



THE ORDER

The Military & Hospitaller Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem

Christmas Cheer

Greetings from our
Order worldwide

Infant Welfare Center

Ongoing care for little
ones in The Holy Land

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THE ORDER

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H.E. The Chevalier John F. Byrnes,
GCLJ, GMLJ, GCMLJ
Grand Prior

CDR George W. Zimmerman,
USN (Ret), DSSM, CLJ, OMLJ, MBA
Editor

The Rev. Christopher J. Decker, ChLJ, MMLJ
Associate Editor

H.E. The Chevalier Jack Schroder, Jr.,
GCLJ, GCMLJ, JD
Associate Editor Emeritus

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For more information and in-depth coverage of activities throughout the year, you can visit The Grand Priory of America on the internet.

www.st-lazarus.us

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A Christmas Message

Dear friends,
 As the year 2023 comes to a close, we in the Order of St. Lazarus and the Grand Priory of America can celebrate another successful year of helping those in need around the world. Thanks to all of you, and to just name a few of our accomplishments, we helped people suffering from leprosy in Mexico and India, women and children in need of care in the Holy Land, a variety of homeless projects around the US and organ donation/awareness projects. Through collaborative work with other organizations, we provided the first major shipment of medical supplies and equipment to the brand-new St. Lazarus United Methodist Hospital in Tanzania and delivered a truckload of prosthetic rehabilitation equipment for amputees directly to a military hospital in central Ukraine. Thank you!

In October we celebrated another very successful Grand Prioral Council meeting of the GPA in Tampa, Florida, and a huge THANK YOU to Chevalier John Tempone and his Southeast Commandery planning committee for an outstanding meeting! We were honored to have our Grand Master, Don Francisco de Borbon and his family attend, and we welcomed with open arms once again our dear friend Dame Jane Anema, the Grand Prior of the Grand Priory in Canada, and Chancellor Fred Tufnell. This year we were also privileged to have the Grand Prior of the Grand Priory of Greece, Chevalier Antonios Kourkoumelis-Kothris, fly “across the pond” to join us for the meeting. Most importantly, thank you, our members, friends and guests, for taking time from work and family to come together to celebrate what we have done and to plan what we will do next! Next year we will be meeting in Newport Beach, California, on October 24-27, 2024, so mark your calendar now!

One of the highlights of the meeting was the unveiling of the 2023 Inaugural Collection of “Portraits for Peace”, a limited edition set of 3 signed, matted and numbered prints depicting the Order’s involvement with leprosy in the Crusades from our resident artist, Michael Graciano, O.L.J. A spirited silent auction was held for the 3 original paintings and more than \$11,000 was raised to help our efforts to support rehabilitation and prosthetics for wounded amputees in Ukraine. Like the millions of victims of leprosy who suffered limb loss from disease during the Crusades, over 40% of wounded Ukrainian soldiers and civilians suffer limb loss from the ravages of war. Go to www.michaelgraciano.com to order your 2023 limited edition set before they are gone, or to order individual prints. [Editor’s note: See page 21 for more



H.E. The Chevalier John F. Byrnes,
 GCLJ, GMLJ, GCMLJ

Grand Prior,
 Grand Priory of America

information.]

A question that often comes up from members is the cost of our GPC meetings, which with today’s inflation and already increased hotel, food and beverage costs rise each year. Rest assured that the GPA makes no profit on these meetings and our goal, at best, is to break even. We diligently start to plan at least 18-24 months before each meeting, and we have a core group of experienced meeting planning members who work with each host commandery to ensure as smooth a meeting as possible each time. We also strive to provide the best experience possible with each event during the meeting, but again keeping costs and members’ desires in mind. Once contracts are signed, which is about 12 months prior to the meeting, we have little control over things like a hotel brand transition, but we do build in safeguards as much as possible. Those of you who have done meeting planning also know that hotel room costs are indirectly proportional to meals and beverage, so if one is low the other one is higher as it is a business for the hotel property. We do realize that these costs may prevent some from joining us each year as each of us has to make personal choices about whether we pay our financial obligations, the GPC costs or both, and only you can answer that question and we hope you can do both!

We made some significant changes at this meeting to how we will enhance our local support of charitable projects in response to our member’s requests, and starting January 1, 2024, fifty percent (50%)

of the Pentecostal Appeal from each member will be returned to their commandery/delegation to support locally originated programs, and the remaining fifty percent (50%) will be used for international programs and national programs of a broad nature. This will be in addition to the already established policy of returning one third of each member’s dues back to their commandery/delegation to support their local charitable programs. This change will allow each commandery/delegation to expand their support and exposure within their own areas, highlighting what we do to a greater reach of the local public and expanding our good works to more in need.

However, this opportunity can only be successful if each of us who have taken the vow of “I shall serve” fulfill our financial obligations of paying our dues and our recommended Pentecostal Appeal contribution of at least double our dues. Our goal has been and is always 100% participation for each, and in recent years we have not met what should be a simple and obvious goal. This year, to date, we are only able to fund about 40% of our proposed programs but with your support by the end of the year we can double that!!

On that note and knowing that each of us can fulfill our obligations if it is “less onerous”, starting January 1st, 2024, you will have the opportunity to pay your Pentecostal Appeal over 12 months instead of the usual lump sum or 3 payments. I’m sure most of us if not all already have a positive experience with deferred giving, and with this new member-friendly plan I’m confident we can continue to honor our commitments to those here in the US and around the world that are so desperately in need. Stay tuned for more details on this!

The year 2023 has seen the continuation of the needless war in Ukraine and the development of new hostilities in Israel and Gaza, with countless innocent thousands in both regions killed and wounded every day. We have provided support to Ukraine for amputees and will continue to do so, both with treasure, time and talent, and we continue to pray for the ending of the hostilities in Israel and Gaza as we provide our support to the Infant Welfare Center in Jerusalem.

It has been my pleasure and privilege to serve as your Grand Prior again this year, and Anna and I both wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, and a peaceful and prosperous 2024! ✨

A Message for Advent 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
The season of Advent is always a precious gift for us believers, who are called to prepare for Christmas by opening our hearts to welcome the Lord who comes. We are invited to fix our gaze not on an uncertain future that is ever less predictable, but on Jesus Christ as we await his coming.

Christian hope prevents us from looking at history in a fatalistic way and helps us to live our commitment in the world with courage and trust. We Christians look to the future without fear, because the roots of our hope lie in the very heart of God. Ours is not only expectation, but also the memory of one who has already come in the mystery of Christmas which we are preparing to celebrate, and the certainty of the presence of Christ who walks with us, at our side.

To wait is to hunger and thirst for happiness, to turn one's eyes and stretch out one's hands to the Lord who comes. In all of us there is an aspiration for peace, joy, justice, forgiveness and salvation. We can have these good things not by our own strength, but with the help of God's grace.

"O that you would tear the heavens and come down!" (Is 64:1) is the prayer of this season of Advent. It is the invocation of those who know how to read history and do not resign themselves to the signs of death. It is our prayer, but above all it is that of the many who are waiting for someone to save them.

To be a Christian is to remain always open to the expectation of the newness of God that can turn our lives upside down. A society without Advent, without the desire for greater justice, for greater solidarity, for a broader and more stable peace, is sad. We are called to be always available to God's plan, capable of renewing the face of the earth.

The time of waiting is the time of hope, but it is necessary to recognize oneself as a sinner in order to experience the joy of forgiveness and the embrace of the Father's mercy. The gravest sin is to wait for no one, to live in passive resignation and fear without a living hope in the newness that comes from God.

On the basis of the free love that the Lord grants us, we are called to live in friendship with the Lord Jesus and with our neighbour, and to live in active and joyful vigilance and in responsible and hopeful fidelity.

Jesus repeats to us in the Gospel: "Be careful, be vigilant, for you do not know when the time is" (Mk 13:33). Jesus compares the believer to a doorkeeper who has to wait for his master to return. He stands by the door; he does not fall asleep, even if it is night, until the master of the house has returned. The door at which to watch is that of the heart. Unfortunately, our hearts are sometimes so full of themselves and so stunned by their own affairs that we do not hear the footsteps or the voice of the Lord knocking. "Behold, says the Lord, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door for me, I will come to him and eat with him, and he with me" (Rev 3:20).

