



ORDER OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM, KNIGHTS HOSPITALLER
Under the Constitution granted in 1964 by his late Majesty King Peter II of Yugoslavia

THE INTERNATIONAL HERALD

PRO FIDE, PRO UTILITATE HOMINUM

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A MESSAGE FROM H.E. THE LIEUTENANT-GRAND MASTER

**Dear Brethren of Saint John of Jerusalem,
Knights Hospitaller – OSJ (Malta),**

Since my installation as Lieutenant Grand Master in April 2019, the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller [OSJ(Malta)], its Administrative Arm and the International Headquarters itself have had to undergone necessary changes. New members have been invested into the Order while, on the other hand, a negligible few have rebelled and resigned. Others have had to be written off due to the lack of payments due to the Grand Magisterium.

Apart from the then existing Priories that, some of which, have increased the number of Commanderies due to the increase of the number of members, new Priories and Commanderies have sprouted in other parts of the globe so as to be added to the ones that already existed.

The International Headquarters has had to undergo heavy masonry works and an overall refurbishment due to the grievous state that it had rendered itself over the many years of daily use and of withstanding the toil of natural elements. These activities have had to be dealt with 'on the spur of the moment' with great difficulty,

hardship and heavy financial expenses. Had it not been for the voluntary work offered and the generous donations given by a small number of members of the Order, all this could not have been possible to achieve.

However, this voluminous amount of work did not stop – nor did it slow down – the Petit Conseil from keeping the Order able to uphold its main objective, namely that of continuing to live up to its motto 'Pro Fide, Pro Utilitate Hominum' and always be prompt in its generosity in the giving of donations to help those in need and also to alleviate the suffering of the poor, the sick and the needy. My hope (...)





(...) is that our members would keep their generosity alive and active enough so that the Order would be able to carry on with its charitable work.

The aim of this 'Herald' is to keep our members up to date with the continuous governing activity of the Petit Conseil which regularly meets every six months and the works that are being undergone by Priories in their unconditional performance towards the motto of the Order.

With hope and ultimately my belief that it is at present and would continue to be in the future the fervent wish and prayer of the members of our Order that the riven body of 'The Orders' that came to be throughout the years, would, where appropriate, be made whole as it had been during the reign of King Peter II.

I salute you with affection and assure you of my remembrance of my Oath of Office.

Yours in Christ & in Saint John,



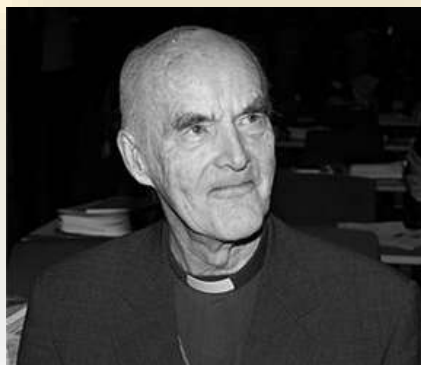
Paul M. BORG, OSJ,
Lt.-Grand Master





WREATH of CHRIST

The Evangelical Lutheran Swedish bishop emeritus Martin Lönnebo has made the Wreath of Christ of 18 pearls in 1995. It is not a rosary, but rather a wreath of Lutheran prayer beads. Lönnebo has made examples of prayers connected to each bead, but because the beads symbolise different occasions or phases in our life and different aspects of our Christian faith we do not have to follow his words literally but we can use them as a practical device to encourage prayer, a time of silence and reflection.



The golden bead of God

Life is a wonder. That something exists at all, is a wonder. Learn to wonder. Learn to trust. If God exists, there is nothing insignificant, hopeless, or meaningless. You may pray: **You are immense, You are near, You are the light and I am Yours.**

The oblong colourless beads of Silence

Our thoughts are limited and words only for the visible world. At this moment you do not have to think, you do not need any words, you do not have to feel anything. There is no need to do anything. You can just be where you are, in peace. Let the time pass. Rest in the silence. You may pray: **I give away my loneliness. I receive that I am Yours.** *(I am breathing out my loneliness. I am breathing in, that I am Yours.)*

The small pearly I-bead

You are an image of God, even if a vanishing, fragile and wounded one. You are precious. You are not alone in the world. When you look at your neighbour, you can see an image of God in him or her as well. You may pray: **You created me as Your own image. Let me see Your image in myself.**

The white bead of Baptism

You may leave all your bitter memories and trustfully enter a new life. God knows you and carries you tenderly in His arms. You may pray: **You have invited me. In Your hands I commend my life.**

The sand-coloured Desert bead

In the desert of life there is suspicion, hopelessness, tiredness, temptations, sadness, fighting. These things are also a part of your life. You may pray: **Keep me holy and I will be holy kept. Heal me and I will be healed. (...)**





**Draw me near Yourself, and my heart will have peace.
Jesus Christ give me mercy.**

The blue Carefree bead

When you are worried and restless, you may lay down your heavy load, forget your worries and leave them in front of the One who says: 'Do not worry' and 'My peace I give unto you'. You may pray: **I give away my load of worries. I receive Your peace.**

(I breathe out my worry, I breathe in Your peace.)

The red bead of God's love

In the love of God you may feel yourself accepted and loved." For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish." You may pray: **You are mine and I am Yours. Your love is everlasting.**

The red bead of Sacrifice

God loves you. You may be like a stone warmed by the sun, giving that warmth around yourself. You can give your sacrifice. You may love and help your neighbour. You may pray for him or her. You may pray: **Let me love my neighbour with Your love.**

The small pearly beads of my Secrets

You may tell God your personal important and secret things you may not want to tell anyone else. If you cannot find the words you may just be silent. God knows and understands also prayers without a word.

I give thanks / ask for / pray... I think / ask /am happy

for... The touch of the bead is a prayer. Lord, You know.
Take care...

The black bead of Darkness

There are dark periods in life when you feel lonely and it feels that even God has gone away. But God is faithful. Even in the darkness He will be near you... He did not abandon Jesus; He won't abandon you either. He will hear you cry and sigh. In the Night He has come nearer you. You may pray: **Out of the depths have I cried unto You, oh Lord. Lord, hear my voice. Do not abandon me.**

The white Resurrection bead

Breathe in quiet joy and trust. The borderline between life and death, this world and future world, is thin and light. Today the eternity may touch you and God will dry your tears. You may pray: **Here is no time. Here is no distance. I have peace in my heart in front of You. Here I want to stay.**
(...)





(...) I often use the Wreath of Christ when I need to consider something in my life or as in the last months with Covid19 when I need peace for praying or meditate over human life, weakness, and death, and I mostly concentrate on one of the beads – the Desert bead. Then I use this meditation:

I start breathing out my worry and filling my heart with silence. Then I say deep in my heart:

When the ennui makes the day difficult,
When the desire burns in my blood,
When the wrath flames up with its red fire,
Have mercy with me.
Fill my heart with patience and joy,
Humility and compassion,
Decency and tenderness,
Have mercy with me.

It is dreary and lifeless in the desert. The wind has blown sand so, that there are not any ways to be seen forward. You cannot know, how to get out of there. But you shall always remember that God showed himself for Moses and called Saint John the Baptist to proclaim the coming of Christ in the desert.

Life is sometimes like a desert. There are so many problems and difficulties, you cannot know how to manage. Desert pearl is telling you, that different kinds of difficulties are a

part of life. Jesus Christ had to stay in the desert too. And there he had to meet severe temptations. Think of what is difficult in your life just now. Take a stone from the ground and hold it in your hand. This stone is the difficulty in your mind. You can throw the stone away and pray: God, take care of this difficulty. Please help me here.

The Lord's prayer.

Rev. Niels REFSKOU, KJSJ,
Chairman of the Ecclesiastical Council.





WHERE IS GOD IN THIS PANDEMIC ?



