History of the Order of Saint Lazarus

The Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem is a worldwide ecumenical organisation of Christian men and women following the noble hospitaller tradition of chivalry founded in the Holy Land during the Crusades around the year 1098. The heraldic motto ‘Atavis et Armis’ – valour in the spirit of our forefathers – encompasses its essential and enduring values of courage and tradition.

With the exception of the Teutonic Order, the Order of St Lazarus is the smallest of the orders surviving from crusader times. Its membership numbers several thousand, organised into national and regional jurisdictions known as Grand Priories, Priories, Commanderies and Delegations reaching across the world. As a non-governmental organisation it has been officially recognised by several countries.

The Crusaders fought to defend Christianity; members of the Order nowadays live out this ideal in spiritual solidarity by the witness of their Christian lives and by the promotion of ecumenism. The original Roman Catholic foundation has in recent centuries expanded to include lay and clerical members from the orthodox, Anglican and reformed traditions. Women have been admitted as members of the Order since at least 1287, contributing both spiritually and practically.

The hospital of St Lazarus in Jerusalem is known to have comprised a distinctive religious community of monastic brothers and knights, many of whom were obliged to leave other orders because they had contracted leprosy. In caring for one another while supporting the crusades their activities were both military and hospitaller. The relief of leprosy remains a focus of the Order’s humanitarian activities today through the maintenance of leprosaria and dispensaries. It also provides primary healthcare by sending medical supplies to various missions in Africa, Asia and the Pacific islands. A recent thrust of the American Grand Priory has been the support of organ donation, led by its Hospitaller, the Deputy Surgeon General of the USA. The Order is also involved in care of the elderly, disabled, and terminally ill, and in several countries it operates volunteer ambulance services. Among the more noteworthy projects undertaken by the Order in recent decades has been the weekly transport from Germany of basic food and medical supplies to Russia, Poland, the Czech and Slovak Republics, Hungary and Croatia, in conjunction with the European Community and the Red Cross.

In common with other Orders of chivalry founded during the Crusades, such as the Hospitaller Knights of St John and the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, the Order of St Lazarus still aims to defend Christianity while expecting its members to practice the Christian tenets of protecting the weak, helping the sick, and promoting justice. A solemn undertaking to maintain this code of conduct and abide by the Constitution is made before God and the assembled congregation on formal admission to the Order.

There are two categories of membership in the Order: Justice, for individuals able to submit nobiliary proofs, and Grace for those unable to do so. Christians may be
admitted or promoted to the following grades: Brother or Sister, Serving Brother or Sister, Knight or Dame, Knight or Dame Commander, Knight or Dame Grand Cross. As a mark of the Grand Master’s special esteem, the Order may also award a Grand Collar to a head of state and very occasionally to its high dignitaries. The Order also confers decorations of merit to members and non-members who have made a special contribution, by their service, to its humanitarian work.

The international medical symbol of the green cross is derived from the St Lazarus tradition. The order’s badge is a green Maltese cross edged in gold, variants of which are worn by all members according to rank. The decoration of merit is a green cross flory. When worn, the badge normally depends from a green ribbon. In the English-speaking jurisdictions of the Order members use postnominal letters to indicate their rank on internal correspondence (BLJ, SBLJ, KLJ, KCLJ, GCLJ), with variations for lady members and clergy. Those of knightly rank and above are addressed as ‘Chevalier’ or ‘Dame’.

The History of the Order

The Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem, like the other orders born in the Holy Land during the Crusades, had an honourable but turbulent beginning. It went on to make a major contribution to the extermination of leprosy in Europe during the middle ages, and had a brief naval period during the seventeenth century when it served with distinction attacking pirates in the Mediterranean, then membership becoming an honorific distinction bestowed by the King of France.

Gerard de Martigues, a Provençal, later known as the ‘Blessed Gerard,’ founded the Order of St John having been director of the Hospital of Notre Dame in Jerusalem sometime before the Holy City fell to the Crusaders in 1099. At first, Gerard directed the Hospital under the authority of the Abbot of St Mary. Later he and his companions left and created a special congregation, adopted a rule, took vows and were accredited by the Popes. The first bull in their favour is dated 15 February 1113 and refers to ‘Gerard, Founder and Governor of the Hospital at Jerusalem and his Legitimate Successors’.