In Advent, the Lord comes to meet us. If the Lord comes, we are called to meet him with our conversion, our adherence to the good news of his grace, our works of mercy as a consequence of the experience of this generous and merciful love. There is a justice to be sought, there is charity to be carried out especially towards the poor, the sick, the lepers. We are called to leave this world of ours better than we found it.

May the Lord who comes today and the Son of Man who will return at the end of time help us to look at all things from their ultimate end and give us the strength to be vigilant in waiting and assiduous in prayer, active in charity, ready every day to convert and to be witnesses of the good news of God's love for all. ✠

Grammichele, 30 November 2023



**H.E. The Most Reverend
Michele Pennisi, GCLJ**

**Archbishop Emeritus of
Monreale &
Ecclesiastical Grand Prior**



A Trinity of Seasons: Advent, Christmas and Epiphany



H.E. The Rev. MG Razz Waff,
USA (Ret), DSM, BCC, GCLJ, OMLJ,
DMin

Chaplain General,
Grand Priory of America

While we often reference “The Trinity,” I would say that we are now in the first of a trinity of remarkably common liturgical seasons, those of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. The “big theme” of all three is God took on human form to live among us. The delineation of the three seasons could be laid out as Expectation/Preparation (Advent), Arrival (Christmas) and Introduction (Epiphany). In this issue of *The Order* our Ecclesiastical Grand Prior, The Most Rev. Michele-Pennisi, states this in his first paragraph of his Advent message. An interesting thing I noted this year that I had not previously “connected the dots” on is that a number of my colleagues who are priests and bishops (and deacons) step back during the first or second week to take an Advent retreat at one of our Episcopal abbeys or communities to take two or three days to prepare for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany.

Christmas (Arrival) seems straight forward to the secular world- December 25th arrives, and then it’s all over, a “one

and done” holiday, while we who live in a different reality of God’s time fully celebrate all Twelve Days of Christmas- what a remarkable juxtaposition of the two ways of celebrating Christmas, one a day, the other a 12 days season where the birth of Christ is fully celebrated in its entirety.

Finally we have Epiphany- the Introduction of Christ to the world. We talk of the four Sundays during Advent (remember the four candles of the Advent wreath?), and the 12 Days of Christmas. Most will know that Epiphany is celebrated on January 6th, but how many know how long the liturgical season of Epiphany lasts? In the Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion, there are nine- count ‘em, nine-Sundays after Epiphany! That is a pretty solid number of Sundays to talk about the introduction of Christ to the world! It is unique also in that the last Sunday of Epiphany is always the Sunday before Ash Wednesday, however the significance of that is a column for another day. As this edition of *The Order* will most likely be in your hands around Epiphany, I will close with the Collect for Epiphany as it reads in the 1979 Episcopal Book of Common Prayer:

LET US PRAY: O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face: through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

Let us pray: Almighty God, you have revealed to your Church your eternal Being of glorious majesty and perfect love as one God in Trinity of Persons: Give us grace to continue steadfast in the confession of this faith, and constant in our worship of you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; for you live and reign, one God, now and forever. Amen. ✦

The International Structure of Our Order



H.E. The Chevalier Hugh Ramsay
Straub, GCLJ, KMLJ, GCrLJ, JD

Grand Justiciar,
Grand Magistral Council

Grand Master

The Grand Master is akin to a corporation's Chairman of the Board. While he is delegated with supreme authority, in practice he regularly consults with others. The Grand Master appoints and presides over a board of directors known as the Grand Magistral Council (GMC), which is the principal policy making body of our Order.

Grand Magistral Council

The members of the GMC are knights and dames from national jurisdictions around the world. Many are members "with portfolio", each of whom has a particular responsibility. These are designated as "Grand Officers" namely: the Grand Commander (Chief Executive Officer); Ecclesiastical Grand Prior (Spirituality); Grand Chancellor (Chief Operating Officer); Grand Referendary (Procedural Oversight); Grand Hospitaller (Worldwide Charity Oversight); Grand Justiciar (Legal Counsel); Vice Grand Chancellor (Administration); Vice Grand Chancellor (Finance) as well as several members without portfolio. At least one GMC member is expected to be present at each national jurisdiction's annual meeting to keep local members current with developments within our international Order. Customarily, the GMC meets annually in Madrid.

Governance Working Committee

Day-to-day governance of our Order is undertaken by the Governance Working Committee (GWC). This committee includes the Grand Master, the Grand Master Emeritus (The Duke of Seville), the Grand Commander, the Grand Chancellor and several others. More than any other body, the GWC keeps its finger on our Order's pulse.

Heads of Jurisdiction

Every two years, all the heads of our Order's jurisdictions gather with the Grand Master at the Heads to Jurisdiction meeting to consider Foundation finances,

contributions by jurisdictions to the Foundation and other issues of interest. This event combined with informal input and good communications through all of the above sources assures thoughtful resolution of any concerns.

Foundation

So, where does the International Foundation fit? In countries which base their law upon English Common Law (including the U.S.), unincorporated associations have a legal personality. This means unincorporated associations can, in their own name, enter contracts as well as sue and be sued. However, in continental Europe (including Spain) where law is often grounded in Roman Civil Law principles, unincorporated associations have no legal standing – they are non-entities.

Solely to achieve a legal personality, our Order created the International Foundation in conformity with the Spanish requirements governing charitable corporations. The Foundation is subject to the ultimate authority of the Chapter General and abides by the Constitution and By Laws of the Order. It is managed by the members of the Governance Working Committee. For individual jurisdictions to maintain their good standing in our Order, each enters a mutually binding agreement with our Order's legal personality, the International Foundation.

As part of the agreement between each jurisdiction and the Foundation, \$80 from every member's annual dues paid to one's national jurisdiction is forwarded to the Foundation together with data regarding the jurisdiction's membership, finances and charity. The funds received by the Foundation are used for Order oversight, Madrid office expense and international charitable projects as recommended by the Grand Hospitaller.

Should the forgoing present any questions for the reader, your Grand Justiciar will be pleased to discuss. ✧

Many of us have an idea of how the Grand Priory of America works. But for some, our Order's International hierarchy is unfamiliar.

The Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem (OSL) is a worldwide confederation of 42 semi-autonomous jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction is bound to our Order by agreement with the "International Hospitaller Foundation of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem", a Spanish charitable corporation.

A quick review of the international administration and oversight of OSL may be useful.

Chapter General

Our Order's ultimate authority is the Chapter General, that is a meeting of all the dames and knights of the Order attending in person or by proxy to decide an important issue. Individual jurisdictions also each have a vote. A Chapter General may be called by the Grand Master or by the Grand Magistral Council. In our Order, Chapters General rarely occur. For that reason, the Chapter General, when not in session, delegates its supreme authority to the Grand Master.

The Infant Welfare Center in Jerusalem



H.E. The Chevalier Michael R. Milner,
USPHS (Ret), DHSc, PA-C, KCLJ, OMLJ,
SMLJ

**Grand Prioral Hospitaller,
Grand Priory of America**

As you all know, our Order has supported the Infant Welfare Center (IWC) in Jerusalem for many years.

Many of our members have visited the center and helped out there during pilgrimages to the Holy Land. The center serves Christians, Muslims, and Jewish members of their community. Their program is kept afloat by our annual donation. You will see in another article that we recently approved a \$60,000 grant for them, which will be wired just after the first of the year.

My wife Patty and I visited there in May 2019, and our Chancellor, H.E., The Chevalier Harold (Pent) Penton, GCLJ, led a delegation from our Grand Priory there this past April. I wrote to their director, Ms. Tania Awwad, the day after the surprise Hamas attacks on Israel to check on the staff and the children and received an update from them that I want to share.