It is a question that we regularly hear and read. Some see in it the direct hand of God, of the punishing God who wants to say to people that they have strayed too far from His commandments. We hear these voices especially in America and Africa. Others see in it a sign that God gives indirectly and wants to point out to us the ecological mistakes we have made by not respecting His creation. The latter have a point, of course, because even today I read a scientific article saying that we can expect even more epidemics that are difficult to

contain, because there has been a large-scale destruction of ecological systems causing a profound disturbance of the natural balances. Many people in Western countries see no connection at all between the coronavirus pandemic and God, because they have completely removed God from their mindset so that He no longer has anything to do with what is happening in the world. Some are calling God to account and wonder why God is allowing this to happen and why He is not intervening. Still others find solace and strength in praying to God at this time. Now that there could not be any Easter celebrations in the churches, the number of viewers on the internet and on TV watching the Easter celebrations turned out

to be very high. When people are in distress, a lot of people apparently find their way back to the church, to prayer, and to God. Once again, He becomes the certainty at a time when all other supposed certainties fail.

But where is God really in this coronavirus pandemic? Is He there or is He not? And if He is there, what connection can we see between God and corona?



We cannot give a conclusive answer to this question. Nonetheless, as Christians, it is worth taking a moment to reflect on this fascinating question. (...)





(...) In earlier centuries, illnesses or anything that could not be explained were directly attributed to the intervention of God. When the plague broke out in the Middle Ages, society considered it a punishment for the sins that people had committed, both personally and as a community. However, science was able to identify the causes of the plague, and there are scientific explanations for the coronavirus as well, although they are not unanimous at this time. They are still guessing at the true origin and the way in which the virus has been able to infect humans. In any case, the coronavirus can be scientifically explained. Is it completely absurd, then, to speak of God in the context of a pandemic?



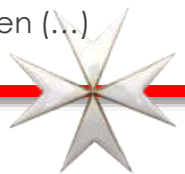
In the Bible, illness, suffering, and death have to do with the disharmony that exists in man. The story of creation, which

describes man's true nature, sublimely captures the bond between God and man, and also explores the cause of this disharmony.

The story of creation is more than a purely mythical story, but contains a number of fundamental theological, philosophical, and anthropological reflections on man and the world. Man was created by God in his image and likeness, and originally lived in total harmony with his Creator, with himself, with his neighbour, and with his environment. Man was elevated above the transience that was and is present in all of nature.

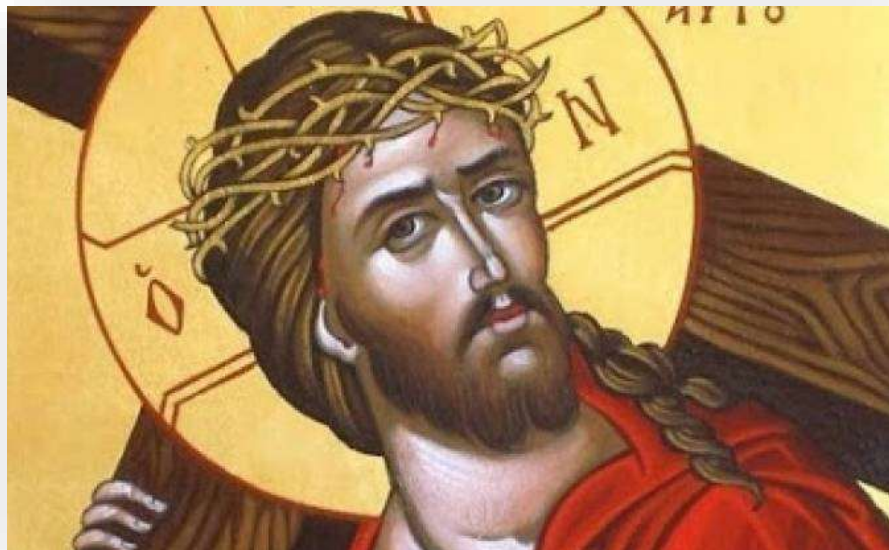


The story of creation also mentions the reality of evil - called the devil - as the cause of the rupture of the harmony. With the rupture of this harmony, the immortality of man came to an end and he became subject to transience. This explains illness, suffering, decay, and death for Christians. God is not the cause of it, nor is it a punishment from God, but it is the consequence of the broken harmony between (...)





(...) man and God.



Suffering in general is therefore inextricably linked to the evil with which man is constantly confronted. Pathogenic and deadly viruses are part of this evil and can affect humans and animals like any other illness.

But is that the whole story and do suffering and death have the final word?

Of course not.

After all, as Christians, we confess that through the coming of Christ, through his suffering and death, and through his resurrection, man was redeemed and saved from the hopelessness of death. The disharmony caused by death in earthly life is finally restored to harmony in eternal life.

This is the mystery that we celebrate time and again at Easter and at every Eucharist.

As Christians, however, we are also encouraged not to undergo suffering passively, but to learn from it. Was this pandemic inevitable? Was it the result of scientific experiments, of the irresponsible treatment of animals, of the disturbance of the balance of ecological systems? Pope Francis does not fail to remind humanity of its responsibility in all these areas. He invites us to reflect on the way in which we have lost an important dimension in our lives, which we must take up again, the care of Mother Earth. There are many passages in the Bible about how God uses nature to call people to repent. Just think of the plagues of Egypt and the descriptions about the end times, which would be preceded by all kinds of plagues. (...)





(...) If man does not care about the disastrous consequences of the destruction of ecological systems, if he leads a life that is contrary to his human dignity, even to his human nature, one might wonder whether man is not bringing about the end times himself?



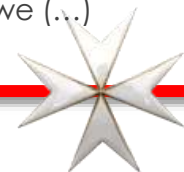
The coronavirus pandemic must therefore become a time for reflection, not only on our ecological misdeeds, but also on our loss of human dignity and the sins against our human nature.

Here, we come close to Paul's theology, which explicitly indicates how everything has meaning, but it is up to us to discover that there is meaning in both the good and the evil

that befall us, and that suffering, in particular, can lead us to purification. Looking up at the cross, where we witness the seemingly most senseless suffering, we believe that it was through this suffering that we as human beings were saved from the hopelessness of our lives. This pandemic, which is now putting us in quarantine, can encourage us to become true 'freed people' and to fulfil the freedom granted to us by God time and again according to the example of Christ. Freedom is the highest good we have received as human beings, and it makes us different from everything else that was created.



In this time of corona, the question of the meaningfulness of prayer is sometimes raised. Why would we (...)





(...) pray, if God allows all this to happen?

Can we pray that He would protect us from the virus, that He would give us strength to endure the suffering that a possible infection would cause, that He would especially give us the strength to keep it going?



As Christians, we can trust in God for everything that concerns us. We can also pray for others, both the living and the dead. In fact, this is a work of mercy. God is deeply involved in our lives and in everything that happens. He is with us and He suffers with us. However, God is not a 'deus ex machina', as if He would magically intervene and completely control everything that is happening. In doing so, He would

not respect our human freedom, for He left it intact from the moment of our creation, even when there was a rift between Him and man.



God created man out of love, and precisely because of that love, He gave man the freedom to develop his life and to respond in total freedom to His invitation whether or not to enter into His love, to enter into a relationship with Him, to believe in Him or not. Prayer is the perfect moment to be with God and to grow our relationship with Him. If God touched our freedom, he would touch the most essential part of our humanity. With this freedom, we can do a lot of good, but unfortunately a lot of evil, as well. Could it be that man - by increasingly behaving as lord and master of creation by controlling everything - has come to consider himself immune, even to such deadly viruses? (...)





(...) Was it not a form of pride to live under the assumption that pandemics and deadly viruses were part of history? According to the already mentioned Bible story, pride is the cause of all sins and the greatest sin we can commit: it is man who wants to be his own god.

