



Advent 2020

SAINT LAZARUS®

The Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem

The International Newsletter

From the Grand Master

All over the world we are still feeling the effects of the coronavirus pandemic. Recent new lockdowns have emphasised the gravity of the situation and we can only hope and pray that these will be lifted in time for Christmas family celebrations and our traditional carol services.

Throughout the past eight months the Order has remained strong, relevant and active. When I read about what is being achieved nationally and locally, I am truly proud to be your Grand Master. We continue to follow the tradition which has defined us over the centuries of working quietly behind the scenes, making things happen for those in need and their families and loved ones.

The Grand Priory of Canada has coined the motto 'Small acts of kindness' to describe what they are doing and this, in turn, describes what all of us are doing in the name of our patron Saint Lazarus. These activities will remain vital over the coming months as the aftereffects of the pandemic become apparent. Societies and economies will need to be rebuilt and we are there to help in our own small way.

As we approach the Christmas season I wish you all and your families a joyful and peaceful Christmas with my best wishes for 2021.

Atavis et Armis!

**HE the Chevalier Don Francisco de Borbon,
Graf von Hardenberg GCLJ**



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“This has been a memorable year. It has been an environment in which our organization excels It is what we do....”

“A characteristic of successful organizations is resilience in changed circumstances and consistency in response.”



2020 and beyond

The Grand Commander reflects on a challenging year:

Focus. Growth. Consistency. These are some of the themes that have characterized the activities of the Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem during 2020. This has been a memorable year. It has been an environment in which our organization excels. It is not so much an opportunity or even a challenge, but the exact same circumstances over decades and centuries in which St Lazarus has always offered help to humanity. It is what we do....

Our focus is best illustrated by the rapid and fulsome response offered by participating Jurisdictions around the globe during the pandemic. A collated report of the St. Lazarus Covid-19 response can be downloaded from our website at <https://www.st-lazarus.net/en/media-files/downloads/download/3-hospitaller/943-the-covid-19-pandemic-booklet>. It is a document worthy of review and to distribute amongst members and like-minded acquaintances/friends. It is axiomatic that this good work continues.

Membership of our Order is increasing in both Europe and North America over 2020. This occurs as informed members in like-minded organizations recognize the profile and activities of St. Lazarus are effective and timely. Our communications to members and the speedy responsiveness by clergy and chancery over the Covid pandemic demonstrate this. Additionally, it is important that we recognize the leadership manifested locally by all our Jurisdictions over this period. These contributions are not taken for granted.

A characteristic of successful organizations is resilience in changed circumstances and consistency in response. A month or so ago, our International Hospitaller Report was published (<https://www.st-lazarus.net/en/charity/international-hospitaller-report/download/38-hospitaller-reports/945-international-hospitaller-report-2020>). It is our premier publication each year and a valuable affirmation of all we achieved over 2019, specifically detailing the astonishing diversity and depth of our response. Be sure to review, publish and circulate it as appropriate.

Thank you for your consideration and ongoing participation in these activities.

Atavis et Armis!

Edward B. White, GCLJ
Grand Commander of the Order

War Memorial Restoration unveiled on Remembrance Day

On the 101st anniversary of the Cessation of Hostilities in the ‘war to end all wars’, a significant restoration of the iconic memorial to the brave men of the parish who gave their lives in that terrible conflict was unveiled in St Michael and All Angels in Observatory, Cape Town.

Traditionally, November 11th is a date commemorated worldwide as a time to pause and remember men and women of all races who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in time of war.

The St Michael’s Memorial recording the names of those who fell in the First World War (1914 – 1919) has, over the intervening century, sadly suffered substantial water damage to its soft, once remarkable porphyry framework.



The complete replacement of the decayed elements of the structure with more durable polished marble and the consequent restoration of the Memorial was funded and managed by the Grand Bailiwick of South Africa.

