not given the attention and structure it should have, and formation about the true nature of the Order as a religious order is not properly explained. The very important document *Regulations and Commentary* was published in Italian and English and has been translated into some other languages, in some cases after too long a period – I believe the Spanish version is now ready.

Undoubtedly, another problem is that in countries where there are no Professed, none of the members really have any awareness of them. It is significant that in countries where the professed Knights are visible and engaged in the works of the Order, it is easier to promote vocations. The three Grand Priors in Italy and the Grand Priory of England are an example of this, and other examples are the French Association and the three American Associations. Compared to other countries where the Order has a presence, there are comparatively more Professed

Knights, they are very visible within the Order, and they are assiduous in their attendance at both spiritual and hospitaller activities. At the very least, when other members of the Order see professed Knights in their habits, they will ask why they are dressed differently! Also, there is evidence that in the formation programmes of these Priories and Associations, the vocation of a Knight of Justice is fully explained.

There are also problems outside the Order, in that many in the Church do not even realise that the Order of Malta is a religious order in the canonical sense. I remember being present at a conference in England where many priests were present together with some Professed in habit and non-professed Knights in church dress at a liturgical function. I was asked by one of the priests to explain why the Knights at the rear of their part of the procession were dressed differently from those in front of them. When I explained that the Knights at the rear were Professed Knights, who either had taken the three vows, or were preparing to do so, he was amazed, saying that he never knew that the Order of Malta was a religious order and that there were Knights in religious vows. It may be supposed that the Church

seems to have forgotten this essential fact of our identity and there is a reason for this – the Order is often a secret, even to itself. This is exacerbated by the fact that it has not always been possible for the Order to speak of itself in the way that other religious communities do and use a common language of the religious life that has been increasingly understood throughout the Church since the Second Vatican Council. In this, the Order is a victim of its own history and development since the beginning of the 19th century.

What can we do to help build up awareness of the possibility to vocation of a Professed Knight both inside (and even outside) the Order?

- A greater knowledge and understanding of the true nature of the Order as a religious order is absolutely essential. This means that those who are responsible for formation within the Order have the challenge to present the religious life of the Order in fidelity to its tradition and in conformity with the mind of the Church. The ‘Regulations for the Preparatory Year’ must follow the directives given in the Section VI, paragraph 2. in *Regulations and Commentary*. These regulations follow

those concerning the selection of candidates in paragraph 1, where it is clearly stated that “new candidates have to be aware that they are about to join a religious order. In the past, the admission to the Order has sometimes been misunderstood as an award for past merits or the admission to an honorific Catholic circle. They have to be conscious of the serious consequences of admission to the order”. Last year, I conducted a survey of what is currently being done by Priors and Associations. It is clear that there are both examples of excellent practice and rather poor practice. In my capacity as Director of Formation and Training, and as a result of looking at what is currently being done, I am working on a standardized version of what must be included in the ‘course of initial formation’.

- I would hope that as Principal Chaplains either you, or perhaps another Chaplain nominated by you, are involved in the formation process in the Preparatory Year. It would be most appropriate for you to be dealing with the spiritual life of the order, and giving an explanation of why it is a religious Order with specific mention of the exist-

ence Knights of Justice, and their place within the Order.

- I hope we can make sure that every Priory and Association has a Chaplain who is dedicated to explaining promoting the vocation to Justice, and to build upon the initiative started by the Grand Master in 2009. It would be good to promote the vocations to Justice as the most intense experience of the charism of the Order, offering possible candidates for these vocations the necessary formation in Christian Doctrine, Scripture, Prayer, Moral Theology, Liturgy, and the History and Spirituality of the Order.
- Undoubtedly recognizing the need to create opportunities for an experience of community life through regular Masses, pilgrimages, retreats, and days of recollection, which offer the possibility for prayer and formation, will help members to understand the Order as a religious order and can help to raise understanding of the Professed.
- In order to try to overcome a basic lack of understanding about the professed in the Order, the Grand Magistracy has made a promotional film about the vocation to Justice. It is called 'The

Heart of the Order', which is a quote from Pope Benedict XVI's address to members of the Order gathered in St Peter's Basilica on February 9, 2013 to commemorate the ninth centenary of the Solemn Privilege '*Pie Postulatis Voluntatis*' of Pope Paschal II. Pope Emeritus Benedict said: "In the 19th century, the Order opened up to new and more ample forms of apostolate in the area of charitable assistance and service of the sick and the poor, but without abandoning the original ideals, especially that of the intense spiritual life of individual members. In this sense, your sense of commitment must continue with a very particular attention to the religious consecration of the Professed Members which constitutes the heart of the Order. You must never forget your roots, when Blessed Gerard and his companions consecrated themselves with vows to the service of the poor, and their vocation was sanctioned by the privilege *Pie Postulatis Voluntatis*. The members of the newly created institute were thus configured with the features of religious life: commitment to attain Christian perfection by profession of the three vows, the charism for which they were

consecrated, and fraternity among the members. The vocation of the professed members, still today, must be the object of great attention, combined with the spiritual life of all.”