Tania reported that the center was closed for the first week after the attacks, and they are following the daily operational instructions of the local Jerusalem authorities. After the first week, they reopened with an expanded mission to help as many elderly folks near the center as possible. They have seen a few added benefits to this expansion. Since they have a more hardened shelter on-site on their lower level, they have been able to provide "emergency cover" for these nearby elderly folks during the air raid alarms as well as for their daily children population. The secondary benefit of having the older folks at the center is that it gives them something

constructive to do by helping the children with their activities while also helping to calm them (and the older folks) during these difficult times. Both groups benefit from being together. The other expansion that local priests and nuns requested was to help their neighbors by providing hot meals for those elderly who can't come to the IWC due to mobility issues. They are attempting to deliver these additional services by getting some of the elderly to help prepare meals for the mobility-limited elders as they help make food for the children daily. They now provide hot home meals to around 40 extra homebound folks daily, five days each week. This has stretched them very thin. Their staff is stretched, and using the older folks during the day helps fill some voids.

They will continue this new paradigm as long as it's needed and resources permit. During this terrible situation, Tania asks for everyone's prayers that things will return to normal soon. She asked me to also thank all of you for the continued support from our Order and for the continued and needed prayers for their center and the Israeli and Palestinian people. Pray for all the injured and all the families of those who have been killed or are being held against

their will. Patty and I pray that we will be able to return there again soon and offer help to those children and their families. ✱



Make a Miracle happen with a year-end donation to the 2023 Pentecostal Charitable Appeal which will fund our Tier 1, 2, 3 Grants.

[Click here](#) to donate online or mail your check to the American Association of the Order of Saint Lazarus, Inc, c/o Jennifer St. Victor-de Pinho, DLJ, 38 Peaceable Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877. Gifts must be in hand no later than December 31.



2023 Grand Prioral Council Report

The following is a summary report of the Hospitaller/Almoner Working Group for members of the Order of St. Lazarus, Grand Priory of America from the Grand Prioral Conference in Tampa, Florida.

Greetings from your Hospitaller, I want to start my update by wishing everyone a "Joyous and Blessed Christmas Season"! Because of our Lord and Savior's birth, life, death and resurrection, we can have everlasting life when we invite Him into our lives. I thank all of you for inviting Him into your life! Let's celebrate His birth this Christmas Season with our friends, family and those less fortunate than ourselves and reaffirm our vows of service in the Order of St. Lazarus.

Now, let's get on to business. We had a very spirited and productive Almoner / Hospitaller meeting in Tampa a few weeks ago. Our task was to recommend grant proposals to the AASL Trustees which fit our vision, mission and budget. As you will read in other places in this newsletter, our annual Pentecostal Appeal donations are down significantly for this year. The fact that we are only at about 70% of our goal is disappointing and created a scenario similar to what we experienced during the first year of the Covid pandemic. The workgroup voted to present a "tiered" rank order of grants that we had extensively reviewed to the trustees so that they could decide what and how much we support in 2024. The final decisions are not complete and as I presented to the GPC/AASL Business meeting attendees in Tampa, there will be another review our final PA donation numbers just after the holidays. The AASL Trustees will be required to gather again, get financial updates from our Grand Prioral Almoner, Dame Mary

Ann Straub, as well as updates from our AASL Vice Chancellors of Finance, Chris and Jen St. Victor de Pinho and a review of remaining unfunded grant requests. We expect that the Trustees will be able to endorse several additional grant requests at that time.

Our Tampa GPC workgroup used the scores and comments from all members of larger Almoner/Hospitaller working group (including those who were unable to attend the GPC in person) to rank order all the proposals received by the deadline we had set. Our scoring procedure is detailed and thorough to ensure we support those groups where our donations can make a large impact. As has been our history for the past few years, and consistent with our Order's mission and vision, we presented the following tier 1 grant proposals and amounts which were approved by the trustees. The total approved for Tier 1 grants is \$169,000. The Trustees endorsed our recommendation to support the two Mexico Leprosy Clinics for \$55,000 (at full request), the Infant Welfare Center in Jerusalem at \$60,000 (at full request), the new St. Lazarus-UMC Hospital in Tanzania for \$26,000 (at full request for continued needed medical supplies), the matching grant program at \$18,000 (at full request) to help local sub jurisdictions do local projects and the Grand Prior's Discretionary Fund at \$10,000 (at full request) to use to meet urgent needs as they arise.

In addition, we presented our recommendations for Tier 2 grants with substantial cuts to the requested amounts since the funds are simply not available. Delaying a decision on these 6 other projects (including 3 Organ Donation

projects, an Orphanage project, a prison project with a local anonymous matching donor, and support for the St. Louis Hospital in Jerusalem which is a palliative / cancer care hospital serving Christians, Jews and Muslims that has been called into use as an acute care hospital due to the Hamas attacks of 7 October) will not only allow us to probe a couple of the grant requests a bit more deeply before agreeing to support them, but allow time for our members to complete their giving to the Pentecostal Appeal for 2023. Our hope and prayer is that by the time you are all reading this newsletter, folks will have made their annual PA donations (at twice or more of their current rank dues) and others will have had more time to see how they can dig deeper to help us support more projects. If we met our original PA goal for this year, we might have an additional \$60,000 to deploy to these valuable projects. The potential impact in terms of service to others can be in the thousands or tens of thousands if more donations are made. I wanted to thank many of our newest members, invested in Tampa, for making donations already. Some have donated generously after they heard the programs explained in greater detail and heard about our funding shortfall.

During my presentation before the entire group, I told those present that the Tier 3 level projects had "no likelihood of funding without a MIRACLE"! I asked everyone to dig deeper and PRAY for that Miracle! Those Tier 3 projects include a leprosy care medical van, another Organ Donation project, two homeless support projects, a request for additional humanitarian aid to Ukraine and a university based English as a second language assimilation project. ►



Atlantic Commandery Hosts Christmas Gathering

Members of the Atlantic Commandery and New York Cadre gathered at the home of Chris and Jennifer St. Victor-de Pinho to celebrate the season and share fellowship. In several locations throughout the house, information about The Order was made available as well as an opportunity to donate online in an effort to connect the charity of Christmas with the good works done by St. Lazarus. ✦



H.E. The Chevalier Michael R. Milner,
USPHS (Ret), DHSc, PA-C, KCLJ, OMLJ,
SMLJ

Grand Prioral Hospitaller, Grand Priory of America

These great projects on Tier 3 totaled \$161,000; all had merit, value and are true works of mercy that our Christian Creed calls for us to support. As with the Tier 2 unfunded projects, tens of thousands more folks could be positively impacted. I believe in MIRACLES, do you? Every dollar you can add will make a difference.

The working group and AASL trustees still have work to do; at the stroke of midnight on 12/31/2023 our donation year ends and we must reconvene to see what remaining projects we can support in early 2024. During the next few weeks our members will speak. I pray that the voice is loud and resonating. I will come back to all of you as soon as I can with our approved plans for the 2024 grant funding year. In the meantime, think about how you can do a little more to help us.

Patty and I wish you all a "Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year". Thank you all for supporting me in this important role as your Hospitaller. Additionally, I wish to thank all my team of Deputy Grand Prioral Hospitallers and Sub Jurisdictional Hospitallers. Special thanks to my dear friend, Dame Mary Ann Straub and our Sub Jurisdictional Almoners. ✦

[Click here to donate online or mail your check to the American Association of the Order of Saint Lazarus, Inc, c/o Jennifer St. Victor-de Pinho, DLJ, 38 Peaceable Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877. Gifts must be in hand no later than December 31.](#)



Color coordination is key for a Yule event.



When there's no snow, florals keep things festive.



"This way to the buffet!"



A LONG-PLANNED VISIT: WELCOME, BELGIAN PILGRIMAGE

After a year of planning by the curator of the St. Damien DeVeuster Museum in Tremelo, Belgium, Ruben Boon, Randy King from Sea Wind Tours and Travel and Sister Alicia Damien Lau from Kalaupapa, the pilgrimage became a reality as the planes landed in Kalaupapa on October 10th, 2023 and our visitors from Belgium were welcomed with much Aloha and lei.