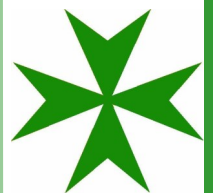
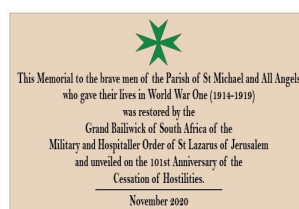
“As St Michael’s has for many years been home chapel to the Western Cape Commandery of our Order in South Africa, it was decided that the current pandemic would provide us with the perfect opportunity to complete this vital work,” said Grand Bailiff, Dame Tamra Capstick-Dale.

“Although our primary mission is for the care of seriously marginalised children and the elderly in our poorest communities, we felt that there was not only the real necessity of saving the war memorial from eventual collapse and the loss of this vital record, but that this was a way showing our care for this parish and its people and history.”

Fr. Timothy Lowes and the Parish Council elected to bring their normal Thursday morning Mass forward and the unveiling of the now refurbished War Memorial was integrated into the service with all solemnity, as befits Remembrance Day.

A special case containing the best preserved portion of the old frame will be conserved as a relic and has been presented to the parish.

Mass was well attended by members of the Order of St Lazarus. A group photograph was not taken due to national Covid-19 restrictions.



Onwards in hope

We are now well into the new Christian year. Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote: “Celebrating Advent means being able to wait”. It is about looking forward with the expectancy of a brighter future and waiting for the birth of the Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.

Christmas is a season of hope, love and thankfulness when we can, at last, meet family members and celebrate the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. It reminds us that his birth took place against circumstances far worse than we have experienced this year which were conquered by the love of his parents, Mary and Joseph, and it brings hope into our lives that however dark the circumstances we encounter, the love of God conquers all.

During 2021, Investitures will resume, Commandery meetings will be able to restart and, at some stage, life will return to normal. But we must not forget the lessons of 2020, for during that time we have been able review our lives and to reassess our priorities.

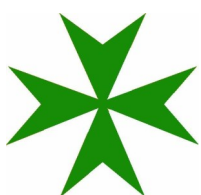
Our Order across the world has certainly done so. As the Grand Master has observed, we have risen to the challenges posed by the pandemic. The Order has become more personalised within our local communities; we have added a ray of sunshine to broken hearts and downcast souls.

Alongside this, however, we must not forget the consistent focus of the Order of St Lazarus in addressing leprosy, promoting its cure, helping those who have contracted it and caring for them and their families. We have always done this, but the immediacy of the pandemic in all our countries and communities has the potential to distract us from this greater mission which runs alongside our more immediate, local concerns.

Christmas leads on to Epiphany when the Magi brought their gifts to the Christ child. In the previous issue of the Newsletter, our Grand Hospitaller highlighted the small percentage of charitable funds dedicated to the relief of those afflicted or affected by Hansen’s Disease. Surely, it is our duty to support this bedrock on which our Order was founded and, in the coming year following the example of the Magi, to redouble our fundraising and giving to help those individuals and families, in thankfulness for our safety in coming through this pandemic.



“Celebrating Advent means being able to wait”



Leprosy sufferers in West Bengal

Walking for Lebanon



An unexpected donation to the Grand Priory of England & Wales’s Lebanon Appeal, in conjunction with *Aid to the Church in Need (ACN)*, was received towards the end of October from Ethan Bradley MLJ, a member of Mersey Commandery, currently living and working in Singapore. Ethan completed a sponsored walk of the island (113.7km or 70.65 miles) and raised £912, which the Trust will make up to £1,000.

The walk took just under 28 hours to complete (27 hours, 53 minutes to be

precise). Ethan was accompanied by Tom Buttling (raising money for the Singapore based charity *Transient Workers Count 2*, which promotes equitable treatment for migrant workers in Singapore) and, for part of the route, by Portuguese national Pedro da Silva and American Josh de Sio. Ethan’s efforts were the more heroic because he fractured his hand a few weeks prior to commencing the walk, so had to wear a plaster cast.