Prayer can help us become humble again and come down from the divine throne we were claiming for ourselves. The powerlessness and fear that many are now experiencing can be an invitation for us to repent and look up to God again instead of looking down on Him out



of human pride. Perhaps prayer is currently arising for many as a cry for help because we genuinely feel that our

existence is threatened - hoping in vain that God would intervene as a 'deus ex machina'. But this can also be a moment in which we turn to God and find Him (again) as the God who is there for us, who does not abandon us, not even in this corona crisis, as a God who is called Love. It can be the moment when we find God again as a forgotten childhood friend whom we thought was long gone, and allow Him back into our lives as God.

Where is God in this time of corona? He is there, as He is there in everything and everyone, but not always as we like to phrase it or claim it with a certain degree of determination. Nevertheless, let us pray to Him with trust and hope that all those who are somehow confronted with this coronavirus pandemic will once again experience Him as the Lord of life, the Lord of the living and the dead, including those who were unexpectedly welcomed into His presence.

Frazer René STOCKMAN, KSJ,
Superior General, Brothers of Charity.





When you are going through
hard times
and wonder where God is,
remember the teacher
is always quiet during the test.

Nouman Ali Khan





Piece of antique damask At the Order's Headquarters



On June 3rd, 1986, the Grand Prior of the Russian Grand Priory of Malta, Professor Gaston Tonna Barthet had received from Cdr. Leo den Hollander the piece of damask being shown in the picture with the following explanation.

The piece of antique damask was presented to Venetian Ambassador Mocenigo by the Emperor Paul I when the ambassador took leave from St. Petersburg.

Since then the damask was handed down through generations in the famous Venetian Mocenigo family until the Countess Mocenigo, a personal friend of mine, gave it to me as a present.

Although I belong to a different branch of the O.S.J. (LGM du Chelas) I took the personal pride in the fact that you had been able to establish a Palace in Malta and that was why, through the kind intermediary of our mutual friend, Mr. Henri van den Akker, I wished to present you with this historical piece as an adornment to the Palace. Unfortunately we never met but you probably heard about my research named in the book about the Order by Eric Muraise which

resulted in tracing the original Maltese crown of Paul I.

Leo J.A. den Hollander, Commander of Justice of the French Branch of the Order, had the function of grand Officer, being the Grand Intendant, and as such a member of the Regency Council in 1972. Moreover, he was Chancellor of the Priory of the Netherlands which, having the status of association of Knights, obtained the approval of H.M. the Queen of the Netherlands in 1969 when Dr G.J. Libbers, a Gynaecologist, was Prior.

This simple memento was given during the phase in history when the Order, through the efforts of Paul I, was struggling to survive and preserve its monolithic identity despite the destructive Napoleonic upheaval which were then raging throughout Europe.

May this memento serve as a point of reference towards UNITY through GOODWILL among all Branches. Though some may scoff others may yet become convinced that reality can be achieved if due care is given to dreams that inspire. Let us be more Christians towards each other.

This original piece of antique damask is to be found at the International Headquarters of OSJ(Malta) in Valletta, Malta for viewing.





In Memoriam
Rev. Fr. Victor ENRIQUEZ



*Thou O Lord has claimed him back.
We gave him back to thee
with a broken heart,
But may Thy Holy Will be done
St. Ephrem*

With deep regret and sorrow, the Russian Grand Priory of Malta communicates that our beloved brother, **Rev. Fr. Victor ENRIQUEZ O. Carm**, has, at the age of 75 years, departed from us to join the Risen Lord. Fr. Enriquez died on the 24th June 2020, the feast of our Patron Saint John the Baptist. Our deep sympathy goes to his family and relatives and to the community of the Carmelite Order.

Fr. Victor, as he was affectionately known to all that knew him, will be long remembered. Besides the spiritual work of priesthood, his gentlemanly qualities, kindness, calmness under stress, his gift of inspiring and encouraging others and above all that smile which was always on his face and that word of comfort will never be forgotten especially by those who knew him well.

Fr. Victor was a very enthusiastic member of our Order of St. John of Jerusalem Knights Hospitaller – OSJ(Malta). Since the day of his enrolment as a Prelate OSJ, his wisdom, his kindness and his patience have been of unquestionable help to the leaders of the Russian Grand Priory - and ultimately to the Order - to surmount many a difficulty.



R.I.P.

**Paul M. BORG, OSJ,
Lt.-Grand Master**





ST. SUNNIVA OF NORWAY'S Oscarsborg Fortress Days diploma's of gratitude to the sponsors

Oscarsborg fortress at the Drøbak-straits is one of Norway's most important fortifications.

It's a strategic location, where the Oslofjord is at its most narrow, was a good choice for a fortress whose purpose was to defend the capital of Norway. The construction was completed in 1853 and after the visitation by King Oscar 1 on the 23. In August 1855, the fortress was named Oscarsborg in his honor.

Oscarsborg defensive capability was tested on the 9. April 1940, and it prevailed! The fortress stopped the German attack on Oslo by sinking the new and heavily armed battleship, Blücher.

The delay in the ongoing attack gave the king, parliament, and government an opportunity to evacuate and organize the resistance. The entire Norwegian gold deposit was also moved to safety.

St.Sunniva is very proud to be allowed to borrow the fortress in order to organize our annual activities, together with the Children's Cancer Association in Oslo and Akershus, aimed at the kids and youths suffering from cancer alongside their families the last weekend in August each year.

This year should have been the eighth consecutive year in a row, but the activities had to be canceled due to the corona pandemic.

We have therefore spent time meeting and conveyed diplomas of gratitude to the representatives of our regular partners, how as volunteers contribute year after year.

Pro Fide, Pro Utilitate Hominum.



Frank JAKOBSEN, CJSJ,
Commander
St.Sunniva of Norway
Prior
Nordic Priory





Oscarsborg Fortress Days: rewards to the sponsors St-Sunniva Cdry (NOR)





ST. SUNNIVA of NORWAY'S charity project: RADIUM HOSPITAL at Montebello in OSLO

The Norwegian Radium Hospital is located at Montebello in Oslo. The Hospital is at the forefront of cancer treatment and is the largest cancer center in Scandinavia. The hospital was inaugurated as the first cancer hospital in Norway by King Haakon VII in 1932. It was established after a public fundraiser started by the Norwegian people itself. The hospital now has units for pathology, radiology, clinical chemistry, clinical research and anesthesia.

During its 88-year history, the development has been staggering. In 1983 the Radium Hospital appointed the pathologist Dr. Jan Vincent Johannessen (° 1941) to be its Director. His knowledge, domestic and international contacts, and innovativeness brought the hospital to be one of the most competent cancer treatment centers in the world. Furthermore, Dr. Jan Vincent Johannessen is known for his comprehensive measures in regard to establishing a wide range of activities for patients and relatives. Patient busses and cars, art library, well-being facility, gourmet kitchen, leisure activity facility, and a youth room, to mention a few. Our main contact at the Radium Hospital is its Social Activities Leader Thora Kollenborg. She started working at the hospital in 1978 and has been the leader of social activities since 1986. Her job is to have contact with the patient and make sure their stay is as good as possible during the treatment.

On behalf of the hospital, she receives a lot of donations and gifts from private citizens, former patients, organizations, and businesses. The gifts and donations are distributed to both young and old patients who are in need of encouragement in a difficult life situation. St. Sunniva has, through its supporters among other things donated a complete work-out gym. Previously many patients had to work-out in halls and stairways (...)



The annual meeting at the Radium Hospital with the hospital leaders, VIF, and St.Sunniva.

The Radium Hospital Grant; Professor of surgery Karl-Erik Giercksky, and nurse Ingunn H. Sandven. The Foundation VIF Community; Leader and social project manager Lars-Erik Eggen, Norwegian Premier League player Daniel Fredheim Holm, St.Sunniva's Hospitalier

Trond Simarud, Freddy dos Santos representing the leadership of the football club VIF, and hospital activity leader Thora Kollenborg.

