

SAINT LAZARUS[©]

The Military & Hospitaller Order of St Lazarus of Jerusalem

The International Newsletter

From the Editor

It is always difficult for me to get my head round the fact that as we in the northern hemisphere are entering the autumn (fall), those of you in the southern hemisphere are welcoming spring and looking forward to summer. That, however, is the reality.

This reminds me that, within our Order, the way in which we implement the Vision, Mission and Values (VMV) of the Order must be tailored to the circumstances in which each Jurisdiction finds itself and according to the needs and aspirations of its members and their local communities. Rather than seeking an identical interpretation worldwide, we should welcome and appreciate the many different ways in which these basic tenets of our Order can be developed appropriately. In this way, a short set of principles becomes a workbook of deliverables suited to local requirements and needs, able to be replicated or developed as required.

This has been true of the Order throughout its long history and has contributed to its ecumenical and practical development. It is equally true for each of us as individual members. Each one of us is a building block within our Order at local level, expanding into our regions and, through time, to the overall foundation and reconstruction of our Order internationally, so that it does not stagnate but remains a living, vibrant, constantly changing and evolving edifice able to adapt as required by the wider ethos of the age.

The PRCC too has needed to develop and adapt to changes in circumstances and priorities, over the past seven years. The approval and publication of the VMV last November has led us to reconsider what structure should be in place for the next five years. Such challenge is welcomed as it leads to new avenues of service delivery to our members.

If that is true for us, it is also true for jurisdictions and local commanderies. We in the Order, bearing the name of our Patron St Lazarus (which means “God helps”), must exemplify that through little acts of kindness in the circumstances and challenges which we face where we live as members of the Order. Guided by that yardstick, we shall continue onward and upward.

Atavis et Armis!

Norman Hunter Rose KCLJ
Deputy Grand Information Officer, & Chair, IPRCC

Inside this issue:

War & Peace	2
News updates	3
GPA Ukraine medical mission	4-5
The St Louis Hospital	6-7
Diary	8



International Public Relations and Communications Committee

Chair: Chev. Norman Hunter Rose KCLJ, GCMLJ

chair.iprcc@st-lazarus.net

Vice Chair: Dame Val Hiscock DCLJ

editor.iprcc@st-lazarus.net

Website: www.st-lazarus.net



War and Peace—a reflection

My studies in the UK in the early 1980's - as a youthful South African abroad - introduced me to Monsignor Bruce Kent, a Roman priest who, at the time, was General Secretary and the voice for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND).

Europe was in the grip of a stand-off between East and West with the Cold War at its nervous height. Each side threatened the other with a doomsday scenario should one side do the unthinkable and reach to press the red button first.

The result would be total annihilation and the utter destruction of vast swathes of Europe where the built environment of cities and suburbs would be reduced to an enormous pile of nondescript rubble and its people evaporated in flesh consuming heat! Fast forward to 2024 and the Nobel Peace Prize is awarded to Nihon Hidankyo, a Japanese grassroots anti-nuclear organisation created by survivors of the US atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.

These people, who lived through such a doomsday scenario, use the gift of life to them to dissuade whoever cares to listen to step away from such madness and ensure that it should never, never again be repeated.

In its citation, the Nobel Committee said that they awarded the prize for all survivors of nuclear catastrophe but particularly to this organisation which, through its members, helps the world gain deeper awareness; for they describe the indescribable, help us think the unthinkable and hopefully enable us to grasp the incomprehensible.



Against this backdrop, a spokesperson for the recipients noted a tragic irony: that Gaza today resembles what Hiroshima and Nagasaki looked like after 'Little Boy' and 'Fat Man' were dropped from a B-29 bomber.

I am reminded of a sombre moment told to us by St Luke when he says that as Jesus drew near and saw the city, Jerusalem, he wept over it, saying, "Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes."

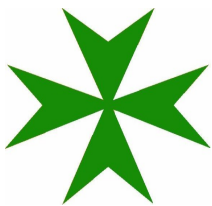
Luke 19: 41- 42.

The Ven. TERRY LESTER

Rector: Christ Church Constantia, Cape Town, South Africa

Chaplain: Order of St Lazarus, Grand Bailiwick of South Africa.

