



The Circle of Bethany - FAQ's

- What is The Circle of Bethany?
 - The Circle of Bethany is the planned giving and legacy program of the Military and Hospitaller Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem Grand Priory of America.

- What does The Circle of Bethany do?
 - We are Members of the Order who have included the Grand Priory of America in our estate planning and submitted written notification of our intent. Our legacy and bequest gifts are intended to ensure the Grand Priory of America can continue its charitable works in the future.
 - As a group, we also seek to facilitate ways for like-minded donor members to connect and strengthen their friendships.
 - The Circle of Bethany supports local events that may include social activities, lectures, teas, dinners, etc., Also, we may host activities during Investiture weekends.

- May I direct my gift?
 - Yes! Donors may to direct their gifts, but the spirit behind The Circle of Bethany is to support the work of the Order of St. Lazarus in the areas of greatest identified need.
 - Legacy gifts which are not specifically directed or restricted by the donor will be included in the unrestricted portion of the endowment, which use is subject to the discretion of the Grand Prior (for deployment as best needed). Ultimately, however, all funds within the endowment are for the benefit of the various charities supported by the Order.

- Is my gift irrevocable?
 - No, the gift is fully revocable if your planning needs change. The Declaration of Intent is not a legally binding document, but rather an expression of your plans and a practical tool for the Grand Priory of America as they consider how best to plan.

- This sounds complicated – is it?
 - Not at all – we make it easy. The Order has a two-page ‘Declaration of Intent’ that you complete and return to CircleofBethany@st-lazarus.us after discussing the relevant information with your legal and/or financial advisors.
 - You may also find the documents at www.st-lazarus.us/giving/

- Do I really have to speak with my lawyers, and do you need their contact information?
 - It would be prudent.
 - Here are some basics you will want to be prepared to cover with your advisors:
 - You would like to make a gift to The American Association of the Order of St. Lazarus Inc. in your estate planning
 - The order’s EIN is 23-7230009
 - The dollar amount (or estate percentage) you had in mind
 - Source of funds (cash, securities, etc.)
 - The proper contact information for both your advisor/executor and the Order

- Are there levels of giving within The Circle of Bethany?
 - No. All gifts are appreciated, and everyone in the Order is eligible to join.
 - All legacy and bequest gifts - large or small - make a significant difference to ensure the Grand Priory of America can continue its ongoing support of the poor, the sick and the dying.

- How do I become a member of The Circle of Bethany?
 - There is no formal application beyond your expression of intent to leave a gift to the Order. Just complete the ‘Circle of Bethany Declaration of Intent’ form and return it to CircleofBethany@st-lazarus.us
 - To discuss your gift, please reach out to The Grand Prior.
 - Following a review of your paperwork, you will receive an acknowledgement. At that point you are welcome to join us for Circle of Bethany events.

- Is this a new society within the Order of St. Lazarus?
 - YES!
 - Sounds like fun- doesn’t it?

- Why is it called The Circle of Bethany?
 - The village of Bethany was home to Jesus' friend Lazarus (who suffered from Hansen's Disease or Leprosy) and his sisters Martha and Mary.
 - Jesus loved his friends, and when he returned to Bethany and saw Mary weeping over the death of her brother, he too was deeply moved and wept. Jesus then commanded the stone be removed from Lazarus' tomb, thanked the Lord for hearing his plea, and cried out to Lazarus to come forth and be unbound and be free.
 - When Jesus returned to Bethany for a Passover dinner with Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, this circle of friends and disciples discussed a wide range of topics including, the best use of wealth, how to spend your time wisely, supporting the less fortunate, sorting out your worries and burdens, knowing what's truly necessary and deserving of one's focus, and a little estate planning as Jesus discussed his future death and burial.
 - Jesus, Lazarus, Martha and Mary have given us the example of how to use the idea of our human mortality as a catalyst for our current decisions. They have shown us that we should embrace our friends and the present opportunities to focus on what truly matters to us, now and for the future.

- What are the symbols of The Circle of Bethany?
 - The symbols of the Circle of Bethany are drawn from the gospels of Luke and John which tell the story of Jesus' miraculous acts woven together with his everyday human engagement as he spent time with his circle of friends in Bethany.
 - A solid gold circle supporting the 8-pointed St. Lazarus Cross representing the strength of members supporting the Order in perpetuity
 - A solid green circle in the center of the cross representing the stone removed from Lazarus' tomb as well as recognition of our own mortality.
 - The inscription "The Glory of God" comes from John 11:4 describing how Lazarus' illness and the acts to follow were all for the glory of God. *As members of the Order of St. Lazarus, all that we do to support the poor, the sick and the dying while bearing Christian witness in a secular society is ultimately for the glory of God.*