St.Sunniva has been cooperating with the Oslo football club for nearly 20 years now, and the club has faithfully supported our project and activities for children, youth, and families afflicted by cancer.





Charity: Radium Hospital at Montebello in Oslo, St-Sunniva Cdry (NOR)



(...) to get the physical mobility they needed. In addition, St. Sunniva has donated lots of good furniture, ICT-equipment, lots of different gifts suited for the different patients, and every December donor join us in giving the children attention and joy in the Christmas holidays. The annual "Children helps children" project at Sjøskogen after-school program has become a tradition. Entrance fees, lottery tickets, homemade waffles, cake, coffee, tee, along with the sale of items to parents, grandparents, and friends, made by the children, produced a representable income to the project. Every year, eight children representing the different classes, go on a guided tour to the hospital with activity leader Thora Kollenborg. The guided tour includes a visit to the radiation machine, physiotherapy room, and a meeting with both staff and patients. After the tour, they enjoy soda and ice-cream. And they get an opportunity to inquire about the hospital. The children are curious and ask about everything.

During the period of 2019-2023, two new buildings are under construction at the Radium Hospital. They are building an additional clinic and a new proton therapy facility. The total investment cost is estimated at over 300 million euros. The clinic building will contain many of the leisure- and social activities facilitated on the hospital ground. The proton therapy building will house advanced world-class equipment, otherwise found abroad. A treatment that will make sure that patients can receive the best treatment available in a domestic setting.



Frank JAKOBSEN, CJSJ,
Commander
St.Sunniva of Norway
Prior
Nordic Priory



The annual "Children helps children" project at Sjøskogen. From left to right: After-school program Leader Mustafa Kroop, Activity leader Thora Kollenborg, Frank Jakobsen, and the children.



From left to right:
Dr. Jan Vincent Johannessen, our youngest assistant Max, and the Vice Mayor in Kristiansand.





And now
abideth
Faith, Hope
and Charity,
these three;
but the greatest of these is
CHARITY.

1 Corinthians, 13:13





PRIORY OF VICTORIA

Grand Priory of Australasia

The arrival of the second wave of COVID-19 cases in areas of the Victorian Priory, particularly Melbourne and other parts of the regions is disappointing. It is vital we learn the lessons from these spikes, or we risk seeing many more across Australia, putting in jeopardy much of what we all have worked so hard to achieve in the fight against this tenacious virus. Melbourne and environs is at Stage 4 lockdown, whilst the areas outside of the metro area are on a strict Stage 3 Covid restrictions.

It has also meant that other States have closed their borders to Victoria bringing to a halt any opportunity to attend face to face Chapter meetings and Investitures. All Airfares – both interstate and international have become exorbitant and out of reach because of the social distancing requirements on board. With very few exceptions, Australians in the foreseeable future are prohibited to travel outside of our country.



The blame game doesn't help, but the lessons learned from the international situation serve to reinforce the local health messages, the testing and restrictions. The spike in Victoria shows just how easy it is for out-breaks to occur if our communities don't maintain physical distancing and good hygiene, and stay at home when sick. A significant number of the new cases are connected to family gatherings. What does this tell us? It would seem some people don't appreciate that this Virus is highly contagious and dangerous, and easily transmitted between friends and close family members - no matter the age.

The Victorian spike also tells us we need to keep working to get the key messages of practising physical distancing and good hygiene, and downloading the COVID Safe app, to communities where English is not the first language spoken or read. Much effort has gone into ensuring our multicultural communities are kept up to date as the pandemic has progressed. For instance, key information to help individuals, households and businesses has been translated into 63 languages. (...)





(...) On a most positive note, we have seven great Aspirants who are patient-ly awaiting their Investiture-hopefully on Saturday 14th November 2020 which of course is contingent upon what restrictions COVID 19 has in store for us. But as a fall back position the Grand Priory has also noted an alternate date in February 2021. We live in hope! Our Priory Council and committees continue to meet via ZOOM, and to keep close contact with our Aspirants via special Zoom gatherings.

Of course our scheduled 2020 Investiture was planned to be held on Saturday 27th June, but unfortunately like many functions and services in our Order, was postponed. Our Priory was exceptionally pleased to be able to watch a special Feast of John the Baptist Service which the Grand Priory Prelate and the Tasmanian Priory jointly presented at All Saints Parish Church, South Hobart (via video). We found it to be truly exceptional with an inspirational message, and an auxiliary service in lieu of our cancelled Investiture Service.

It was my pleasure to advise that at the last meeting of our Priory Council, members, unanimously agreed to donate a further amount of \$5,000 to further assist with BlazeAid's recovery work in Gippsland. Bush fire recovery is a long and slow process, and to provide follow up support to the agencies such as BlazeAid: help farmers replace fencing and infrastructure burnt by the fires.

Of course, our fund raising is very limited at present – no doubt the Covid 19 has also impacted negatively on every Grand Priory and Priory across the international Order of Saint John Family.

Geelong Commander Dame Ro Thompson CGSJ reported that at the last meeting of the Geelong Commandery, members heard about the challenges to the Christ Church Meals Program under the current Covid 19 restrictions. (...)





(...) It was reported that the Program still provides daily take away breakfasts for 40 homeless people and hot take away evening meals twice a week. Unfortunately social distancing has affected the social contact that normally takes place. Costs have risen, many volunteers are no longer able to assist and some food donations are no longer being received. To provide some relief to the program, the Commandery unanimously agreed to donate \$500 to the Meals Program. Before the onset of Covid 19, the program provided free breakfast seven days a week throughout the year and an evening meal every Monday and Wednesday. Guests come from a range of backgrounds - street kids, homeless people, schoolchildren, people who need company as much as food, the unemployed, stranded travellers and families. Those who come for a meal are welcomed regardless of their circumstances and for some, the meal at Christ Church may be their main meal of the day; for others it is their only meal. The Meals Program is run entirely by

volunteers and the support of local businesses. Approximately 10,000 breakfasts are provided per year, plus the evening meals twice a week. Surplus food is also available for guests to take away. The work of the Ballarat Commandery sees it providing strong support to Ballarat's "Soup Bus" and the "Shower Bus", together with the generous donations of warm outer clothing, footwear and woollen jumpers and socks to help those marginalised and homeless people through the frigid winter months. Toilet bags, complete with toiletries have also been made up and given to those in need. In spite of the Covid 19 limitations and restrictions, our members maintain a very strong presence in supporting charities and those people in need of support.



Wattle Day is a day of celebration in Australia on the first day of September each year, which is the official start of the Australian spring. This is the time when many Acacia species (commonly called wattles in (...)





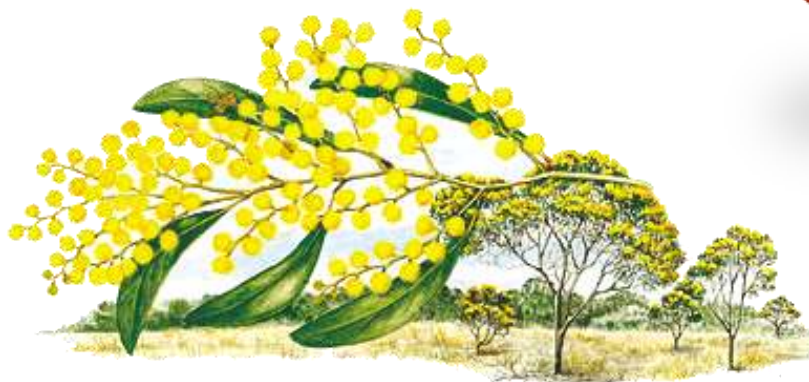
**Ships don't sink
because of the water
around them; ships
sink because of the
water that gets in
them. Don't let what's
happening around
you get inside you
and weigh you down.**



(...) Australia), are in flower. So, many people wear a sprig of the flowers and leaves to celebrate the day. The bright golden fluffy blooms herald the gradual warming and lengthening of our days. A single wattle flower is the emblem of the Order of Australia. When in flower, the Golden Wattle displays the Australian national colours, green and gold. As one species of a large genus of flora growing across Australia, the Golden Wattle is a symbol of unity. Wattle is ideally suited to withstand Australia's droughts, winds and bushfires. The resilience of wattle represents the spirit of the Australian people.