"They describe the indescribable, help us think the unthinkable and hopefully enable us to grasp the incomprehensible."



Young Lazarites International Network

In the previous issue of the newsletter, I hinted at this new initiative. Since then, we have been able to gather a reasonably clear picture of those members who fall in the 21-35/40 age bracket in most jurisdictions.

The genesis of this proposal came from the realisation that the overall image of Order is middle-aged to elderly. Although many of us joined when we were much younger (I was 31), we had little option at that time but to adapt to what the Order was locally. This proposal seeks to give our younger members a voice, by creating an informal network so they can discuss freely their thoughts and ideas.

It is described as a network and that is exactly what it will be – a non-hierarchical forum where open discussions can take place with minimal external coordination. The forum could also help to facilitate local help to disadvantaged, disabled and elderly members of the members' communities, and even to support fundraising through activities which they find appropriate – e.g. sponsored cycle rides, running in marathons or abseiling. Through these activities, in addition to raising money for our charities, our young members would increase our public image by wearing St Lazarus badged tee-shirts and sweatshirts.

At the time of writing these ideas are still in the development stage but are progressing steadily. It is hoped that the forum will go live at the beginning of 2025 and be launched by the Grand Master.

NHR

Leper Aid Through Music – Christmas Charity Campaign

For centuries, the Order has had one mission: to help those on the margins of society – especially those affected by leprosy. Thanks to our work in countries such as India, China, or Vietnam, we've already given countless people a new chance for a healthy life. But



now, the people of Madagascar are facing a catastrophe they cannot overcome alone.

In the spring of 2024, Tropical Storm "Gamane" struck the islands. Over 87,000 people lost everything – their homes, their livelihoods, and their sense of security. The leprosy



village of Belfort was hit particularly hard. The floodwaters swept away everything. The villagers, many of whom have disabilities, now have nothing left, and many still don't have homes.



To support them the Grand Bailiwick of Germany is selling a CD titled "Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est". One of Germany's finest male choirs is performing sacred choral music from various eras and languages, with a powerful message: where there is love, there is God.

For only 5 euros (plus shipping), you can not only receive a musical masterpiece, but also support the leper village. All proceeds will go completely to this project, and your support can make a real difference.

The CD (with bulk discounts for orders of 10 or more) can be ordered from the Referendary of the Grand Bailiwick, Chev. Dr. Andreas Rademachers KCLJ (referendar@stlazarus.de). Shipping will be in early December.

To listen to some samples, visit <https://www.jpc.de/jpcng/classic/detail/-/art/ubi-caritas-et-amor-deus-ibi-est/hnum/7860853>



GPA Ukraine Medical Mission Trip - September 2024

On September 15, 2024, the Grand Priory of America (GPA) and the Humanitarian Grand Priory of Europe (GPEU) completed their second successful medical mission trip together to Ukraine since the war started in February 2022. This time, in addition to the GPA (John Byrnes) and the GPEU (Dirk Augustin and Matthias Keene), members of the Grand Priory in Canada (Rev. Paul Richards) and the Priory of Belgium (Dirk Decoster) joined us, and two concurrent missions were carried out.

The central team, led by Dirk Augustin and Rev. Paul Richards, left Frankfurt on 5 September and drove to Ukraine via Poland to pick up our Belgian member before crossing over the border into Ukraine. From there they spent the next 5 days delivering high priority medical equipment to Cherkasy, a town south of Kiev, before heading to Kiev to deliver tactical combat individual first aid kits (IFAK) to the Volunteer



Hospitaller Brigade of Kiev and to meet with their leaders. Additionally, Reverend Richards used his travel to Germany, Poland and Ukraine to promote ecumenism within the Order, presiding over worship with the Anglican congregation in Kyiv, who have celebrated at St. Catherine's Lutheran Church in Kyiv for 26 years.

My team also started from Germany on 5 September, and drove to a small village in Poland late that night, crossing over the border into Ukraine the following day. The

team consisted of Sean O'Donnell and Brian Harlow (both now new postulants and both former military), before we added three more international members after arriving in Lviv, Ukraine. The air raid warnings started our first night in Lviv and continued every day until we left, but this is the daily life for everyone in Ukraine now. The new team members came from Poland, Austria and the UK, and were also all former military.