This was a special request for a pilgrimage and immersion experience to spend several days on the peninsula to absorb the mana, the spirit of St. Damien and to understand the culture and the people he served. The pilgrims came with many questions and the hope that the settlement, the Church community, and the Sisters could make a commitment to support each other in sharing the positive impact of St.

Damien and his unconditional service to those most in need. Pilgrims included Yves Wantens and Tanuja Munnoo who is the General Representative of Flanders in New York. We were also honored to have the Mayor of Tremelo, Bert De Witt. From the St. Damien Museum in Tremelo were Aldermen Dominique De Rijck and Bertrand Eraly; Wim Vandenbroeck, General Director Bartholome Massart; President Museum Council, Ruben Boon and Nadia Gijsemans, Head of Communications. On Oct 11, other State and DOH personnel joined in various activities including Bishop Larry Silva, Bishop of Honolulu; Governor Josh Green and his staff; Mayor Richard Bissen, from Maui County; Valerie Monson and DeGray Vanderbilt from Ka Ohana 'O Kalaupapa; Henry and Anwei Law from IDEA, an International organization for those with Leprosy in Seneca Falls, NY; Deacon Andres Emayo, Jr. and Clarissa Emayo, from the island of Kauai who helped with the food and liturgical service; Robert Mondoy, director of music for the Diocese of Honolulu and Liturgy/Music Coordinator at St. John Vianney's Church.

The first day of arrivals was Tuesday, Oct. 10. The nine pilgrims arrived, along with Randy King who brought the food and Robert Mondoy, who came to provide

a marvelous program of Hawaiian liturgical music. Visitors checked in, got their visitor tags, and settled in to their quarters. In a flash it was lunchtime. Lunch and supper were served to the group in the parish hall which had been thoroughly cleaned from top to bottom by Jennifer and Caitrin, two teachers with boundless energy, who teach at Sacred Hearts Academy in Honolulu. Before going on the walking tour of the settlement [under a hot, Hawaiian sun], there was an orientation for the group. The pilgrims had the opportunity to walk along the same pathways that so many of the patients had trod, to see some of the historic structures and to visit Mother Marianne's gravesite. We were all ready for a delectable dinner followed by a presentation by Valerie Monson.

Our biggest and most action-packed day was Wednesday, October 11. This day took detailed planning and re-planning many times over. Governor Josh Green and his staff came in on the same plane as Bishop Larry Silva. Randy had gone back to Honolulu the evening before so he could bring in the bentos for our picnic at Judd Park after the Mass and signing in St. Philomena Church. The DOH had staff coming in. This was a challenging part of the planning, since we did not have a bus to accommodate twenty or more people. Thus, the caravan technique was employed: a van that could take six; a truck that could take four and the keyboard; another two trucks that could take two; two vans from the DOH transported their staff. We all arrived at St. Philomena Church for a wonderful liturgy, followed by remarks from the Mayor of Tremelo and the signing of an agreement in which the signees pledged to support spreading and sharing the legacy of St. Damien and the people who experienced life as exiles separated from everything they knew in their past lives.

Picnicking at Judd Park gave us a chance to share stories and impressions, a time of listening and growing in understanding. The spirit of aloha and ohana was deepening.

After lunch, a moving ceremony, the Circle of Remembrance, was held on the proposed site of the Kalaupapa Memorial, a planned structure designed to remember the names of the 8,000 or so people who were sent to Kalaupapa as patients. Our

collective hope is that construction on the Memorial will begin before too long. We all formed a circle and, one by one, each mentioned the name or names of patients to be remembered.

Upon our return to the Kalaupapa side, the Bishop and Governor visited the patients in the Care Home while others visited St. Elizabeth Convent and the Bishop Home Complex where the legacy of Mother Marianne and the Sisters of St. Francis were shared. Finally, they made their way across the field to the Kalaupapa Bookstore and the Bernard Ka'owakaokalani Home, now the home of Ka Ohana O Kalaupapa.

The schedule was flexible enough that the Governor was able to spend a few minutes in St. Elizabeth Convent and hang out and chat before returning to the plane that would take him back into the activities of a public service life. Dinner that evening was, again, a gustatorial delight, followed by another presentation by Valerie on the lives and activities of select patients who had positively impacted the Kalaupapa Settlement. Thursday was a less intense day beginning with Mass at 8 am presided by Bishop Larry at St. Francis of Assisi Church, followed by a visit to our curatorial facility hosted

by Katie Matthews. Among other items on display from the massive collection were some of the original Stations of the Cross from St. Philomena Church. A brief walk-through of the two wings of the facility revealed items from the lives of the early patients that helped to understand their conditions with greater clarity. A walking tour of the Papaloa Cemetery was led by Valerie Monson. Of course, the pali trail had been beckoning our visitors since they first saw the trace of Switchback #1 at the top of the trail. Under the leadership of Glauco, the hardy group made it up and down the trail in roughly three hours, arriving just in time for a delicious salmon dinner prepared by DeGray.

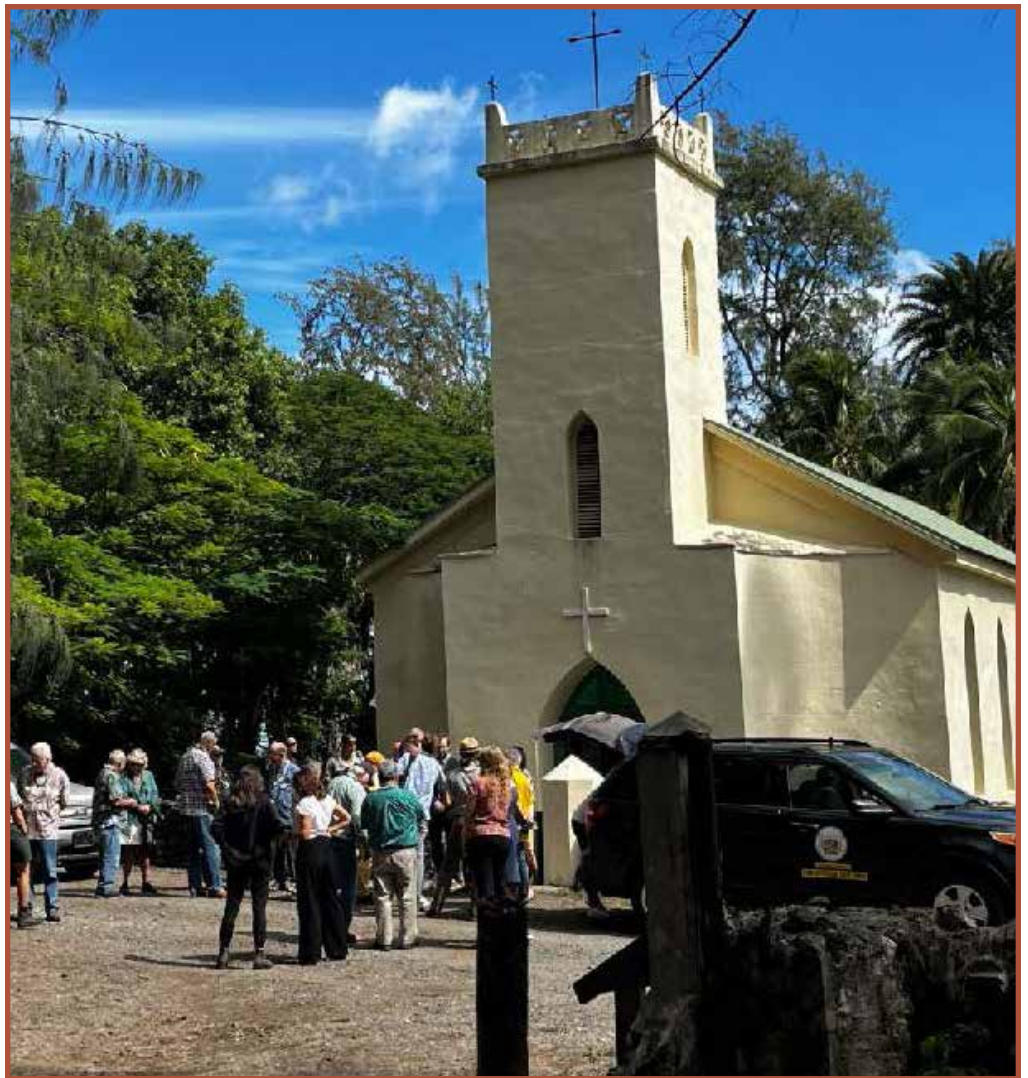
Friday was the last day of the pilgrimage, beginning with Mass at 8 am, presided by Father Patrick, our pastor. Deacon Andres assisted at all the Masses. The schedule was modified as all the Belgian pilgrims wanted to walk the three mile Damien Road in the footsteps of Damien and the early patients who had been dropped off at the wharf ►