- Unfortunately the subtitles are only in English, but we are working on getting them in other languages. When it was first issued during 2015, the Grand Master said that this film must be shown as part of the formation programme for the Preparatory Year. I am aware from the survey I conducted that some Associations are doing this, but I suspect that many are not.

What happens if a Knight shows interest in the vocation to Justice?

- It would be very good if they were able to talk about this to a Chaplain. If they wish to know about the vocation, they can be guided towards the relevant articles in the ‘Journal of Spirituality’. I have discovered that these journals have often not been distributed to Members of the Order, and at present they are not available ‘on line’, except through the Order of Malta Intranet, which has a restricted access. We are in the pro-

cess of upgrading our IT provision in the Grand Magistry, and there will be a section on 'formation' which will contain many documents, including the 'Journals'. In the meantime, I am happy to supply copies of the relevant articles by email to anyone who is interested.

- Each year during the Lourdes Pilgrimage, there is a meeting held on the Saturday evening for any Knights who might be interested in the vocation to Justice. It is held after Vespers in St. Frai and takes place at 8:00pm in the Hotel Gallia et Londres. The first part of the meeting consists of a brief introduction to the vocation, followed by a viewing of the film, 'Heart of the Order'. There are usually about thirty Knights attending. Some will be Knights who have expressed an interest – some perhaps who have been before and others for the first time. A number of Knights of Justice at various stages are also invited: Aspirants, Novices, in Simple Vows or in Solemn Vows. They have the opportunity to ask questions during the meeting and then talk to each other over dinner. This meeting has been happening for about seven years, and it is true to say that most of those who

have joined the First class during that period have started their journey at this meeting.

- It would be helpful if I could be made aware of any possible candidates for Justice. I can be contacted by email, and my role as Director of Vocations is to be as helpful and supportive as I can to any candidates for Justice. I can supply them with the relevant articles from the Journal of Spirituality and invite them to them to the Meeting if they are attending the Lourdes Pilgrimage.
- Section XIX of *Regulations and Commentary* describes the admission process for someone who wishes to ask to be admitted to the First Class. I commend this to you.
 - ▶ A Knight of the Third Class who wishes to enter in the First Class must have examined the matter of entering into religious life with his Spiritual Director and with the Chaplain in charge of Vocation to the First Class within a Priory, Subpriory or Association. If no such Chaplain has been appointed, then any Chaplain of the Order should be consulted, or the Grand Magistracy must be contacted directly, so

that appropriate advice can be given as to how to proceed. The Chaplain or the Professed Knight in charge must be familiar with all the articles of the *Constitutional Charter and Code* which refer to Members of the First Class.

- ▶ If the Knight resides in the area of a Priory or Subpriory, a formal request for admission must be submitted to the appropriate Superior, that is the Prior or the Regent. The Superior will need to ensure that the Knight fulfils the requirements of Art. 6, 7, 9 and 10 of the Code.
- ▶ If there is no Priory or Subpriory in the area where the Knight resides, then the request must be presented directly to the Grand Commander, who will advise the Knight as to how to proceed.
- ▶ A Knight of Justice is appointed by the Grand Master as "Director of Vocations to the First Class". It is his responsibility, under the guidance of the Grand Commander, to assist and orientate the Knight in his passage towards Aspirancy and Novitiate. The Director of Vocations to the First Class can be contacted through the Grand Magistracy.

- ▶ Any Knight who thinks he may have a vocation to the First Class, or who would simply like to have more information, may write directly to the Director of Vocations to the First Class at the Grand Magistracy.
- ▶ After the deliberative vote of his Chapter, the appropriate Superior will ask the Grand Master for the Knight to be admitted as an Aspirant to the Novitiate. His request will be accompanied by the documents required for admission to the Novitiate, as specified by the Code. The appropriate Superior will delegate a Professed Knight or a Spiritual Father, to whom the Knight can be entrusted for the period of Aspirancy. Admission to Aspirancy is granted by the Grand Master, subject to prior deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council.

H.E. Fra' Duncan Gallie

Director of vocations to the First Class



OBSEQUIUM PAUPERUM: THE WORKS OF THE ORDER

Dear Confreres, dear friends,

It's a great pleasure for me to take this opportunity, to summarize some of the activities in which the Order has been deeply involved lately.

As you already know, in the last years, a major concern of the Order has been the help and support to migrants and refugees. We are very proud of the unique response we could give, both on the field and in worldwide bilateral and multilateral discussions.

Not only was the Order able to provide first assistance and hospitality, according to its means and resources, in all the countries affected; but it was among the leaders, at the highest level, in forwarding the message of the responsibility of mankind to welcome people in need: no human being is illegal and, as Pope Francis said: *"It is necessary to respond to the*

globalization of migration with the globalization of charity and cooperation, in such a way as to make the conditions for migrants more humane”.

For almost two years, the Order of Malta has prepared its participation to the World Humanitarian Summit that took place in Istanbul in May 2016. The first important step on the way to the Summit was the Symposium “Religions Together for Humanitarian Action”, held in Geneva within UN premises in May 2015. It was such a success that the General Secretary of the United Nations took over the main topics raised during the Symposium, and included them among the six main themes discussed during the Summit in Istanbul.

