



SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER
OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA

GRAND PRIORY OF ENGLAND
PROCURATOR

GRAD PRIORY OF AUSTRIA
PROCURATOR

GRAND PRIORY OF BOHEMIA
PROCURATOR

The Pontifical Delegate
to the Order of Malta
H.E. Cardinal Giovanni Angelo Becciu
Citta del Vaticano
00120 Italy

22/07/2020

Your Eminence,

The recently published article in OnePeterFive¹ is trying to sow further unrest and disunity within our Order.

We have therefore mapped out in the attached Memorandum, what we believe can become the common Vision of the spiritual Renewal of the First Class and the whole Order - a common aim that we believe all members will engage with for the good of the Order.

We firmly believe that the aims associated with this Vision:

- The reform of the governmental structure with a stronger distinction between the role of the Grand Master as religious superior of the entire Order and his role as head of State (including the corresponding consequences for the other organs of government).
- strengthening the powers of the Receiver of the Common Treasury, making him less dependent on the Grand Master alone, but on the contrary closely linked to the Sovereign Council,
- finetuning the roles of the Camara die Conti and of advisory bodies to the Receiver of the common treasuries,
- implementation of the principle of "one territory" allowing only one entity of the Order within one territory,
- structuring of Priors and Sub priors to help support the small number of geographically-scattered members of the first class,

will easily fall in place, once we all gather around the core vision of the renewal.

We remain with deep respect for your Eminence and with the assurance of our prayer for your difficult Mission – so decisive to the future of our Order

Fra' Maxwell Rumney

Bailli Norbert Count Salburg

Johannes Prince Lobkowicz

¹ (<https://onepeterfive.com/knives-out-knights-of-malta/?fbclid=IwAR2ARwc7zoZmpKSYNDnhitSrzzGKJO3BcOG4VnMLLoNzIzrAVsQazxiwBU>)

Memorandum regarding the reform of the Order

After its constitutional crisis in 2016/17, the Order received a clear instruction from Pope Francis for the "spiritual and moral renewal of the Order, especially of the professed" (Letter of Appointment of the Pontifical Delegate of 2 February 2017).

Following the Order's expulsion from Malta, the Napoleonic era, and the Italian turmoil of the 19th century under Garibaldi, the Order had largely lost the ability to take economic responsibility for its knights. Most of the centers of their community had also been lost. As a result, the Professed of the Order had to secure their livelihood with either inherited wealth or the practice of civic professions, and to take responsibility for their individual lives, outside of the Order's structures.

Consequently, a culture developed in which the vows of poverty - which make it possible to give one's life to Christ in the community of the Order and in the service of his mission - necessarily had to be tempered by the need for the Professed Knight to support himself financially until his death.

The Holy Father's instruction to the spiritual renewal of the Order has to be considered against this background.

The renewal of the Order of Malta must create appropriate conditions for new professed vocations

The renewal of the Order must strengthen its character as an institute of consecrated life. At the same time, it will bring to light the richness of an ecclesial community 'sui generis', with its diversity of vocations and states of life in all its classes.

- a. **The Renewal must create structures within the Order, that allow the First Class the autonomous arrangement of their life whilst integrating their Members into local entities of the Order.**

Members of the Order outside of vows cannot decide on the execution of the vows of the Religious. The reform must therefore create structures within which decisions with immediate influence on the life of the members of the First Class are solely made by these members. This might be done by regional structures (Langues), a Chapter of the Professed, and a Professed Council to the Government could be created. Membership of the Order could be reformed so that those who wish to test their vocation as a Professed may be admitted without the current requirements of membership which are financially burdensome and can make it difficult for younger people to join the Order. The noble requisites required for some roles and admissions must not act as a barrier for the proper running of the Order.

b. The future life of the Professed in the Order has to be structured to allow for the devotion of the whole life of a Knight of Justice to Christ and the poor within the vows according to his evangelical councils.

A core concern of the renewal process must be to create the conditions for the Professed to realize their vows in the Order as total devotion to Christ and the poor and in full availability for the works of the Order wherever the Order sends them.

For this purpose, a formal, comprehensive and unified novitiate will be established, which the novices enter, leaving behind their previous life's circumstances. There they will practice the basic principles of consecrated life in spirituality, daily living and service to the poor and sick, while becoming even more familiar with the history and charism of the Order. The novitiate will include equipping the novice with skills for future work for the Order.