on Kalaupapa Side. After assembling at the wharf for a brief prayer in Dutch, the group, along with Glauco, set out at a moderate pace to make their way to Kalawao, with stops along the way to photograph the gifts of natural beauty surrounding them, to visit Siloama Church, the first church built by the Protestants before Father Damien arrived, and to visit St. Philomena Church, Damien's Church, along with visiting his gravesite and the other gravesites in the enclosure. Finally, they made their way to Judd Park to conclude their walking pilgrimage. SBJ followed discretely behind the group in the truck in order not to add artificial noise to the breathtaking natural setting.

Because of time constraints and their desire to climb the crater, the consensus was to all "pile" into the truck that had followed them rather than to make two shuttle trips back and forth from Kalawao to the crater. Not sure how we managed, but we got four people in the bed of the truck and five in the cab, and down the road we traveled, knowing that if the truck couldn't make it, there was plenty of muscle power to push it.

As we observed, we had a truckful of Belgians and one Cuban! We did make it to the crater, and off they went again, this time hiking to the top of the crater. SBJ climbed the right fork of the trail to the ali'I sled area to share Sr. Alicia Damien's story about her experience with her camera and the spirits of the crater.

We made it back for lunch, cleanup and one more assembly at Paschoal Hall. During this time of sharing, Valerie once again shared from her wealth of knowledge of the lives of patients and her love of all things Kalaupapa. To emphasize the sometimes faulty impression that "outsiders" had of the patients, she focused on Tandy MacKenzie, a Hawaiian who, as his life journey unfolded, had fallen in love with opera and had a successful career as an opera singer, especially in Europe. When he came back to Oahu to give a concert, the people of Kalaupapa invited him to give a concert for the settlement. Hesitant because of the false impression that these people did not know music, yet he finally came to the settlement, to be greeted by a large crowd of enthusiastic fans. He was amazed that Paschoal Hall was filled, and more amazed that the audience knew every piece of music that he performed, and sang along with every genre. His one concert tour extended to three concerts, only leaving Kalaupapa because of scheduled appearances in Oahu. Others like Red Skeleton, The Von Trapp Family, Shirley Temple, Irving Berlin, Charlie McCarthy, Art Linkletter, the Royal Hawaiian Band, Ernie Pyle, John Wayne and others performed there also. A bond had been forged by understanding through personal contact.



Finally the time had come to head to the airport. Our new-found friends were saddened to leave, yet their families were awaiting their return home. As their plane took to the air, we knew that we would be in touch and, perhaps, see them once again in Kalaupapa. *E komo mai.* ✧

This article and its accompanying photographs were originally published by members of The Mother Marianne Circle of Kalaupapa. It is respectfully presented here for the benefit of The Grand Priory of America.

WINTER 2023: NEW MEMBERS



Robin Siegert Barnes, OLJ

Presbyterian
Nurse Practitioner
Timonium, MD
Commandery of the Atlantic



Juan M. Castro, OLJ

Catholic
Journalist
Miami, FL
Commandery of the Southeast



Irene Gines-Caruso, OLJ

Greek Orthodox
Talent Acquisition Manager / Recruiter
Reston, VA
Commandery of the Atlantic



Gregory Houston, OLJ

Catholic
Funeral Director
Casselberry, FL
Commandery of the Southeast



Sean McSwain Jordan, OLJ

Christian
Stay at home Dad / Home Schooling
Tomball, TX
Commandery of the Southwest

I
SHA
SER

A Warm Welcome
to our
New Members

WINTER 2023: NEW MEMBERS

Dr. Martin Andrew O'Toole, OLJ

Catholic
Physician
La Canada, CA
Commandery of the West



Alexander Reveron-Casanova, OLJ

Christian
Accountant
Manati, PR
Commandery of the Southeast



Justin Craig Spaulding, OLJ

Methodist
Student Conduct Administrator at
Colorado State University
Littleton, CO
Commandery of the Southwest



Eduardo Raúl Trejo, OLJ

Catholic
Attorney at Law
Naucalpan, E. Mex
Delegation of Mexico



Alexander Georg Warnatzsch, OLJ

Catholic
Sales Manager
Smyrna, TN
Commandery of the Southeast



ALL
RVE

Welcome
our
members



The Southeast Hosts The Grand Prioral Council 2023

Twenty-three and me, What's in Your Christian DNA?



This year's GPC was held in Tampa, Florida with History as the theme and hosted by the Southeast Commandery. The weather, venue, company and gathering was superb and thankfully, successful, and safe. As one may imagine, the planning for and execution of the GPC was the primary focus of the commandery for well over a year and all the hard work paid off with productive meetings, good food and fellowship. All our SE members who attended worked as greeters, helped with transportation management, and served as ushers for key events. Notable highlights included first ever commandery dinners at one location [different rooms] which allowed commanderies to socialize but mix with friends from other regions. The venue was the Columbia Restaurant, who's history begins when Tampa was host to Teddy Roosevelt and his Rough Riders on the way to Cuba. Columbia has been owned by the same family since the late 1800s and our dinner presentation was graced with a chat from the current family leader who told Columbia's history and that of the emergence of Tampa as a leading US city. Transportation was included making it easy for all members of the Order to participate. Meetings were productive thanks to the hotel's hard-working staff and our luncheon

was blessed to have a presentation on Christian history with discussion on the Science of the Shroud of Turin by Dr Wayne Phillips, MD.



Miss the Shroud presentation? You can view one of Dr. Phillip's other clips by scanning this QR code or [clicking here](#).

Our postulants were received into the Order at the oldest standing Catholic Church on Florida's west coast beneath high stained-glass windows with Saint Louis IX of France, surrounded by his knights looking down upon us. Our Grand Master, and SE Commandery members gathered for photo under that window as Don Francisco, a descendant of Saint Louis, introduced his son Frankie, to his forefather. **photo right** ▶

After the Vigil Service we dined at the Tampa Club at the top of the Bank of America building across from the hotel. We had a spectacular view of downtown Tampa, Tampa Bay, and Gulf Coast beaches. The view was as good as the company and fellowship.

Our gala was great fun with entertainment from a local flamenco dancer, singer, and guitarist. Noted artist Michael Graciano provided an extra blessing with three exclusive works of art centered on our

history, charisma and calling which were offered to members with proceeds going to our charities.

All of our meeting venues held good food, drink, exciting vistas, and fellowship. We were honored to host this event and



look forward to continuing our exploration of our history in order to guide us into the future. In this tradition, we also honor those "In Service" to people living in the margins of society. You, and your sisters ▶

and brothers in the Order of St Lazarus are “In Service” to countless clients in need. Do you remember what drew you to this Order?

Service is in Your Christian DNA! Watch [this short video](#) featuring our Grand Master and two of our members.



In Other News

Southeast Zoom Gatherings

This past year the Southeast Commandery has sponsored inspirational and thought-provoking zoom presentations. Nearly monthly, the commandery works to keep members together despite the distance that separates us. Here are some highlights:

Today we are all Jews...