The Grand Magistry organized a conference on Refugees and Migrants; entitled: “Role and Missions of the Sovereign Order of Malta”. This event was held at the Magistral Villa on the Aventine on December 11, 2017, where more than 50 participants among Ambassadors, Hospitallers and Leaders of Relief Organizations from all over Europe were updated by experts on current situation of migrations, and shared information on the help

provided by the different entities of the Order.

These conferences witness how the Order of Malta has become a major stakeholder in promoting the importance of religion for humanitarian help. Religion serves as a means to solve conflicts and not as a reason for conflicts, as H.E. the Grand Chancellor at the Summit in Istanbul stated: *“Especially in the Middle East, many people suggest religion is at the core of these clashes. However, it is far too simplistic to lay the blame on religion as the main source of conflict. Instead, religion is often misused to pursue very secular interests of power. We must not accept this and need to work together to find innovative ways to fight this tendency.”*

Last September, the Order was invited to participate at the 71st Session of the United Nations in New York. It was an extraordinary occasion to present our involvement and our Christian attitude by three statements: first, in the plenary session at a high-level meeting to address to large movements of refugees and migrants; second, at a roundtable concerned about “vulnerability of refugees and migrants on their journeys from their countries of origin to their countries

of arrival”; and third, at the side event organized by the Holy See, “Responsibility and Solution Sharing: The Role of Religious Organizations in Responding to Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants”.

A key sentence was rapidly defusing on the Internet: “To be successful, we must challenge global indifference, face fear and repudiate welfare selfishness”.

This March in Paris the XXV Hospitallers’ Conference took place, and more than 60 Representatives of the Grand Priories, National Associations, Embassies and Relief Organizations could meet and share their successful experience and know-how. The over thirty interventions give witness to the development of new activities, the promotion of Catholic values and the involvement of the Order in international challenges.

Another major activity last year, which received huge participation from almost all the entities of the Order from five continents, was the service to the pilgrims on the occasion of the Jubilee of Mercy as asked by His Holiness Pope Francis. This ser-

vice has been the core of the Order of Malta since its foundation. During the Holy Year, more than 1,800 volunteers came to Rome to ensure medical assistance in the First-Aid Posts inside the Papal Basilicas and in St. Peter's Square. I would like to thank all those who collaborated in the organization and the effective functioning of our contribution. I am sure that the opportunity to meet with volunteers from different countries and entities improved not only the mutual knowledge of Members and volunteers, but also the awareness of the works of the Order, as well as its meaning: sanctification of the Members, service to the Faith and to the Holy Father, and assistance to one's neighbour. According to my personal experience, I can attest that such occasions give origin to long-lasting friendship and fruitful cooperation.

In 2016, in Europe, the Order has also provided First-Aid teams in different fields: in Germany, Austria, Hungary on the route of refugees and migrants; in Poland, with five other entities of the Order, it has provided assistance at the World Youth Days in Krakow; in France, it has been an active presence on

those tragic days of terrorism in Paris and in Nice; and in Italy, there has been the efficient response of the C.I.S.O.M. (the Italian First-Aid Corps) after the earthquake in Marche and Umbria.

To complete this short overview of 2016, I'll just summarize some of the visits to our works and meetings: the inauguration of a social center in Spain (Madrid), the VI Asia-Pacific Conference in South Korea; visitations in Brazil and Paraguay; the Middle American and Caribbean Conference in Panama; the XXV Anniversary of the Order of Malta Relief Corps in St. Petersburg, and the XXV Anniversary of the Lithuanian Relief Corps; the VII Colloquium of the I.A.C.B. (International Association of Catholic Bioethicists) in Canada; then the State visit to Armenia, and the participation to the Summit of the Francophonie in Antananarivo (Madagascar).

As a reminder, I would like to recall briefly the main figures:

The Order of Malta operates through 12 Priories, 47 National Associations, 133 Diplomatic Missions, one worldwide Relief Agency and 33 National Vol-

unteer Corps, as well as numerous hospitals, medical centres and specialist foundations. It carries out more than 2,000 projects all around the world. It does not pursue any economic or political goal and does not depend on any other state or government.

Its 13,500 Members, 80,000 permanent volunteers and qualified staff of 25,000 professionals – most of whom are medical personnel and paramedics – form an efficient network that includes everything from emergency relief for refugees and the displaced living through war and conflict, to intervention in areas hit by natural disasters, hospital work, medical care and social services.

H.E. Dominique
Prince de la Rochefoucauld-Montbel
Grand Hospitaller

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1. A Consideration on “*Novo Millennio Ineunte*” for the Order of Malta (2002)
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4. The Pilgrimage (2004)
5. Order of Malta: Criteria for Identity and Life Commitments (2005)
6. St John the Baptist: Guide and Witness (2006)
7. Ecclesial Dimensions of the Order of Malta (2007)
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10. Introduction to Prayer (2010)
11. Formation and Service (2010)
12. Order of Malta and New Evangelization (2011)
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