Under such an observance of their vows, the professed should expect,

- that the Order takes on the responsibility for their economic livelihood and pensions,
- that the Professed are deployed responsibly according to their talents and according to the possibilities and necessities of the mission of the Order,
- that the professed are trained with skills to serve the Order and Our Lords the sick.

Indeed, for a renewal of Vocations to the First Class, it will not suffice to secure only their vital necessities and provisions for their old age.

It will be imperative to create local communities of professed and/or non-professed, where they can partake in the life and mission of the Order. The fostering of existing and creation of new such local communities is actually a shift of paradigm and should help promote vocations to professed. This has already happened in Germany. It is high time, that the Members of the Order from all classes again gather - temporarily or permanently – in local communities to jointly grow in their service to the poor and the sick and in their faith in Christ.

c. With the Renewal the Order *as a whole* has to commit itself to creating conditions, which will once again make the Order attractive to young men seeking to consecrate their life.

The renewal must not be a reform solely of the Constitution and Code. It must facilitate the renewal of the lives of all its members. Besides the Religious we are talking about the thousands of men and women with their respective vocations and talents, living in varying levels of commitment and states of life within the Order!

This abundance should encourage the Order to anew appreciate and cultivate the mutual testimony of married and unmarried, old and young, Professed, Priests and Laypeople. Each member is not only called to service to the poor and sick but to the vocation of his brothers and sisters!

In recent decades, many members of the Order and its youth have found their individual vocation in places where they have spent longer periods of time in community serving the poor. **We have learned that the Order of Malta is young and alive where its members together carry out the basic functions of the Church (diaconia, witness, liturgy and community) in "modo melitensis".**

In light of this experience, the reform of the Order will have to include the creation of specific places of community. This does not mean community houses exclusively for Professed. Rather, it is about places of life where Members from all the Orders' Classes, with their different vocations and states of life (professed, students, trainees, single people, couples and families) live in community in varying degrees of proximity and intensity of commitment, serving the poor, growing in faith and celebrating the liturgy of the Church.

Without such places, the vocation to become a Knight of Justice in the Order of Malta will remain undiscovered and without a home. They are necessary so that young men can find, test and later permanently live a vocation of total consecration to Christ and to the poor within the charism and community of the Order.

d. Catholic Order and Sovereign State

In view of the - hopefully only temporary - small number of today's Knights of Justice and the fact that they are geographically scattered, a significant role of the first Class in the mission and leadership of the Order is made more difficult today. On the other hand, the Order as a whole represents much more than just the community of the First Class.

Therefore, the First Class, while it must remain a spiritual center or heart of the entire Order - under the condition that the vows made are credibly lived out -, cannot disproportionately bear the weight of the leadership of a much larger, sovereign organization in the service of the Church.

This also implicates that the role of the Grand Master and Grand Commander – while obviously being head of the Religious of the Order - must in other governmental respects be essentially representative.

If we expect the Order to prosper today under competent leadership, it is essential for its immediate future that its leadership be broadly based on the Order as a whole and lead by those best experienced to do so, whilst respecting the religious nature of the Order. Such leadership will naturally include suitable professed members. It is hoped

that future Professed could be trained and given experience to allow them to help lead the Order.

The transition

The renewal represents a major paradigm shift. It is important to acknowledge that the current Professed have given their lives to Christ under the conditions valid today - having to bear responsibility for their own support. This can prevent full engagement in the works of the Order and can therefore impede the actual goal of the vow of poverty.

Those responsible must encourage as many of today's members of the First Class as possible to participate in the renewal of the Order with inner commitment. By the same token, those who wish to continue their vocation in accordance with the rules of the Order under which they have made their vows may do so.

Our suggestions should not be seen as criticism of the current professed but as a genuine desire to enhance vocations to profession. Vocations should find an environment,

- where the Order takes responsibility for their livelihood;
- where Professed are prominent and respected in the Order;
- and where they can devote themselves wholeheartedly to the charism of the Order.

The government and leadership of the Order should naturally include such Professed Knights who are willing and able, as Religious, to participate in the reform with their whole life and ministry.

Fra' Maxwell Rumney

Bailli Norbert Count Salburg

Johannes Prince Lobkowitz

for the drafting Team

22nd of July 2020