



THE ORDER

The Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem



Summer 2021

GPA NEWSLETTER

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The Order



Summer 2021

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Spiritual Message

Peter and Paul: Two Sides of the Same Coin

Fr. Razz Waff, GCLJ, DMin, BCC
Chaplain General



The month of June has a number of common saints feast days that are on both the Episcopal/Anglican and Roman Catholic liturgical calendars. Arguably the most well known of those recognized on the calendar is the Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, who are commemorated on June 29th each year.

Peter and Paul were polar opposites: Paul, the urbane Roman citizen, well educated, raised as an Orthodox Jew, was taught by Gamaliel, the most famous rabbi of his time. As Christianity began to grow, Saul (his name before his conversion) became a fanatical opponent determined to stamp out the “dangerous heresy,” which he did with zeal, witnessing first-hand the stoning to death of Stephen, and continued to do until his conversion experience on the road to Damascus. Afterwards, he became Christianity’s biggest supporter, as witnessed in his travels in The Acts of the Apostles.

Peter was the opposite of the cosmopolitan, urbane Paul: A rough hewn fisherman, little education, stumbling and uncouth. Yet it was Peter whose trust in Jesus led him to try to walk on water and then begin to sink; who wanted to build three tabernacles at the Transfiguration, and then denied knowing Christ just before the crucifixion and then risked his life to spread the gospel. It was also Peter who at first only wanted to spread the gospel to the Jews, refusing to baptize Gentiles, until a change in heart led him to baptize the centurion Cornelius and his family.

I would argue that each of us have a bit of both Paul and Peter in us, and that throughout the history of the Church we have seen the pendulum swing back and forth as well.

How have you seen yourself? How do you see your church at the parish level? The diocesan level?

Let us pray:

Almighty God, whose blessed apostles Peter and Paul glorified you by their martyrdom: Grant that your Church, instructed by their teaching and example, and knit together in unity by your Spirit, may ever stand firm upon the one foundation, which is Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen*



From the Grand Prior



The Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem Grand Priory of America

13 May 2021

Colleagues in St. Lazarus:

Given the improving situation regarding COVID-19, I have determined that the Grand Priory of America can and will conduct a more secure and safe, in-person, Grand Prioral Council meeting in New Orleans, LA.

When I announced in early February that we would cancel our planned GPC in Milwaukee, WI, COVID-19 was very active in the United States, with severe consequences particularly for the elderly and those with certain pre-existing conditions. In an abundance of caution for the safety of our members, we decided to forego any face-to-face activities until this pandemic appeared to be more under control; at that time, I asked you to continue to hold the original dates, as we planned to hold the GPC, albeit virtually.

Today, three months later, the situation has improved significantly. We now have three vaccines, increasing numbers of our citizens (approximately 45%) have received at least one dose, and vaccine availability is widespread. The number of those newly infected and dying from this disease continues to drop, particularly due to widespread individual adherence to social distancing, mask wearing, and vaccinations. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention constantly monitors our national, regional, and state progress against COVID-19, and modifies its guidance regularly. As a result, social distancing guidelines have reduced from six feet to three feet, and mask-wearing has been modified in outdoor settings, and in groups of fully vaccinated individuals.

As we continue to monitor these indices and public health guidances, we project continuing progress in overcoming this pandemic. In a recent poll of our membership, we verified that a significant majority are eager to meet again, given sufficient safeguards for health and safety.

Accordingly, we have asked the Grand Commandery of the South to arrange a more secure and safe program and environment for us to meet, and, as usual, they are rising to the occasion! They have been able to secure hotel rooms and meeting venues at good value, albeit a week earlier than we had originally asked you to hold. We will plan to stay at the Higgins Hotel (part of the Hilton portfolio) next to the World War II Museum, and conduct our meetings and meal functions in those venues.

Because we would like to safely and securely conduct our activities, we will require members, their spouses and guests, and any other attendees to be fully vaccinated, as a condition of registration and participation in the GPC. While we will not require proof of vaccination, we will depend on the honor of the attendees, as part of our chivalric underpinnings, to attest to their vaccine status.



Given current CDC and local guidelines, this will afford us, while vaccinated and socially distanced, the opportunity to gather and meet, unmasked. We will further follow any restrictions based on National, State, and City public health requirements and guidelines, as well as any conditioned by the venues which we will use, including hotels, churches, transportation, and museums.