Godfrey de Bouillon, uncrowned ‘king’ of Jerusalem was so impressed with the dedication of Gerard and his companions towards the sick and the wounded that he supported and gave them funds and facilities. Some believe that the Order of St Lazarus took on a separate identity in 1120 when Boyand Roger, Rector of the Hospital of Jerusalem was elected Master of the Hospitallers of St Lazarus. Those suffering from the ‘living death’ of leprosy regarded Lazarus of Bethany (John 11:1-44) or Lazarus the beggar (Luke 16:19-31) as their patron saint and usually dedicated their hospices in this name. The first written reference we have to St Lazarus as a ‘knightly’ order is a letter written by Henry II, King of England and Duke of Normandy, dated 1159, in which he makes a large donation to it, and refers to the ‘Knights and Brethren of Saint Lazarus’. However the "Livre au Roi" the legal code of the Latin Kings which was drawn up during the period 1198-1205 stated that a
knight with leprosy should join the convent of St. Lazarus, so it was obvious that a monastic "order" was already in being by that time.

Five major orders were formed in the Holy Land in the late eleventh to early twelfth centuries: the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, Knights Templar, Knights Hospitaler (St John), Knights of the Hospital of St Mary of Jerusalem (Teutonic Knights) and Knights of St Lazarus. Templar knights who contracted leprosy were sent to the care of the Order of St Lazarus. These knights trained the brethren of St Lazarus in the military arts and were responsible for transforming the Order into a military one. William, Archbishop of Tyre, as well as other historians of the period, appeared unaware of the difference between the Orders of Saint Lazarus and Saint John, referring to them in their accounts simply as ‘Hospitallers’. By 1256 the Order of St Lazarus had grown considerably and its existence was recognized by Pope Alexander IV under the Rule of St Augustine. It acquired a church, a convent and a mill in Jerusalem and property near the Mount of Olives. It built a chapel at Tiberias and two hospitals for pilgrims in Armenia. It acquired more establishments at Nablus, Ascalon and Cæsarea.

In 1187 Saladin invaded and re-conquered the Holy Land. The Order lost its main hospital and convent, and a contingent of Lazarite knights perished in the loss of Jerusalem. In 1191 Richard Cœur de lion defeated Saladin at Azuf and recaptured Jaffa. He and Saladin made a treaty by which the sea coast from Tyre to Jaffa remained in the possession of the Crusaders, and Christians were allowed full liberty to visit the Holy Sepulchre. The Order relocated to Acre, built a hospital, convent and church, and carried on with its hospitaller functions. It was given sovereign rights over a section of Montmuset, the northern part of the city, taking over the defence of the most northery section of the city walls. Pope Urban IV confirmed these privileges in 1264. Acre fell to the Sultan of Cairo's greatly superior Mameluke forces in 1291 after a prolonged siege. All the knights of St. Lazarus were killed in the defence of the city, as were most of the Templars and Hospitallers of St. John. So also died Christian hopes in the East.

The green cross of St Lazarus disappeared from the Holy Land after two hundred years. It moved to Cyprus, then Sicily, then returned to its French headquarters at Boigny near Orléans. The property at Boigny had been given to it by King Louis VII in 1154 and was erected as a barony in 1288. Many knights who had become used to the Mediterranean climate decided not to return to France and went no further than Sicily, where they established themselves on properties given to them by the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick von Hohenstaufen. Their headquarters was in Capua, on the Italian mainland. These expatriates eventually became a completely separate branch of the Order under papal jurisdiction when in 1489 Pope Innocent VIII issued a bull giving the properties of the Orders of St Lazarus and of the Holy Sepulchre to the Order of St John, in effect dissolving the two. The branch of St Lazarus at Boigny refused to recognize the validity of the bull.
By the early sixteenth century the Order was moribund. Leprosy had been virtually eliminated in Europe. The Crusades were over and in papal eyes there was very little to justify the continued existence of St Lazarus. Though the knights of St Lazarus at Boigny continued to function as an order, as far as the Pope was concerned, the Order in France had ceased to exist. The properties of the Sicilian branch had been transferred by the Pope to the Savoyan Order of St Maurice, which became the Order of Saints Maurice and Lazarus. Originally created as a military order whose mission was to protect the Papal States’ shoreline from the Barbary pirates, it soon became nothing more than a distinction of the House of Savoy and after the unification of Italy, a state order in the gift of the Crown of Italy. Following the Second World War, from his exile in Portugal, King Umberto exercised his right of *fons honorum* to proffer these Savoyan orders to many of his deserving friends. His son, Prince Victor Emanuel, continues to award the Order of St Maurice and St Lazarus.