Pastor, author and inspirational speaker, Rev Chris Edmonds took us on a journey to meet the greatest generation's victory over darkness through his father's service in World War II. Rody Edmonds never told his son what happened during the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944, he said that some things just can't be talked about. After his father passed Chris sought to find out what happened, and led to his writing, “No Surrender, a Father, a Son, and an extraordinary act of heroism that continues to live on today”. His father's unforgettable story is helping him enlist an army of ordinary people to live by Roddie's Code: choose goodness, oppose hate, dignify life, and express love to all. Here's the story in a short 18-minute movie, the book is even better! I know I continue to follow and be inspired by this story, especially today — Be the hero.

Links Related to this topic:

- Video: [“Following the Footsteps of My Father”](#)
- Text: [Congressional Act Awarding Master Sergeant Edmonds the Congressional Gold Medal](#)
- Text: [TIME Magazine Article “The Story of an Unjustly Overlooked American World War II Hero”](#)

The War in Ukraine...today

Retired Navy captain and award-winning naval intelligence officer, CAPT Peter O'Brien, USN (Ret) offered two detailed in-depth briefings and discussions on the

war in Ukraine. Pete provides strategic, operational, and tactical views of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the valiant fight the people of Ukraine are waging to keep their nation free. From convoy escort to war in the trenches, Pete provided insight and clarity rarely found. Pete does daily updates, and you can subscribe by sending a request to John Tempone.

Pete will be back next month for more update.

Exalted Warrior Foundation and what one person can do...

Ms. Annie Okerlen owned and operated a highly successful Yoga Studio in Tampa. Following the attacks of 9/11 and subsequent military involvement, Annie knew that the healing power of yoga was needed for wounded veterans. Selling her business and going all in to help, Annie proved medically that yoga heals. She has been admitted to the Army's Walter Reed Hospital and the US Veteran's Administration hospitals as a vital practitioner.

Here she tells how this works, without cost to veterans, gold star families and veteran caregivers. View the [Zoom gathering by clicking here](#). The passcode for to access the gathering is **Dj&@poRv**

Next year we plan on doing more of these zoom calls as well as regional vesper services. Want to come and participate? We'd love to have you and hear what you want to do. Continue to be the hero!

So, what's in your DNA?

Your DNA is traced to defenders of Pilgrims in the Holy Lands and noble knights and dames defending Europe from a variety of enemies. Members of the Order of St. Lazarus liberated Spain from the Moors and served in the American Revolution as a French officer alongside Continentals at the Battle of Savannah. We were conspicuous in our gallantry during World War I in the ambulance Corps and, today, quietly driving in a medical convoy in Ukraine or cleaning a leper's wounds in Mexico.

The Southeast Commandery members are brothers and sisters who have inoculated the homeless in Florida, ministered to working poor in Appalachia, supported an emerging hospital in Tanzania, and drove a truck load of medical supplies in a war zone. We are brothers and sisters who have created books of chivalry, reviewed legal documents



H.E. The Chev. John Tempone, Col,
USMC (Ret), DSSM, KCLJ, MMLJ,
SMLJ, DC3rdLJ

**Commander,
Commandery of The Southeast**

and proposals from vendors and charities, and been up late and early to review mail that runs the day-to-day operation of the Order, giving of your time, treasure, and talent so that our clients have a better life.

We are Blessed and Honored to have you. This past year you have excelled! This coming year is another opportunity to be... the hero. ✨



GRAND PRIORAL COUNCIL 2024 · NEWPORT BEACH, CA



The Very Reverend Marcos J. Gonzalez, ECLJ, CMLJ, SMLJ, MDiv, MS

Commander,
Commandery of The West

THE MILITARY & HOSPITALLER ORDER OF ST. LAZARUS OF JERUSALEM

SIEMPRE ADELANTE! ALWAYS FORWARD!

Dear Confreres and Consoeurs,
On behalf of the Commandery of the West, I am delighted to invite you to our 2024 Grand Prioral Council in Newport Beach, California, October 24 to 27, 2024. Our GPC 2024 Planning Committee has been hard at work to ensure that we have a most enjoyable and spiritually fruitful annual meeting. Since we will be in California amidst the great Missions which brought the gospel to this part of the country, our theme will be "Siempre Adelante! - Always Forward!" This was the motto of the great apostle of California, St. Junipero Serra. It is also a fitting motto for us as the Order of St. Lazarus as we continue our almost thousand year tradition of chivalry and outreach to the sick and needy of our world.

The site of our meeting in 2024 will be the fabulous [VEA Newport Beach, A Marriott Resort & Spa](#). This is a newly renovated resort property overlooking the Pacific ocean in a magnificent setting. I think you will be very pleased with the beautiful rooms, amenities and facilities of the resort. We were able to negotiate a very competitive rate of \$299 per room in a hotel in which the same class of rooms regularly sells for over \$600 per night. This is an incredible discount to our members who take advantage of early booking, which I strongly recommend.

The Newport Beach location offers many advantages to our members:

- Very close to John Wayne Airport (SNA)
- Also accessible to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX)
- Disneyland is nearby!
- Spa, beach, hiking trails, golf, harbor cruises and so much more!

By registering as soon as possible you can take advantage of this greatly reduced rate. There is a limited block of rooms so

I encourage you to take advantage of it. The GPC registration application will be available early next year.

For our Friday evening Vigil we will be using Queen of Angels Catholic Church and for the Saturday Investiture we will use Christ Church by the Sea United Methodist Church. Both of these are near our hotel. At the Vigil we will be treated to the singing of the Norbertine Fathers of St. Michael's Abbey and will have the privilege of having the relics of St. Damien de Veuster and St. Marianne Cope (brought from Hawaii for the occasion) present during our prayer service.

Right across the street from our hotel is the huge Fashion Island which includes many exclusive shops as well as excellent restaurants for our Commandery dinners on Thursday evening.

Our Friday evening dining will be in a beautiful outdoor setting overlooking the Pacific and bluffs and cooled by ocean breezes. Our Hawaii Cadre will be arranging a Hawaiian/Polynesian evening of delicious dishes and beautiful entertainment. Our formal Saturday evening gala dinner will be in the resplendent ball room with a magnificent band for dancing the night away.

Our official Thursday morning excursion (optional) will be to the very interesting [Richard Nixon Presidential Library](#) and Museum. Other tours can also be arranged to the [San Juan Capistrano Mission](#) or [St. Michael's Abbey](#). Both are well worth visiting!

Our 2024 Grand Prioral Council promises to be a wonderful occasion to renew our bonds of friendship, chivalry and Christian service and have a fabulous time doing it! I hope to see you all there! ✨



HOTEL REGISTRATION IS OPEN!
Scan the QR Code or [click here](#).



servicio con corazón

In addition to our usual work, on February 18th we hosted an investiture in Mexico City. Our Grand Prior John Byrnes, Grand Prioral Almoner Mary Ann Straub, Bailiff Hugh Straub and Chancellor Pent Penton visited us over a long week-end. Three new members were designated OLJ's: María Luisa Aspe (historian), Silvia Novoa (entrepreneur who has headed the philanthropic organization called World Vision) and Carlo Pérez Aristi (lawyer). In addition, eight persons were awarded various recognitions, including our veteran members Teo Von Harrsch, KLJ and his wife Erika Ponce, MMLJ, and Mauricio Porraz, as well as Dr. Juan José Salazar, KLJ, eminent dermatologist specialized in leprology who has been practicing at our clinic in Irapuato over the last 28 years, and our chaplain, Father José de Jesús Aguilar. In addition, we granted MMLJ's to three non-members to whom we are most grateful: Dr. Martha Angélica García Avilés, a physician who is the vice-director at the Mycobacteriosis Department of the Ministry of Health, Dr. Luis Gerardo Vega, another eminent dermatologist who has practiced at our clinic in Morelia since 1995, and Mr. Ignacio Morales, a well known lawyer and former ambassador to France who has donated blankets to give away at our clinics over the last several Winters and intends to continue doing so.