Those who are not vaccinated will have the opportunity to view the Vigil, the Investiture, the Grand Priory of America Business Meeting, and the American Association of Saint Lazarus Meeting, based on audiovisual equipment availability, on a recorded basis through the GPA website following the conclusion of the GPC. We will provide you more details about our planned program as soon as they are available. Please watch your e-mail accounts, as well as check our website, for further updates and registration and hotel information.

Once again, the safety and security of our members is paramount. Under these conditions, I am looking forward to meeting once again!

Be safe, and be vaccinated.

In Christ and St. Lazarus,

H.E. Rear Admiral, The Chevalier Kenneth P. Moritsugu, USPHS (Ret), GCLJ, GCMLJ, GCrLJ, MD

Grand Prior

Grand Priory of America

The Military and Hospitaller Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem



National Donate Life Month



April 2021

*What members of the Military and Hospitaller Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem
should know!*

RADM Michael R. Milner, DHSc, PA-C
Grand Prioral Hospitaller
Grand Priory of America

&

Fr. William D. Razz Waff, DMin, BCC, GCLJ
Major General, US Army (Retired)
Chaplain General
Grand Priory of America

How many of you reading this know that the month of April is **National Donate Life Month**? Didn't know that, well then, please read on. As members of the Military and Hospitaller Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem, you should know that Organ / Tissue Donation Education and Transplantation is one of our ***Signature Projects***, meaning that one of your Order's philanthropic purposes is to help others by raising awareness about how members and their families can give the "Gift of Life". If you read the newsletter this past January regarding World Leprosy Day, you learned how OUR Order is making a difference in caring for those with Leprosy. Well, thanks to you, OUR Order is making a difference through your generous donations to our annual Pentecostal Appeal in this area as well. But there is more that you should know about what OUR Order has been doing for the past couple of decades on this Signature Project.

A few basic facts; In the USA, over 30,000 organ transplants are performed each year and there are over 120,000 Americans awaiting a lifesaving transplant. One organ or tissue donor can save up to 8 lives and restore health to over 50 others. Transplantable organs include liver, lungs, heart, kidneys, pancreas and intestines. Transplantable tissue includes corneas to restore sight, bones and ligaments to repair injuries and restore mobility, skin grafts to heal burns and for surgical reconstruction and heart valves to replace damaged ones. There are no major religious denominations which are against organ donation; in fact, the Pope has declared that organ donation is the epitome of Christian charity. The American Rabbinical Council has declared that organ and tissue donation is more than a gift, it is a mitzvah or duty, as a preservation of human life is the greatest responsibility. There is no cost to be an organ/tissue donor. The donation is the GIFT! Just like the miraculous story of Lazarus being brought back to life by Jesus as told in the Gospel according to John (11:1-45), an organ donation can bring another loved one or complete stranger back to life!!

So how is the Grand Priory of America, OUR ORDER making a difference you might ask? Well, for the past decade, our Order has donated over \$125,000 to various organizations that promote organ / tissue donation education and awareness. These funds help raise awareness, promote inter-family discussions and help generate commitments from new donors. OUR ORDER's "***St. Lazarus Green Cross***" is prominently identified on several apartments in the jurisdiction of the Commandery of the Southwest used by patients awaiting a transplant. The funds have been used to purchase beds, medical equipment and other special furniture for use by children and families while



they await the gift of life from a donor thereby allowing them to reside in close proximity to the transplant medical center. OUR ORDER's **Green Cross** has been displayed on Rose Parade floats seen by millions around the world and banners carried by our members as they paraded in past Opening Ceremonies of the World Transplant Games Olympiad. The funds have helped expand biomedical research through "Bridge to Life" programs that studied various fluids and solutions that help to preserve donated-organ-tissue survival while in transport to receiving medical centers. And this past year, OUR ORDER contributed to a national program to help train our nations schoolteachers on the lifesaving value of organ and tissue donation, bringing the human stories of renewal and improved health to our children with hopes to expand awareness to their families. You have heard the old adage, "Out of the mouth of babes", right? As parents, we often learn new things from our children!