Ethan was aided in publicising this initiative by his Commander, Chevalier Charles Marshall KLJ. The St Lazarus Charitable Trust will send a cheque for £1,000 to ACN for relief and reconstruction efforts in the Lebanese capital of Beirut.

Ethan Bradley
Yesterday at 5:23 AM

WALK SINGAPORE

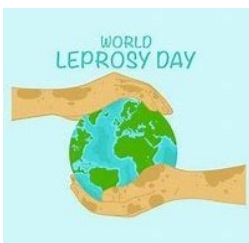
Distance	Elevation Gain
113.73 km	469 m
Moving Time	
27:53:47	



World Leprosy Day

World Leprosy Day (“WLD”) falls on the nearest Sunday to January 30, the date on which Mahatma Gandhi died in 1948. It was established in 1953 by the French humanitarian Raoul Follereau. Next year WLD falls on Sunday January 24, 2021. It has been agreed that this will be observed by the Order worldwide through its Jurisdictions.

It is particularly pertinent this year as we come to realise the extent of the COVID-19 pandemic on inhabitants of Less Developed Countries in which Hansen’s Disease is prevalent and where the Order funds relevant charitable projects.



WLD is not just about fundraising it is also about prayer for those who suffer from leprosy and thanksgiving for those who care for them – medically or within the local community. Our Deputy Ecclesiastical Grand Prior, Pastor Eric Dyck, has written a ‘mini liturgy’ for use in churches on that day which is available on the international website. We hope that chaplains will make use of this as appropriate.



A Christmas message from our Ecclesiastical Grand Prior

Dear Members of the Order of St Lazarus,

We could ask ourselves what the sense is in celebrating Christmas during this difficult period of the COVID -19 pandemic outbreak, and especially in a society characterised by lack of hope, uncertainty about the present and the future and distrust of others, to say nothing of the transformation of individual desires into rights regardless of duties and freedom, without responsibility. By making us discover our false certainties and our inability to live together, however, the pandemic also helps us understand that we need not only each other but someone who gives a profound meaning to our life.

Christmas, which presents to us the paradox of a God who makes himself visible in a child born of a woman, is not an event of the past, but a mystery ever present in history and remains through all time: it is the announcement of the birth of a new Man, who has come to build a new world, where there is room for all that is authentically human, for the daily holiness that gives us the joy of doing everyday things in an extraordinary way. As Christians, we are called to spread the beauty of Christmas music that is not reflected only in traditional Christmas carols, in the tolling of bells that ring in celebration to echo the song of the angels, but continues in the witness of a renewed life in the light of the good news of God's love for humanity.

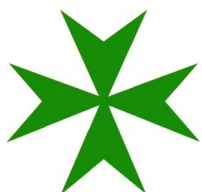
For Pope Francis *"If the music of the Gospel stops vibrating in our innermost hearts, we will have lost the joy that springs from compassion, the tenderness that comes from trust, the capacity for reconciliation that finds its source in knowing that we are always forgiven. If the music of the Gospel stops playing in our homes, in our squares, in the workplace, in politics and in the economy, we will have turned off the melody that makes us fight for the dignity of every man and woman"* (Brothers all, n.277).

Each of us is called to be the herald of this Good News to everybody, bearing witness to God's love with concrete actions of mercy, to be at the service of our most needy brothers and sisters and in particular of the sick, according to the tradition of our Order. Christmas is the foundation of what Pope Francis calls "the mysticism of fraternity", because it gives us the certainty and joy that God is with us and we are with Him, all children of the same Father, and brothers and sisters together, because we are brothers and sisters of that Child, Son of God and the Virgin Mary, who now generates in us that new life.

+ **Michele Pennisi**

Archbishop of Monreale

Ecclesiastical Grand Prior



"Each of us is called to be the herald of... Good News to everybody, bearing witness to God's love with concrete actions of mercy"



**May we be filled with the wonder of Mary,
the obedience of Joseph,
the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the determination of the Magi,
and the peace of the Christ child.
Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit
bless us now and forever.**