Amidst the pain our world continues to endure, we should find comfort in our faith, and in the stories of hope, resilience and solidarity, and continue to see the value in the positive, encouraging lessons that are emerging for our post-COVID world.

Dame Barbara ABLEY, AM CJSJ FACN
Prior, Priory of Victoria
Grand Priory of Australasia





The frustrating thing is that those who are attacking religion claim they are doing it in the name of tolerance, freedom and openmindedness. Question: isn't the real truth that they are intolerant of religion ? They refuse to tolerate its importance in our lives.

Ronald Reagan





THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A PARADIGM CHANGER ?

Even if it is called Covid-19 because it appeared in Wuhan just before the end of the year, it will be 2020 that will always be associated with the pandemic. There will have been a time before, and a time after. It gives us an idea of how the Plagues of Egypt have become part of the common Jewish history, as well as the Flood in the times of Noah.

It made the world stop and come to a tremendous if not complete lockdown, with an uncountable economic cost. The death toll is nearing 1 million after nine months, which makes it more deadly than HIV/Aids and Malaria – yet these pandemics never produced a similar effect on society.

Covid-19 has indeed outscored all other diseases, and resembles the effect of a war, without material devastations – as if a giant neutron bomb would've been detonated. And it is seen as that: 'we are at war with the virus', politicians courageously say. It is as if we are in the midst of a film, like 'Contagion' (2011). Only, those films last only one and a half hours, and have a nice ending: the virus is beaten, and we'll have a last drink before we go home.

I will not argue here with believers or unbelievers regarding the seriousness of the virus, whether it will go away or not, whether it is 'just a flu' or the starting point of the Apocalypses. Politicians are very keen in playing this



game, and I wouldn't be able to beat them on their ground.

I just would like to make some observations on how the pandemic and the way it is being dealt with, changes our lives and our society. As pope Francis said: the Future will be different. The pandemic is a paradigm shift. How does it affect our lives, and also: how does it affect our Order: what can it mean in this context: 'Pro Fide Pro Utilitate Hominum'? Once again, these are just some mere reflections, food for thought, and no scientific (or otherwise) positioning.

Nationalist and party-political answers to global problems: a missed opportunity (once again)

Since the Second World War, we have invested heavily in international institutions and worldwide collaboration. (...)





REFLECTIONS on THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A PARADIGM CHANGER ?



(...) In Europe, the EU was meant to be the masterpiece of integration leading to a strong political union. Even a few weeks into the pandemic, this unity went to pieces. Countries closed their borders for one another, and in the race to get the vaccines, were eager to try to buy each other off.

Even after several months, the EU didn't succeed in



getting much nearer to a common approach, be it to define the criteria for traveling between countries. Here again the national states decide on their own, pointing fingers at their neighbours 'who don't care enough'.

In our little Belgium, there was great unity shown in the early days, in order to boost our federal government (which was a minority government 'in running affairs')

with a 10 party majority – for six months. Very soon though, political games were back in play, and each of the 10 parties wanted some trophies for their own. Political recuperation is not solely a European problem though. 'It would have taken the previous government years to make a vaccine, and I will have it three weeks from now', some president recently said.

It seems that statesmanship is duly filtered away in the process of getting elected, especially when it is deemed most needed.

The only problem with these nationalist, particular approaches is, that the virus doesn't take into account national boundaries...



Another example of Western centred decision making ?

Although some wise men refer to it as the China virus, it predominantly affects and occupies the western





(...) world, and the new tiger BRIC countries. From an outside view, the world's reaction was effectively western centred: we closed our frontiers and put the world's economy virtually to a standstill, which made some of my African colleagues sigh: compared to our daily crises with malaria, Ebola, famine and floods, the few Covid-cases in the region are not a match, yet we suffer more from the lockdown than from the pandemic. The big amounts of money spent on the pandemic in our own countries have not been balanced anyhow with a desperately needed increase in foreign aid. It most probably will never happen.



The psychological cost of loneliness

Social distancing measures, quarantine periods and the lockdown also meant that people in elderly care residences wouldn't have visits for months, and that people in

hospital died alone. Not only those who died of Covid,



but also most other people who died during lockdown in a hospital setting died alone. A definitive farewell that can never be made up for. People had to let their loved ones embark on their final journey without the possibility of a last hug. One lady in her nineties left the residence and walked five kilometres to die on the tomb of her son. An iconic picture of despair.

The socio-economic cost of the pandemic

States poured in tremendous amounts of money, according to their possibilities, and most probably far beyond their possibilities, to keep society running. It will definitely not be enough to maintain standards from before, (...)





REFLECTIONS on THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A PARADIGM CHANGER ?



(...) but it will for the moment prevent a complete meltdown of the system. Yet industries and shops, restaurants and the whole cultural sector are at risk of collapsing. It will be a slow, very slow process of recovering.

And at the bottom of the ladder sit those who had nothing (left) to lose, but lost anyhow: the weak and the vulnerable, without financial reserves, without a social network to come to their rescue. They are losing the one thing they still had: the hope for a better future for their children. Social services were very often closed or functioning on a limited scale during the lockdown, and it results very difficult to obey the order to stay at home, if you don't have a place to stay, and to wash your hands frequently, if you have neither water nor soap...



And the worst is yet to come: these huge amounts of subsidies and state support will at a given moment have to be paid back. There is no such thing as a free lunch. And the temptation may be great to do so by cutting back on social expenditure. We will have to be very vigilant to prevent this !

Somewhat ironically, we saw that – at least in the first wave of the pandemic - the most vulnerable people,



those living on the street, were not the ones hit most directly by the pandemic. They lost their bare earnings, but didn't get sick: the virus mainly was ravaging the middle classes, coming back from skiing holidays, and their parents and grand parents. The latest wave of infections is rather linked to the popular suburbs of the towns, where people are (...)





REFLECTIONS on THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A PARADIGM CHANGER ?



(...) living more closely together in less favourable conditions.

This also illustrates the big social stratification that is still very present in almost all our societies. The virus may be strong, but apparently is not capable of tearing down the barriers that separate the various social worlds we live in...

A new paradigm ?

But the pandemic and the whole lockdown period were also quite instructive. As from the Old Testament's readings on the Plagues and on the Arch of Noah, we hope we can also get some insights from this present day Covid tragedy.

Maybe the first one has to deal with the reversed order of importances: the desperate lack of social contact made



us rediscover its value. In a world that is fueled by gain maximation and growth, this may be an eye opener. We had to slow down, change our rhythm of life, work from home, and we are still there, so it's feasible ! But more important still, new types of solidarity between neighbours developed, or rather: old forms were revisited. A solidarity of proximity took shape: for old neighbours who couldn't go the bakery's or the butcher's



themselves, or who had to stay in quarantine. Equally, it was no difficulty finding volunteers to man centres to distribute aid to the homeless. We are all in this together, and we are capable of making the difference, with salience and resilience. Do not break the bruised reed, but erect it.

And we are ready to take care of others. In helping, and in keeping up with common sense measures of (...)





REFLECTIONS on THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A PARADIGM CHANGER ?



(...) safety: wearing masks and keeping physical distancing, but bridging this distance by socially connecting to people (the presumably wise professor who coined the term social distancing must have had a black out on that very moment). Bringing hospitality to people. The 'love for our neighbour effectively starts with our neighbour !