Since then, we have held two breakfast meetings on certain Saturdays falling in June and September, and a meeting for lunch on December 2nd, which took place



H.E. The Chev. Guillermo D. Salas Vargas,
KCLJ, CMLJ, MBA

Almoner & Hospitaller Delegation of México

at the very elegant "Club de Industriales", where we are well received. This lunch was preceded by a Thanskgiving Mass celebrated by Father José at his parish. In this context, I may mention that in the second half of the year we welcomed Mr. Eduardo Trejo, a new member who was recommended to us by our Grand Prior. We can be sure that he will be an outstanding partner, who incidentally has followed Father José in his TV and radio programs and on the social networks on the Internet over several years. Courteous and professional, he promises to be of great help in the Delegation's projects and has already become a good friend of all our members.

I am glad to mention that at the Tampa GPC in October, Pedro Casillas, CLJ, was formally nominated as our new Delegate by Grand Prior John Byrnes, after four years when Teo Von Harrsch held that position. At 33, he is the youngest Delegate ever, and one of the most energetic. Also at the GPC, I was very grateful and humbled to receive this year's Alan Weaver Hazelton Award.

On another subject, Pedro Casillas and I made a series of visits along the year to Morelia and Irapuato, in order to meet the nuns in charge at each clinic personally and supervise the various tasks being executed in each one. At our most recent visit, which took place on December 3rd, my wife Fina and I, Sister Margarita from Colombia – who heads our effort in Morelia, Guadalupe Araceli Suárez, OLJ – a resident of Morelia – and a few persons who are volunteers at the clinic in that city, visited Archbishop



Carlos Garfias (pictured above). He showed sympathy for our work and designated a young priest from the Archbishopry to be our permanent contact for anything we need to take up with them. (Of course, our friendship with Cardinal and Archbishop Emeritus Suárez Inda continues as before, and Pedro and I visited him a couple of times at his home along the year).

Meanwhile, the visits to patients and their families at their homes in the villages in the vicinity of Morelia and Irapuato continued, as well as the low cost consultations at the clinics, mostly for dermatological ailments –including leprosy and psoriasis– but also for other illnesses, since many of our patients have several health problems simultaneously. In those visits, our nuns brought food packages to our beneficiaries donated to us by Hérdez (a company akin to the Green Giant in the US), as well as some local donors. Furthermore, they regularly organized religious and social events that were well attended, and gave talks to counsel our beneficiaries in good habits of hygiene and nutrition. **Continued on Page 16** ▶

FRUITS OF SERVICE: THE DELEGATION OF MÉXICO

Also, the Delegation of Mexico was proud to have 100 copies printed of the updated version of the leprology manual that was released this year by Dr. Juan José Salazar, KLJ, our Chancellor for Irapuato. (He is mentioned in the first paragraph above, and we are glad that he was invited by Dr. García Avilés, MMLJ, to take part in the simposium on leprosy that took place last November 6th). Fifty of those copies have been donated to the Mycobacteriosis Department of the Federal Ministry of Health, and other copies have been handed to selected M.D.'s who specialize in dermatological illnesses, including of course our own physicians in both of our clinics. Naturally, we took this opportunity to promote the Order by inserting graphical symbols and a note on the back of the book, as well as a well thought out foreword signed by our Delegate, Pedro Casillas.

Finally, we continue to have a good working relationship with Direct Relief, the organization that donates medicines from large pharmaceutical companies to charitable entities such as ours several times along each year. They regularly offer us medical products, some of which we accept when they happen to be useful at our clinics. We are most grateful to them.✱



UPDATE: THE COMMANDERY OF THE ATLANTIC | NEW YORK CADRE



On Tuesday evening, December 12th, the New York Cadre held its traditional Evensong Service in honor of the Feast of St. Lazarus at the historic French Episcopal Church du St. Esprit in Midtown Manhattan. The service was officiated by the Rev. Nigel Massey, Rector, and was streamed live on YouTube. (The Web link to the service is below). Afterwards, several members of the Cadre gathered for a festive dinner at a nearby restaurant. ✱



Pictured above are members of the NY Cadre with Rev. Nigel Massey.

You can view the service by [clicking here](#).

DELEGATION OF MÉXICO Christmas & New Years' Message



Pedro Casillas-Capetillo, CLJ, MS

Delegate
Delegation of México



My dear mantle brothers and sisters,
In this special time, it fills me with joy and gratitude to address each of you on behalf of the Order of St. Lazarus in Mexico. In this significant celebration, where the divine light illuminates our hearts, I wish to express my sincerest wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. May the grace and peace of Jesus fill your lives with countless blessings and may hope and joy multiply in each of your homes.

As the delegate of the Order of St. Lazarus in Mexico, it is an honor for me to extend this message to all members of the Grand Priory of America. In these times of uncertainty and constant changes, we find refuge and comfort in the faith that unites us as a community in Christ. Christmas gives us the opportunity to renew our connection with God and reflect on the true meaning of the Incarnation.

Let us remember that the birth of our Savior in a humble manger teaches us profound lessons of humility and service. Just as medieval knights defended justice and protected the most vulnerable, we, as members of the Order of St. Lazarus, are called to follow that noble example. In this Christmas season, let us renew our commitment to be instruments of divine mercy, bringing comfort to those who suffer and being beacons of hope in a world often shrouded in darkness.

In our capacity as knights and ladies of the Order of St. Lazarus, we recognize the importance of living according to Christian principles. Love for our neighbor, compassion, and solidarity are values that we must embody in our daily actions. It is a call to be authentic knights and ladies of Christ, committed to selfless service and the construction of a more just and compassionate world.

In the spirit of the season, I want to remind you of the importance of dedicating our time, talent, and treasure in service to others. In the tradition of medieval chivalry, where loyalty and generosity were cherished virtues, I urge each of you to contribute significantly to the society that surrounds us.

The true greatness of a Knight lies not only in skill on the battlefield but also in a willingness to serve others. In the coming year, let us put this ancient teaching into practice and commit to being instruments of love and peace in our environment.

May this Christmas inspire us to be better individuals, to love more deeply, and to live in harmony with the principles that Christ taught us. May the New Year bring us opportunities for spiritual growth and to be living witnesses of divine love in our lives. With fraternal affection and on behalf of the Order of St. Lazarus in Mexico. ✦



Living Surgeon General Host Historic Event at Dartmouth

On September 29, 2023, five of the six living Surgeon Generals, including our Grand Prior Emeritus, Kenneth P. Moritsugu, MD, MPH, FACPM, were hosted at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire to discuss mental health. The other Surgeon Generals included Drs Richard Carmona, Regina Benjamin, Antonia Novello, Jerome Adams, and Joycelyn Elders. Dr. David Satcher, who couldn't attend, sent a video message. The current Surgeon General, Dr. Vivek Murthy, MD, MBA, convened the group. Dr.

Murthy's tenure as Surgeon General has focused on Protecting Youth Mental Health. The discussion was led by Dr. Sanjay Gupta, CNN's Chief Medical Correspondent.

This was a historic event and a topic of interest to most of us. Having all the living Surgeon Generals in one place was a remarkable opportunity. Several of them also spent several days at the college interacting with medical students.. You can view the stream and access the articles by [clicking here](#).



Piping On The River

The South Shares Fellowship & Service



Dame "Michie" Bissell, DCLJ,
DMLJ, GMLJ, DC1stLJ, RDH

Commander,
Grand Commandery of The South



The Grand Commandery of the South has had a busy and fun year! Our members have been very engaged in suggesting ideas for our giving through their various activities.

And A Little Dog to Lead Them

A most rewarding gift, not that all aren't, but one that greatly impacts little ones is the dog "Bean" (see photo 1). Captain Christopher Daniel, our chief marshal, and Michelle Daniel, two of our Mississippi representatives, became aware of a need for children who have experienced trauma and abuse to find comfort during forensic interviews, a process that can be a very difficult experience for them. Through the Pentecostal Appeal, the Grand Priory's Match Program and our members' generosity, the Hope Haven Children's Advocacy Center was able to welcome Bean, an emotional support dog, who has been instrumental in offering care for some of the most vulnerable children who have been rescued from harmful situations and are on the road to healing.