Maybe you know this and maybe you don't, but there are so many of OUR members who give of themselves to promote this great ministry. Like our Grand Prior, H.E. Rear Admiral, (Dr) Ken Moritsugu, GCLJ, who has an intimate relationship with the Organ / Tissue donation world. Sadly, OUR Grand Prior lost his late wife Donna and second daughter Lianne from two tragic and separate auto crashes; but, because he knew the value of this "gift of life" process, he agreed to share his loved ones organs with others and helped save several other people. His tragedy became a joyous celebration for those waiting and for their loved ones. Grand Prior Moritsugu has been a national and international advocate of Organ Donation since that time and in 2016, was a featured presenter at the White House on this topic. Chevalier Charles Beardon, KCLJ, the past Commander of the SE Commandery, is the longest serving organ donation coordinator in the United States and over the past 4 decades, has assisted in saving of over 10,000 lives! Brian Hinsley, OLJ, an organ transplant recipient along with his caregiver wife Kim, OLJ, have been prominent community educators sharing their story of life and love with local church groups, Rotary Clubs and other service organizations for the past 20 years. Diane Weissmuller, CLJ from the Grand Commandery of the West, also an organ recipient 29 years ago, hosts weekly calls with patients awaiting an organ transplant so as to comfort them and share expectations to help relieve their anxiety and fear. Dame Louise Jaccobi of the Grand Commandery of the South, has been a longtime organ donation center CEO, advocate, educator and local leader. There are many other members of OUR Order, who quietly share their stories, and educate their neighbors on the process of becoming an organ donor.

As noted at the GPC in Los Cabos, Mexico in October 2019, the work of the Order is in fact the *ministry* of the Order. What we do with our Pentecostal Appeal is to partner with other communities to further that ministry. One definition of a sacrament in the Anglican/Episcopal tradition is that a sacrament is "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace". In that vein, having been founded as a healthcare Order, our Pentecostal Appeal partners are the "outward and visible signs" of what we are about. In a similar sense, each of the various parishes we all belong to, have community partners that they work with to further expand their ministries beyond the boundaries of their parishes. YOUR Pentecostal Appeal donation does the same for GPA: it extends our ministry beyond our immediate confines.

We have done remarkably good work within GPA to leverage our Pentecostal Appeal, as best as possible. However, if each member- lay and chaplain- donated the recommended twice the amount of annual dues, we would expand the reach of the Pentecostal Appeal very significantly. As every chaplain who has fielded an annual parish pledge program in their church knows, the only limit to what can be done is based on the donations/pledges which are made each year.



So now you know more about **National Donate Life Month 2021** and what OUR ORDER is doing to raise awareness, understanding, support, and share stories of LIFE. We keep serving others just like our forbearers of the Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem have done since 1098 AD!

Please share what you know about the great works of OUR ORDER!

Stay tuned to your email box for additional opportunities to learn more about OUR “Gift of Life” ministry. OUR ORDER’s organ / tissue donation education and transplantation committee has much more in store for you. We have had several ZOOM calls scheduled. Calls highlighted our members as they help educate physicians and medical students and help share their experiences with other organ recipients. The SE Commandery conducted a Zoom call to discuss the incredible gift of sight that a cornea transplant can provide to a blind person. Our Grand Prior, Dr. Moritsugu discussed, with a leading transplant surgeon and an organ donation awareness leader, the evolution of the science of organ donation.

We continue to learn!

God Bless you all and OUR Order!



Grand Priory of America

50th

Anniversary



Dear Confreres and Consoeurs,

By now all of you have heard the exciting news that we will be holding an in-person GPC in New Orleans! The leadership team and the members of the Grand Commandery of the South have stepped up to the challenge once again and are planning an event at the World War II Museum and Hotel that we won't want to miss! More information will be forthcoming but save those dates and join us for our first national in-person meeting since 2019!

What you may not know, though, is that 2021 marks the 50th Anniversary of the Grand Priory of America! While the GPA may not be quite as old as the international Order founded back around 1073, it still marks a significant milestone for all of us and celebrates 50 years of our organization helping those in need!

To help us celebrate our 50th Anniversary, David Juliano and his heraldic artist designed a crest which is attached to this message. I would like to thank David for his outstanding contribution commemorating our Golden Anniversary, and I encourage all of you to affix it to any material related to the Order that will be distributed to your members or to the public this year. We will be presenting pins bearing this crest to all attendees in New Orleans, and they will be available to those unable to attend following the GPC.

More information celebrating our Golden Anniversary will be distributed throughout the year.

I look forward to actually seeing you in New Orleans!

Stay safe and thanks for all that you do for the Order and helping those in need.