Pro Fide Pro Utilitate Hominum

For us as Dames and Knights Hospitaller, it takes us also to the very heart of the Pro Fide Pro Utilitate Hominum. Quoting Pope Francis once again: 'the most important person is the one standing right in front of you, the one who is looking you in the eyes.' If we can lift this person up, and comfort him so that he is no longer staring at the comfort



him so that he is no longer staring at the ground but looking up at the Future, then we have shown him true hospitality – welcoming him in the warmth of the house of the Lord, the House that we all constitute. To quote again in the end my African friend: 'You know, we are used to dealing with pandemics. And we manage to control the outbreaks, because we're all volunteers to look after our neighbours. And we're organised' (even without tracing apps). There is no need for pointing fingers, because nobody is to blame. The virus just is there. But combined with a natural dose of common sense that we all have been gifted with, this should provide enough of a support base that no virus will ever be able to destroy !

Dominic VERHOEVEN, KGSJ, (B)
Secretary to the Chairman of the Ecclesiastical Council
Director Caritas Flanders
Vice-President Caritas International



Historic Hagia Sophia cathedral converted into a mosque



Hagia Sophia or Ayasofya: a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Celebrations outside Hagia Sophia in Istanbul after a top Turkish court revoked the sixth-century World Heritage site's status as a museum.



On Friday July 10th 2020, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan issued an unprecedented decree, converting the historic Hagia Sophia cathedral once again into a mosque.

The city that Constantine had protected for more than a thousand years... has now undergone, in this unfortunate year, the destruction by the Turks. I suffer at the thought that the temple of Saint Sophia, famous all over the world, has been destroyed or desecrated. This is a second death for Homer, a second passing for Plato". These words by the great humanist, Enea Silvio Piccolomini, who became Pope Pius II, were written five centuries ago, after the great Christian city of Constantinople fell to the Ottomans.

Erdogan's decree is a gesture of immense symbolism and historic meaning. "A threat against Hagia Sophia," said the Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill, "is a threat for the whole of Christian civilization".

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo stated: "A country where every day calls to prayer are recited from its 80,000 mosques, where prayers are performed five times a day, will now go and re-conquer one of the biggest symbols of the Orthodox world. Is that so?... Would you have enjoyed it so much if a mosque at the center of Europe were converted into a church?" We urge the Government of Turkey to continue to maintain the Hagia Sophia as a museum, as an exemplar of its commitment to respect the faith traditions and diverse history that contributed to the Republic of Turkey, and to ensure it remains accessible to all". Four popes have visited the former cathedral: St. Paul VI, St. John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis I. Yet, 24 hours after its conversion to a mosque, no major Christian leader or scholar has denounced Turkey's religious assault on the Hagia Sophia.

"An apathy reminiscent of the absence of solidarity when the Byzantine Christian civilization sank with the fall of Constantinople in May 1453", Ivan Rioufol wrote in Le Figaro. "Neither Venice, France, nor England has come to the aid of this resplendent part of their culture. The story repeats itself".

(© Reuters)

CALL FOR CONTENT



WE WANT
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for The International Herald !



Make yourself heard, from all OSJ units.

We **DO** want to know how you are doing over there on our motto ***Pro Fide, the pro Utilitate Hominum !***

Send your contributions in Word format and in pictures soon for the next **04/2020 edition to:** lambrechtnot@skynet.be, **by the end of November** to come at the latest.

MANY THANKS !





THE ST. JOHN FOUNDATION

President: Dame Elsa Coblentz, DJSJMM,

August 31, 2020

Dear Members of the Order of Saint John, SJF Board, Advisors and Friends.

As Grand Prior Emeritus of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, and as we enter onto the 2nd half of 2020, a year that has been nothing but sadness to humanity, I write this letter praying, in the name of St. John, for the wellbeing of all members and families, hoping that the future weeks and months to come, will bring us new hope and a safe return to our regular lives.

Countless businesses and organizations have been severely hurt by this pandemic. Naturally, we are no exception. Our fund raising events are at a standstill. The Poinsettia Xmas Ball as well as the Summer Fiesta has been cancelled. Other than collateral donations, both events are our principal source of income.

The Saint John Foundation is fully committed to our charities and we are working on creative ways of bringing in funds to support those in need in the USA, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Cambodia to name a few.

Our current commitments for 2020 are as follows:

Casa Esperanza in Panorama City, USA

Two scheduled Jules Stein Eye Clinics in Sept and Oct 2020 USA

16 patients will be examined and receive new glasses Pro-Bono

(Approx. \$300.00 dollars) cost (misc.) to the Foundation.

Las Posadas Christmas Food Giveaway, USA

(\$4,000,00 dollars) Donation for the purchase of 100 food gift cards.

A Grant to a local student to the University of Santa Barbara, USA (...)





CHARITY REPORT St. John Foundation
KING VALDEMAR the GREAT & COSTA RICA Commanderies (USA)



Due to Covi-19 currently on hold
(\$2,500.00 dollars) Scholastic Grant for one student

Hogar de Ancianos in Port Limón, Costa Rica
Over 75 women and men (Home for the age)
(\$1,000.00) Donation for the construction of a new security gate.

Hogar Cristiano in El Roble, Costa Rica
Orphanage Home to 87 children
(\$4,000.00 dollars) Donation for the installation of a new State of the Art 16 port "Virtual WI-FI System" enabling children to attend classes while at the Orphanage. This is an urgent matter as most schools are closed.

More recently, we are considering an unsolicited donation to help our Brother of the **SOSJKH** Gary Becks presently working with some of the most unfortunate but, happy people in Cambodia. **(\$ 2,000 to \$4,000 dollars) donation for Food, Water and other incidentals)**

Our projected donations for 2020 ads up to \$15,800.00 dollars.

In the past, whenever things got tough, members of the Foundation stepped up to the plate to "right the wrong". Please be advised that today, we are committed!

"A PANTOM TEA - VIRTUAL EVENT"

In October, in lieu of the live Events, a **special envelop** will be sent to all of our benefactors and friends asking for help with a generous and unselfish contribution to upset the deficit caused by the Covid-19. Please keep the St. John Foundation in mind and open your hearts to help us with our Mission.

Warm regards in St. John and May God Bless you all.

Edmond J. Coblentz,
Grand Prior Em.





REFLECTIONS on PLURALISM

Some time ago, I participated in a discussion concerning pluralism in Catholic institutions in Belgium. In the course of this discussion, different meanings of the word were examined. First the distinction was analysed between 'neutral' pluralism and 'real' pluralism. Those who support 'neutral' pluralism believe that values and norms, especially as



related to religious views or traditions, are personal matters which do not belong in the public sphere. This sphere should be neutral. The idea implies that even domains such as healthcare and education should be completely neutral as

well. Healthcare professionals should in other words abstract from their personal views and values for the benefit of the patient. In this perspective, no healthcare or educational institution would be allowed to implement any selectivity with regard to participants in its management, services, professionals, students or patients. When, in a society, the hold of religious groups on institutions compromises the achievement of the ideal of neutrality, a policy of dismantling that hold must be pursued. Usually, a deeply rooted aversion to any religious influence in society is behind this strategy – at least that's how things are in Belgium. Another reason for pursuing this policy is the expectation that in this way cohesion in society will be strengthened or, at least, that the impact of religious or ideological oppositions will be reduced.



'Real' pluralism, on the contrary, supposedly implies the view that values and norms are not and cannot be merely personal matters, but inevitably (...)





(...) play an important role in the public and political sphere. What is called 'neutrality' is therefore illusory. Furthermore, according to the proponents of real pluralism it is a good thing that values and norms play a role especially in fields such as healthcare or education, where highly sensitive matters that concern the very essence of human life (and death) are at stake. Healthcare practice cannot be reduced to neutral technical operations, but inevitably and often unconsciously is based on specific values or norms determining choices in the sort or the amount of care given to (certain kinds of) patients.