In our two-vehicle convoy we made the long drive from Lviv to Vinnitsia, ending up in our destination of Zaporozhe, on the southern front, late the next day, where we added several more team members from one of the local military units. Early the next morning, with our phones in airplane mode and Bluetooth and WiFi disabled, our convoy made the challenging drive to the front and headed to a well-concealed bunker in a discreet location a couple of kilometers from the "zero line". There we met a large group of soldiers from this unit, distributing the IFAKs that the GPA purchased, with our Lazarus Cross attached to each kit, and training these soldiers on how to use the medical gear inside each kit.



Last year the GPA, along with the GPEU, delivered over \$100,000 of rehabilitation equipment for amputees to a military hospital in central Ukraine. Many of these amputations were necessary because of missing or inadequate tourniquets when they were injured. The idea this year was to try and reduce this extremely high rate of amputations by providing the frontlines with the needed medical equipment to tackle these injuries when they occur and reduce the need for prosthetics and rehab equipment, hopefully enabling many of the wounded to return to a more normal life after the war.



We ended our visit to this bunker and these soldiers with quite a dramatic drone demonstration, and began our long trip back to Kiev to meet up with our central team. On 10 September we met with our central team in Kiev, and shared stories of our trips. That afternoon, both teams had the privilege of visiting the Vatican Embassy (Apostolic Nunciature) in Kiev, and met with Msgr. Joseph Maramreddy, the Deputy Consul, to discuss possible future opportunities for support between the Order of St. Lazarus and the Nunciature. We also spoke with several representatives of other charitable groups and NGOs working in Ukraine about future collaborative efforts between the Order of St. Lazarus and these groups.



All of us departed Kiev on 12 September to begin the long trip back to Germany, but first stopped at Bucha, outside Kiev, where in the beginning of this war atrocities committed by the Russians resulted in the deaths of over 500 civilians, including many women and children. Visiting the memorial that was erected in their memory brought a sombre ending to this trip and reinforced our resolve to continue our support of the innocent people of Ukraine.

This was a complex and carefully planned medical mission, with Rev. Paul Richards and I flying more than 11,000 air miles each and all team members driving more than 3,500 road miles in three different countries – Germany, Poland and Ukraine – and all in just 11 days! It involved the participation of two separate teams totalling 12 people from eight different countries – USA, UK, Canada, Germany, Belgium, Poland, Austria and Ukraine. It required the use of four vehicles with a “couple of necessary add-ons” along the way, and a lot of gas station stops for coffee and stretching! All this notwithstanding, it was worth every second of travel and every ounce of energy to get our medical equipment to those who need it and to make sure they are properly trained in how to use it. To see the smiles on the faces of these soldiers, paramedics and civilians, and to shake their hands and give them embraces of friendship and solidarity, makes any risk and cost more than worth it.

John Byrnes, GCLJ, GCMLJ



The Crusader Jerusalem leprosarium and the modern Saint Louis Hospital

These extracts are drawn from a paper by HE the Chevalier Charles Savona-Ventura. The full paper may be downloaded from the international website at [https://www.st-lazarus.net/sites/default/files/media/files/st_louis_hospital - full text illustrated.pdf](https://www.st-lazarus.net/sites/default/files/media/files/st_louis_hospital_-_full_text_illustrated.pdf)

The Jerusalem leprosarium dedicated to St Lazarus has a long and complicated history, and may have suffered repeated destruction and reestablishment throughout its history. It was definitely in existence just prior to the First Crusade and the establishment of the kingdom of Jerusalem in 1099.



Evidence for the existence of the leprosarium in the 1130s is found in a contemporary plan of Jerusalem which depicts the *e[cclesia] s[ancti] Lazari* in the north-western point outside the walls of the city. The brethren caring for these unfortunates were to eventually organize themselves into the formal Order of Saint Lazarus emulating the Order of Saint John by assuming an added military role. The establishment was not a particularly large one, and the early statutes of the Order provide for the housing of fifty-two sick *confrères* besides their carers. The inmates were managed by a master abbot and followed a monastic routine and code of practice.