On 25 July 1593, King Henry of Navarre abjured the Protestant faith in order to accede to the French throne as Henri IV. In 1608, two years before his assassination, he created with the blessing of Pope Paul V the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and named Philibert, Marquis de Nerestang, Grand Master of St Lazarus, as Grand Master of the new order. He in effect amalgamated the two orders, which then became known as the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St Lazarus. The insignia of the new order was an eight-pointed Maltese cross with *fleur-de-lys* in the angles and quartered in the colours of both orders (purple and green), bearing on the obverse a representation of Our Lady and on the reverse of St Lazarus.

There is a good deal of controversy as to the King’s reasons for founding this new order and then joining it to St Lazarus. Some historians see it as a move to prove to the Pope that he was now a good Catholic fulfilling the vows he took to create institutions to glorify the Church and the Faith when he abjured Protestantism. Others hold that the King was being clever and his only desire was to prevent the considerable properties of a moribund St Lazarus from falling into the hands of the Hospitallers of St John and, in effect to revive St Lazarus (which Pope Innocent VIII had tried to dissolve in 1489). Since over the years he had made several efforts to have the Pope annul the 1489 bull, it is reasonable to assume that the truth lies somewhere in between. Historians of the Order claim that, although they owed allegiance to a common Grand Master, neither order lost its sovereign identity.

In theory the Order was military, but with the exception of a brief period in the seventeenth century when it manned ten naval frigates it played no military role after it left the Holy Land. It was composed of diplomats, high-level civil servants and members of the titled nobility and was limited to 100 knights. The King was the sovereign head and protector and chose the Grand Master. The Grand Master, however, was only recognized by the Pope as Grand Master of the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and not of St Lazarus. During the reign of Louis XVI the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel – not the combined order – was awarded to the top three students of the Royal Military School. The orders were separate though they shared the same Grand Master. Although the Order enjoyed a unique relationship with the French Royal House and was officially under the protection of the King of France, it was never a Royal Order. The King’s titles as Sovereign, Founder and Protector
meant that he was Sovereign and Founder of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Protector of St Lazarus.

During the French Revolution, a decree of 30 July 1791 suppressed all royal and knightly orders. Another decree the following year confiscated all the Order’s properties (the Château de Boigny, the Military Academy, the commanderies and hospitals). Louis, Count of Provence, Grand Master of the Order, who later became Louis XVIII, continued to function in exile and awarded the Order, though sparingly. Supporters point out that while in exile in the Latvian province of Mittau he awarded the Order to Tsars Paul I and Alexander I of Russia, Grand Duke Constantine of Russia, Count Rostopchine and General de Fersen. They maintain that he even created an hereditary commandery in Sweden for Chev Olof Nilson which is still in existence. When the Count of Provence returned to France from exile to reign as Louis XVIII, he gave up the magistracy of the Order and became Protector, as had his predecessors, but appointed no Grand Master.

Shortly after Louis acceded to the throne in 1814, Napoleon escaped from Elba and returned to France, forcing the King to leave Paris again to seek refuge in Ghent. During this period and after he returned to France, circumstances did not permit the King to summon a Chapter General to elect a Grand Master. The Order was governed by a Lieutenant-General, the Duc de Châtre, assisted by M. Silvestre, the Herald, M. Dacier, the historiographer, and Father Picot, a chaplain from Versailles.

King Louis XVIII, the Protector, and the Duc de Châtre both died in 1824. King Charles X succeeded his brother and took the title of Protector, and left the Order to be governed by a Council of Officers, headed by the Marquis d’Autichamps, and the Council of (hereditary) Commanders. Recruitment slowly resumed and promotions were made. In 1830 Charles X abdicated, and with his de jure successor, the young Duc de Bordeaux, who reigned from 2 to 7 August 1830 as Henri V, went into exile. King Henri V was the last de jure royal Protector of the Order. The Order did not enjoy the protection of the new King and was not listed thereafter in the royal Almanac. From 1830 the Order of St Lazarus was governed by a Council of Officers, who felt it was necessary for the Order to have a Protector. The Melkite Greek Catholic Patriarch Maximos III Malzoum had for years been acquainted with the Order of St Lazarus. In 1821-23, whilst Archbishop of Myra, he spent three years living in France, where, with the support of King Louis XVIII, he founded the church of Our Lady of Myra. While living in Paris he brought the sufferings of Eastern Catholics to the attention of Louis XVIII and other members of the Order of St Lazarus.