John

HE The Chevalier John F. Byrnes, GCLJ, GMLJ, SCrLJ

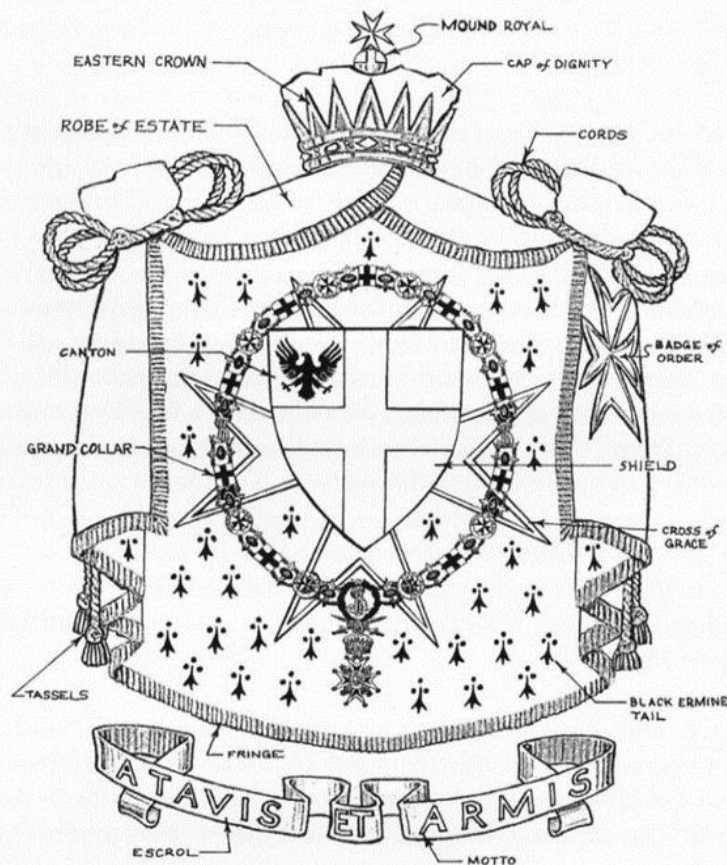
Chancellor

Grand Prioral Hospitaller Emeritus

Grand Priory of America

HERALDRY

The Three C's: The Great Arms of the Grand Priory of America



When I was a little boy, I listened to stories about the Three C's. These were about the Civilian Conservation Corps and fighting forest fires in Oregon. Last year, I learned that the Triple C stood for Chari, Charlotte, and Candy who are the Southern equivalent of the three Graces (Agliaia, Euphrosyne, & Thalia).

I now have a new meaning for the Three C's: The Cross, the crown, and the cape.

In heraldry the various component parts of what is popularly called a coat-of-arms, are properly known as an achievement. The full achievement of the Grand Priory of America contains three basic elements: The Cross, which stands for Christendom, the crown, which symbolizes honour, and the cape, which represents fraternity. The following figures and definitions illustrate the meaning and significance of our Great Arms.

Badge - this Maltese cross is formed from four spearheads. There are two barbs at the end of each arm, eight in all, representing the eight beatitudes (Matt. 5: 3-10).

Canton - one of the four spaces between the arms of a cross (ordinary).

Cap of Dignity - the black velvet cap which lines the Eastern crown. The chapeau is a symbol of authority and black is associated with solemnity.

Cords, Tassels, and Fringe - these golden accessories enhance the Continental practice of displaying an achievement upon the manteau. In Eastern Orthodoxy, gold represents perfection and the light of heaven.

Cross of Grace - an eight-pointed Maltese cross of green edged with white.

Eastern Crown - this radiated crown is of gold and is jeweled. It is also known as an antique crown. This coronet was selected because the Order owes its origin to the Eastern Church, and still to this day is under the Spiritual Protectorate of the Melchite Patriarch of all the Orient.

Ermine - white fur with black tails. it symbolizes purity, eminent office, and the peerage.

Escrol - a ribbon or scroll on which the motto is placed.

Grand Collar - is comprised of a series of enameled gold panels all attached by chain links. Pendant from the collar is the cypher, crown, and cross of the Order.

Motto - Atavis Et Armis (By Ancestors and Arms).

Mound Royal - the orb and the cross represents temporal sovereignty beneath the Cross of Christ.

Robe of Estate - a knight's sable mantle, trimmed gold, lined ermine, and shoulders tied with tasselled gold cords. The origins of the robe of setate can be traced back at least to the 16th century. The Order's mantle or church cape is a symbol of brotherhood.

Shield - the principal vehicle for the display of arms. It bears the green Cross of our namesake and patron saint. A verbal description or blazon follows: Argent a Cross Vert, and in the first canton an American Eagle displayed Sable.

I hope that this new explanation of the Three C's is of value to the rank and file of our Order. Please bear in mind the Cross, the crown, and the cape: symbols of Christianity, charity, and chivalry.

Easter, 2007
Chicago, Illinois

Respectfully submitted,
Ernest E. Aitchison,
Knight of Justice