By 1187 there were two leprosaria in the region, one for males and one for females. The region also apparently included a dedicated burial chamber to the east and the open reservoir known as the Pool of Saint Ladre to the north in the modern-day suburb of Morasha (now largely built over).

Following the fall of Jerusalem to Saladin's forces, the brethren of Saint Lazarus moved their base to St. Jean d'Acre which served as the last outpost of Christianity in the Holy Land until their expulsion by the Islamic forces led by Sultan Khalid in 1291. The area outside the two gates today hosts the forty-four bed St Louis Hospital, managed by the French Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition, which serves as a hospice for persons with advanced disease, and the international pilgrim centre of the Pontifical Institute of Notre Dame of Jerusalem.



St Louis Hospital provides support and comfort to people in need of high quality comprehensive palliative care within a culturally and religiously diverse community. It serves as a beacon of Christian charity that is provided without any form of religious or economic bias to those in need irrespective of their religious beliefs.





The hospital initially served as an all-purpose hospital for people from all religious communities. However, after 1950, it concentrated its services to providing palliative care to patients with advanced terminal cancer and other terminal disease states. The hospital has operated as a charitable institution run by the French Sisters of St. Joseph since its conception, except for the short period in 1948-49 when the hospital found itself on the extremely hostile border between Jordan and Israel. During this period, patients-in-need were rerouted to St. Peter's Church on Mount Zion. It has in the last decades undertaken the necessary refurbishment to update its facilities and services to better serve its inmates with modern-day palliative care standards. The refurbishment process is still ongoing.

The Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem has repeatedly supported these refurbishment projects. In 2013, the Order adopted the hospital as its flagship international project encouraging its member jurisdictions throughout the world to support the necessary refurbishments required to bring the establishment to the new Israeli Hospital Code imposed in 2011. The Order committed itself to contribute the sum of €80,000 to renovate the kitchen as prescribed by law. This renovation allowed the kitchen to better cater for the varied meal choices of its multireligious inmates, be they Christian, Muslim or Jewish. It also could better cater for any special diets required by the patients' medical conditions. This project was completed in 2016. In 2024, the management of St Louis Hospital again approached the Order for renewed support for an ambitious refurbishment project updating the basic essential services. The Order committed itself to support the refurbishment project related to the electricity supply provision including the instalment of a generator with a donation amounting to €94,000.

The hospital is named after one of the most significant French Crusader kings – King Louis IX whose life was exemplified by support to the sick and needy, and whose life exemplified a particular religious fervour sufficient for him to be declared a saint. He was also a patron of the Crusader Order of Saint Lazarus providing the Order with a base at Boigny in France. Saint Louis Hospital is proud of its Crusader heritage and proudly displays paintings commissioned by Count Amédée de Piellat depicting Crusader towns in the Holy Land and paintings of coat-of-arms belonging to several Crusader families.

Anybody wishing to support the refurbishment project of Saint Louis Hospital can directly contact the institution's manager for details by email at alex@hfsl.org.



Diary 2024-25

2024			
18-19 October	GP of Spain	Vigil & Investiture	Madrid, Spain
19 October	GP of the Maltese Islands	Investiture	Valletta, Malta
24 - 27 October	GP of America	Grand Prioral meetings & Investiture	Newport Beach, California, USA
26 - 27 October	GP of France	Investiture	Andlau, Alsace, France
2 November	GB of South Africa	Investiture	
8 November	GMC meeting		Madrid
23 - 24 November	GP of Finland	Investiture	Helsinki, Finland
29-30 November	GP of Poland	Vigil & Investiture	Cracow, Poland
6-7 December	GP of Greece	Vigil, Investiture & Dinner	Athens, Greece
2025			
26 April	GP of Finland	50th anniversary celebration	Turku, Finland
1-4 May	GP of Australia	Vigil, Investiture & National Chapter	Sydney, NSW, Australia
2-3 May	GP in Canada	Vigil & Investiture	Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Full details of all these and other forthcoming and recent events can be found on the international website. You can also find information about events and activities around the world on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/groups/st.lazarus

Items for inclusion in the diary should be sent to the Vice-Grand Chancellor (Administration) at bennisonpm@gmail.com