A second important distinction made in the discussion was that between 'external' and 'internal' pluralism. In

Belgium, religiously affiliated healthcare institutions attract a large group of patients precisely because of the combination of value orientation and professionalism.



The same for catholic schools. Leaders of these institutions often plead for real pluralism: they desire to uphold the specificity of their hospitals or schools. However, the continuing success of these catholic institutions, in combination with a strong secularization of society, has led to a situation in which a majority of care providers and patients feel little or no affinity with the religious origins and the related ethical positions that have for so long been the basis of Catholic healthcare institutions and practice. Hence, the following paradox arises: patients continue to choose en masse Catholic institutions (...)





(...) hoping to find quality care, while that success itself makes it increasingly unlikely that in these institutions enough professionals operate from the viewpoint of the religious vocation that led to their existence (and success).



The main answer to this confusing situation proposed in the discussion mentioned was a combination of real and internal pluralism. The central element of internal pluralism is the choice of an 'open dialogue' *within* religiously affiliated institutions between various value orientations. On the assumption that they all recognise the centrality of human dignity, managers and professionals with diverse value systems should be able to participate in the overall value orientation within the institution. Open dialogue should even lead to the strengthening of the identity of the different parties. At the same time, a critical attitude

towards the official (Roman) Catholic ethical doctrine is advocated, so as to promote more openness. Proponents of internal pluralism cherish the hope that the different views will not be watered down during the process of consensus building, for instance while drawing up the institution's mission statement (or its revision) or when (new) ethical guidelines are being developed.



In the light of the real societal situation (in Belgium) the expectations with regard to internal pluralism seemed to me over-optimistic. When pluralism is conceived in this way the question arises whether this will not de facto (...)





(...) result in abandoning the specific, traditional value orientation, thereby producing instead something akin to neutral pluralism. Internal pluralism also implies the willingness to cope with the presence of individuals who may have very different or even opposed views (utilitarian, Kantian, traditional religious views of different kinds). In our post-modern juncture, many individuals have largely become estranged from any form of religion, so the plea for internal pluralism may well veil a form of 'post-modern tolerance' (i.e., a form of tolerance understood as 'anything goes'; or 'the wish of the patient prevails').



As far as open dialogue is concerned, the question is obvious: how 'open' can that dialogue possibly be? Are all conclusions acceptable, including complete abandonment of religiously oriented values? What will be the role of, say, the ethics documents of the umbrella

organization of Catholic healthcare institutions in the dialogue? How will the hitherto privileged position of the christian pastoral service be upheld within the institution? Why is it that a critical attitude is deemed necessary especially with regard to Catholic tradition and to ecclesiastical documents on ethics? Should it not rather be the case that one adopts an a priori positive attitude and examines what the underlying reasons for the official religious view might be, instead of approaching it with a priori suspicion. In any case, if one wishes to maintain the Christian character of a healthcare institution, it seems to me there can only be openness within certain limits (implying a critical attitude for example vis-à-vis a purely utilitarian point of view). All these problems will be unsurmountable unless the value dialogue is undertaken under the strong guidance of a religiously committed institutional leadership. Today, this leadership is either absent, or, if it is present, it is often a *proiri* considered as dogmatic.(...)





(...) Anyone who has already been engaged in a dialogue concerning serious ethical problems with people who hold different beliefs or adhere to divergent value orientations knows how difficult it is to find real consensus. The endless differences of opinion within the Belgian Advisory Committee on Bioethics are a perfect example of this. It is an illusion to think that ethical viewpoints – even when defended by well-meaning discussion partners – can be brought to a consensus in which all participants can recognize themselves. Reconciling fundamental ethical differences is something quite different from reconciling superficial opinions or applying principles or rules in a discussion.



Adopting a policy of open dialogue threatens to create false and exaggerated expectations. Real dialogue, on the contrary, presupposes the sharing of certain fundamental presuppositions and can therefore operate only within certain boundaries. The purpose here should not so much be the strengthening of divergent identities, but the development of that kind of identity that can thrive within a Christian healthcare or educational

institution. Since Christian ethical values strongly endorse human dignity, it should be noted that also non-believers can very much feel at home in a Christian institution. On the other hand, common reference to 'human dignity' will not be sufficient at all. The real question is what is to be understood by human dignity. What honouring human dignity means for example with respect to unborn life, to the sanctity of the human body of potential donors of organs (not simply spare parts), to demented patients, to the dead? It is not the concept of dignity itself that is going to make the right choices for us. Even utilitarians sometimes accept the notion of human dignity.

All in all it seemed (and seems) to me that it is vain to plead for real pluralism and at the same time for internal pluralism. In Belgium a dispute about euthanasia (as permissible within catholic institutions themselves) erupted (already in 2017) between the general management of the psychiatric hospitals of the Brothers of Charity and their own religious authorities (see <https://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/cdf-belgian-bros.-of-charity-hospitals-must-drop-catholic-identity-over-eut>). The policy of internal pluralism led de facto to the adoption of an ethical viewpoint in which any reference to specific religious insights, categories or doctrine had simply disappeared.



Herman DE DIJN, CGSJ
Prof. Em., Philosophy dept.,
Catholic University of Leuven (B).





Prioratus Flandriæ: from the old days



Now that active life has largely come to a standstill and there is little new to tell, we would like to look back at an event of almost 6 years ago.

Luc Van Eeckhoudt, CJSJ, now Prior of Prioratus Flandriæ (Belgium), received on December 13, 2014 the title of 'Commander in the Order of the Holy Pope Silvester' from the hands of the then Papal Nuncio for Belgium and Luxembourg (2009-2016), Monsignor Giacinto Berloco, Archbishop of Fidenæ, Italy.

This title was bestowed by Pope Franciscus for his commitment to his dedication to the small and poor neighbor and as a servant of the 'Catholic cause'.

Earlier that day, the Apostolic Ambassador of the Holy See had been welcomed by the Linter town council. The day before, the Nuncio performed Queen Fabiola's funeral mass in Brussels. At the end of the Eucharist in St. Peter's Church of Orsmal, the Latin papal bull (dated 21 July 2014) was read and handed over to Luc Van Eeckhoudt. After a word of thanks to the papal nuncio and the pope, his thoughts turned to his mother. He dismissed his role in the construction of a village in India (early 1970s), but he was full of praise for the Orsmal volunteers under the leadership of deacon Guy Goris.



Chev. Erwin VANDECAUTER, KSJ,
Prioratus Flandriæ Priory





**Blessed is the one who
perseveres under trial
because, having stood the
test, that person will receive
the crown of life that the
Lord has promised to those
who love Him.**

James 1:12



REFLECTIONS on the MIRACULOUS POWER of PATIENCE

There is a perfect timing within everything. Within every thought, feeling and action there is a divine alignment to the cycles of the seasons, planets, stars, and galaxies. One cannot hurry the ripening process of a fruit, force a baby to develop faster, nor increase the planet's momentum around our Sun. The planet is moving through space around the Sun at the perfect speed of 67,000 mph. We wouldn't want it to move faster or slower since it would throw everything off balance. We are part of a vast Universe that is carefully orchestrated with the most Divine Perfection. Once we are tuned into this perfection that is already here now, our lives emulate a divine synchronicity everywhere we are.

"The key to everything is patience. You get the chicken by hatching the egg, not by smashing it." ~ Arnold H. Glasgow

The tomato falls naturally from the vine when it is ripe, and just like you, it naturally knows when to hold on and when to let go. When you learn to live each moment relaxed in your body, you naturally live in divine harmony with the Universe. Your entire energy field opens up and you become receptive to whatever the Universe brings your way. Through deep relaxation there is a sense of acceptance, and a deep feeling of being in alignment with everything. Relaxation is simply practicing, "Being With What Is" whether it's your innermost thoughts about you, or your ideas about the outer world. Through relaxing, you naturally become patient and are in tune with the cosmic timing behind everything and can truly see that the world is perfect just the way it is.