You can find out more about Hope Haven by visiting their website at: <https://www.hopehavencac.org>. Bean has proved to be a much-needed and very welcome dog. *[Assistant Editor's Note: Be sure to read Bean's Christmas Card, on the facing page!]*

The Ice Have It At Saint Jude

As many of you know, Hurricane Ida ravished many parts of Louisiana, and we don't support bricks and mortar. But we

were able to support a need of a church that many of our members attend, and that had a great deal of damage. Through our giving, we were able to provide them with a much-needed ice maker. The church has many outreach services, so the ice machine is necessary. Along the same giving, St. Jude Community Center, which feeds 400 meals to the homeless daily, needed a food warmer. As you can see from the pictures, magnets are placed on the items. See photo 2.

Signs for Salvation (Army)

We received a request for money for screens placed on several Salvation Army living facility floors. These screens announce the activities of the day for the residents. Our creative designer, Vice Commander Larry Merington, placed an OSL shield graphic on the screen's lower corner. See photo 3.

Our fall luncheon at the Bay St. Louis Yacht Club had Rev. Harold Roberts and fellow Canadian members performing with bagpipes. They were fully decked in their Scottish plaids and accessories. Photo at top. The music was enjoyed by all the regatta participants throughout the club.

Two projects that remain on our giving plan each year are the Single Mother project in northwest Arkansas and the Interfaith Church Council, of which Rev. Winston Rice is the Episcopal representative.

Our final contribution will be to support prison buses. These buses take family members for Christmas visits to various prisons in the state. ✦

Bean*

Squire Daniel's Brenn Bean is donated and trained to provide K9 emotional support to abused children and the advocates who intervene to rescue them from harm.

Donors:
 Chris & Michelle Daniel
 &
 Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem, Grand Priory of America, Commandery of the South

OSL is dedicated to the chivalric ideals of faith, honor, and charity by promoting Christian unity and the relief of human suffering

1

Sloppy kisses and warmest wishes

WISHING YOU A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON FILLED WITH PEACE, JOY, AND LOTS OF CHEW TOYS. THANK YOU FOR MAKING IT POSSIBLE FOR ME TO BRING COMFORT AND SUPPORT TO PAWSOME CHILDREN.

Love,
 Bean

and Hope Haven Children's Advocacy Center



Reminder:

Have you given your oblation?



Scan to Give Here or [Click Here](#).

A member's annual dues are called his "oblation". The amount of dues is determined by the member's rank in the Order. The dues statements are mailed by the Grand Prioral Receiver annually calling for payment by St. Lazarus Day, December 17th.



DELEGATION OF IMPERIAL CALCASIEU

Joyeux Noël!



The Reverend Deacon Joshua R. LeBlanc,
SChLJ, MMLJ, SMLJ, MA

Delegate
Delegation of Imperial Calcasieu



My fellow Lazarites,
As we say in South Louisiana – Joyeux Noël. I am writing this to you after having just celebrated Solemn Vespers for the feast of St. Lazarus with our delegation members here in historic St. Martin de Tours Catholic Church in St. Martinville, LA, where we have come together to pray and reflect.

As we come closer to celebrating our Blessed Lord's Nativity at Christmas, we are reminded of the good work our order has done over the past year. Here in the Imperial Calcasieu Delegation, we are proud to have celebrated our fifth Giver's Candlelight Celebration at Christus St. Patrick Hospital in Lake Charles and our second such celebration at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Lafayette. In addition to these two significant Delegation events, we have actively supported our veterans through charitable donations to Southwest War Veterans Home and VFW Post 7321. We have also supported our local St. Teresa Center for the Works of Mercy, which seeks to help the poor and underprivileged here in Acadiana by providing hot meals and basic necessities to those in great need.

The work we do under the cross of St. Lazarus reminds us that society often

holds the weak and suffering in disdain. We remember that our Blessed Lord comes to us at Christmas in weakness, and ultimately, his suffering brings about our redemption. Whenever we serve and minister under the cross of our order, we should always do so, mindful that it is Christ whom we serve in our works of mercy. Those whom the world regards as miserable and discardable, we look to as blessed and the way to salvation. The Letter to the Hebrews reminds us, "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unaware." (Heb. 13:2 RSV)

As we begin this new year, let us all recommit ourselves to working for the good of our order. May our prayer constantly be that in seeing our works, others look beyond us and see Christ whom we serve. As the Benedictine motto proudly proclaims, "Ut in Omnibus Glorificetur Deus," That in all things, God may be Glorified! ✦



THE ORDER



A SPECIAL OFFER:

AN OFFICIAL DIPLOMA FROM THE GRAND MASTER

The Chancery Office administration is pleased to present to you the official diploma for the Grand Master of the Military and Hospitaller Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem.

This official diploma has been available to all members since 5 May 2018, when they are admitted, promoted, or awarded. It is also available to non-members when they receive meritorious awards.

There is no cost to you for the official diploma.

The following information should be included with your requests: name, rank, meritorious award (if applicable), date admitted, promoted, or awarded Grand Chancery number, and address if different from yours.

Please send your requests to the GPA Vice Chancellor for Administration at chancery@st-lazarus.us.

The document's characteristics are as follows:

- Produced and printed in Madrid. Sent to the recipient via certified mail in a solid cardboard cylinder.
- The document is printed in full color in an A3 format (420x297 mm – 16.53x11.69 inches).

The document contains wording in Latin, name of recipient, admission/promotion/award, and the signatures of the Grand Master, Grand Chancellor, and Grand Referendary, along with each of their seals as well as the official gold seal of the Order at the bottom left side of the document.



EXCLUSIVE PRINTS STILL AVAILABLE

There are still some Limited Edition 3-piece print sets remaining from the Grand Priory of America's Inaugural 2023 Collection of The Lazarian Legacy: "Portraits for Peace" recently displayed at the GPC in Tampa, Florida. This limited series of 30 sets will never be reproduced as a complete set again. Each set of prints within this series contains all three Giclee quality works accompanied in matte frames signed by the artist, dated and inscribed with the number of the edition series. Furthermore, a wax seal of The Order of St Lazarus will be centered and applied on each of the frames. A Certificate of Authenticity accompanies your limited edition set which documents its exclusivity and scarcity. We value the artistic integrity and individuality of each set piece, along with our commitment to preserve the rarity of these limited print works. Therefore, once this set series of 30 is sold out, no additional reproductions of the inaugural 2023 collection will ever be made available again. Each Limited Edition 3-piece set is \$500 USD each, and unsigned individual prints are available for purchase for \$100 USD each. Please contact michael.graciano.art@gmail.com via email with your interest and for payment instructions. Remember that 100% of the proceeds go the GPA's Ukraine Relief Support Fund to help wounded amputees - soldiers, women and children - in Ukraine.



The Southwest Prays and Enjoys Fellowship for the Feast of St. Lazarus

St. Lazarus Day was celebrated by members of the Southwest Commandery who attended a choral evensong service at St. John the Divine Episcopal Church in Houston on Sunday December 3. The sung evening prayer service included the full choir as well as the young choristers who made this a special Advent service which was led by our Commandery Chaplain, Rev. Doug Richnow.

Following the service, members and guests went for drinks and dinner to the wine room at Ouisie's Table, a nearby restaurant. A business meeting outlined plans for the 2025 Grand Prioral Conference which will be hosted by our Commandery. ✨



SCENES FROM THE RECEPTION AT THE 2023 GRAND PRIORAL COUNCIL



A GRAND TIME: MORE FROM TAMPA



LAZARUS



An Evening Prayer for Members of The Order of St. Lazarus

Lord, you who are the friend of all humanity were an intimate friend of Lazarus and his sisters. His death brought tears to your eyes, and power to your voice so that you called him forth in life from the bonds of death. Lord, may you who are our life now renew us in the power of your spirit to be concerned with the lives and needs of others so that one day we may all share eternal life with you in your heavenly kingdom. Amen.