"He that can have Patience, can have what he will" ~Benjamin Franklin

So where does impatience come from? It is an ego based energy that stems from not choosing to be at peace with what is. It's an old habit brought on by not loving yourself, your body, your friends, family, and your experience of this world just the way it is. You tend to push or rush through an experience when love is not present. Rushing is (...)





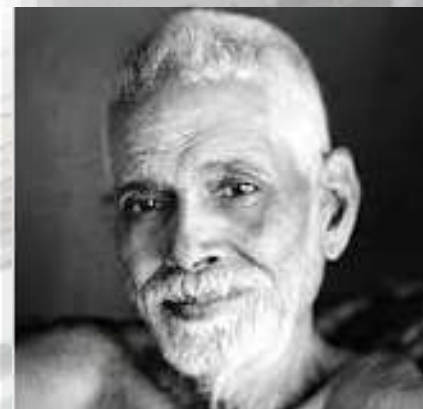
(...) truly an act of violence to your soul. It's all about the ego trying to make the river flow faster because it thinks once it gets through this experience THEN the goodies will arrive and it will finally be happy, rich, fulfilled and at peace. The big joke is that the ego never arrives at peace because it's a wanting machine! As you may have already noticed, your ego wants everything that it wants right now! It is not willing to wait another day. It acts like a spoiled child yelling for Mother to fetch its favorite chocolate. It wants exactly WHAT it wants WHEN it wants it, and not a moment later. It doesn't care whether the season is right, it just NEEDS to be satisfied now or else!

"Misery does not exist in reality but only in mere imagination." ~ Ramana Maharshi

By rushing to get things done, your body becomes contracted, your mind narrows and your being misses this divine moment. With all this constriction you block the flow of your living your true life, causing things to manifest with massive delay and perhaps never come to fruition. The ego is impatient simply because it feels separate from this divine ocean of existence. This suffering is caused by years of believing in the Great Illusion, that you are not connected to the Infinite Source of love, intelligence, and power. The ego is obsessed with its own private agenda. It has its own "separate" desires, time schedule, and has completely forgotten about merging with God and experiencing bliss. Whenever your ego is in charge, you will rush through each life experience and actually miss the greater mission of your life, which is to celebrate your life, and ridiculously enjoy this amazing divine existence.

"Patience is the companion of wisdom." ~ Saint Augustine

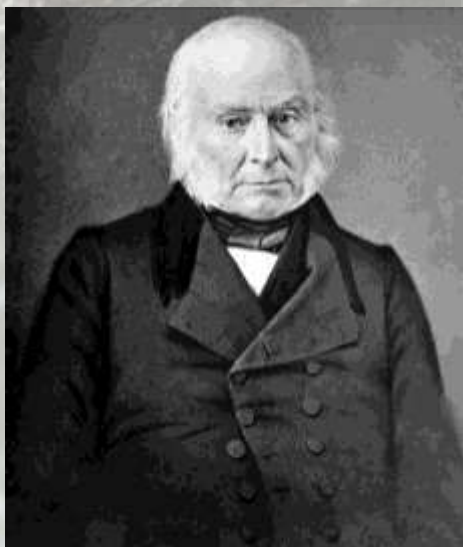
By practicing relaxing into each experience of your life, you will magically bring your desires more effortlessly to you. Patience is a major aspect in the process of consciously manifesting what you desire. With infinite patience, you can send any request into the Universe and it will easily manifest! It is important to let go of attachment to your future outcome and patiently allow the Universe to answer your request. The most Divine timing is waiting for you. The question is can you relax enough to wait for it ?
(...)





(...) ***"Hurry up...and wait."*** ~John Oswald

One of the best ways to master patience is learning how to live in society in a relaxed, open, and receptive body. This means living IN the world, yet not OF the world. Being connected to the big rat race, yet not rushing to get ahead of the other rats. Whenever you are late for an event, instead of rushing and freaking out about what might happen, enjoy the excitement of the journey there. Know that the more you rush, the more impatient energy you are creating. Whenever you "have to" wait for someone, instead of being impatient choose to see that you "get to" wait. What if every time you had to wait, it was actually the Universe offering you this amazing gift to take a mini-vacation and enjoy yourself deeply ! Waiting allows you to deeply sink into a vast spaciousness where you can taste the beauty of your infinite soul. Waiting is really just a form of meditation, Doing nothing means your mind and heart are completely in the now, and not focused on the past or future, and receiving the divine blessings of existence. Be patient and all the goodies you desire will spring forth into existence.



"Patience and perseverance have a magical effect before which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish." ~ John Quincy Adams

I sincerely hope that these insights have been an inspiration for you during these challenging times in which some of us might be living a more isolated life. Contemplation and meditation on these truth's can also be healing. Let us pray for a world in which living a miraculous life becomes the norm. I also pray for all of you to maintain and cherish patience!



Inez Vermeulen, DSJ,
Intendant
Loon Commandery,
Low Countries (B)





PERSONALIA

International obituary:

Several members in different Pories unfortunately passed away from this life. Our deepest gratitude remains for their achievements and fraternity within and beyond the Order. May they all rest in the peace of our Lord; their name liveth for evermore !

Elections and Nominations, Promotions

No specific information reached us concerning nominatios and promotions.

EVENTS POSTPONED – PETIT CONSEIL by VIDEOCONFERENCE

Depending on national and local decrees and/or based on common sense in these hazardous times, almost all of the Order's national and regional activities and gatherings are postponed *sine die*, some of these consecutive times. **However:** this edition will show out that while uncountable activities are postponed within the Order and, while religious gatherings (...) are deviated to celebrations online and temporarily more experien-ced in the personal sphere, **charity** works are **continuing**. This is a situation nobody asked or wished for, but meanwhile an unique opportunity to give way to creativity and out-of-the-box thinking.

These harsh times turn out to be a solid catalyst for **personal deepening** and for making this clear distinction between the essential and the trivialities.

It allows to appreciate even better this extra dimension of **Brotherhood** and **Sisterhood** within the Order, even when only in contact by digital means, vastly transcending more superfluous contacts in other organizations.

Unusual times lead to **unusual** situations and **solutions**: the **Petit Conseil** will, for the first time ever, have a meeting by **videoconference** at the end of October, because Malta most unfortunately - for the time being - is declared to be a 'red zone' by some countries during the current pandemic. We will be virtually crossing the borders from San Francisco (USA) to South Victoria (AU) and everywhere in between eastbound.

DISCLAIMER

Please note that the information in this magazine, including all articles, does not make any claims. Any (...)





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LITTLE WORD FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Arms, I hope you'll enjoy this 3/2020 edition, despite of all what is happening on this globe. Of course I fully understand that a lack of activities in our dear Order worldwide makes the delivery of content for this International Herald somewhat harder. But **thanks to your ingenuity and creativity, we made it**. Some units reported more on the spiritual domain by lack of fundraising opportunities for charity actions, or highlight a charity project more generally for the number of years this unit has been supporting.

This time no fellow member is put in the 'super trooper' spotlight in the series "Remarkable Members in the footlight", started in the previous Herald. Do take that stand in the next International Herald !

Many thanks to all members contributing to this edition, and for all the good works *pro Fide pro utilitate Hominum* their reports are reflecting. Keep up this splendid action, and **do NOT forget to send me** content in Word and useable pictures in Jpeg or comparable **by the end of November** to come, at the latest ☺ !

Gently take care of each other and of your fellow man within and beyond the Order, as you always did ! We pray for the victims of Covid-19 and their beloved, and for the regions affected by the devastating fires raging in the USA. I wish you all the very best.

Yours most sincerely in X° and St-John.

Jan Lambrecht, OSJ,
Editor