Now Patriarch since 1833, Maximos III came to France again in 1841, after visiting Pope Gregory XVI in Rome. The Knights of St Lazarus made contact with the Patriarch during his second sojourn in Paris and asked him to be the Spiritual Protector of the Order. He accepted for himself and for his successors. The knights and hospitallers of the Order of St Lazarus, now confident that their traditions would be maintained, resumed their charitable work especially for the benefit of Christians in the East. Under the spiritual authority of the Patriarch, there was cautious recruitment to the Order, so that by 1850 it numbered some twenty knights. Among
the Eastern prelates appointed to the Order were, notably, the Melkite Greek Catholic Archbishops Clement of Beirut (who became Patriarch in 1856), Mgr Agapi Dumani (appointed in 1864) and Mgr Antoine Sabbagh (appointed in 1871). In the West, recruitment of new members was restricted by the Patriarch’s position vis-à-vis the Ottoman Empire. Knights appointed up to the end of the nineteenth century included, in 1853, Admiral Alphonse Hamelin, who commanded the Black Sea squadron during the Crimean War, became Minister for the Navy and was Grand Chancellor of the Légion d’Honneur when he died in 1860. In the same year, Admiral Louis Edouard Bouët Willaumez, who became an Imperial Senator and died in 1871. In 1863, Comte Louis François du Mesnil de Maricourt, who became French Consul at Larnaca in Cyprus and died in 1865 while ministering to cholera victims; Comte Paul de Poudex, who died in 1894; the Abbé Jean Tanski, who came to France after taking part in the Polish uprising, lived in Paris (where he was attached to the parish of Sainte-Marie-des-Batignolles), later became Almoner of the Order, contributed to its maintenance and died in 1913. In 1866, Comte Jules Marie d’Anselme de Puisaye, a Zouave in the papal armies; the Vicomte de Boisbaudry in 1875; Baron Yves de Constancin in 1896, who was later to become commander of the Hospitaller Nobles of St Lazarus, a Knight of the Order of Isabella the Catholic and of St Anne of Russia. A man of letters, he founded the Association of Parliamentary Journalists and was the director of the Revue Internationale, dying in 1914. In 1880, Comte Jules Marie d’Anselme de Puisaye, living at the time in Tunisia and desirous of involving the Order in a charitable and hospitaller project, founded in Tunis the Association de la Croix Verte, a society for aid to the injured and sick.

In 1902, the Melkite Greek Catholic Archbishop of Saint-Jean-d’Acre, Mgr Cyrille Ghea, a member of the Order, became Patriarch Cyril VIII. Under his aegis, new members joined the Order, among them Mgr Grégoire Haggear, his successor as Melkite Archbishop of Saint-Jean-d’Acre, Paul Watrin, Paul Beugnot, Charles Otzenberger, Jean-Paul Eyscher, Alexandre Gallery de la Tremblaye, Jean Georges de Guillet de Pardes de Fleurelles.

In 1910, the Patriarch, on Canon Tanski’s advice, decided to re-establish the Order’s Chancery in France, its historic seat. A Council of the Order was appointed: Paul Watrin, an advocate at the Appeal Court in Paris, was appointed Chancellor; Paul Beugnot as the Juge d’Armes and Canon Tanski as Chaplain. After this reorganisation Patriarch Cyril VIII wrote a long letter, dated 3 June 1911 from Damascus, to the Chancellor, in which he discussed the role of the Eastern Church in which the Order was interested, and concluded: ‘Finally, as a pledge of our recognition and affection, we grant our blessing to all the Order.’

There is some confusion about the name the Order gave itself at that time. Guy Coutant de Saisseval, late Grand Chancellor of the Paris Obedience, stated that it was the ‘Nobiliary Association of the Knights of St Lazarus of Jerusalem’. The late Paul Bertrand de La Grassière, the Order’s modern historian, on the other hand, wrote in 1932, that it never took on that title but was called ‘Order of Noble Knights of St Lazarus of Jerusalem and our Lady of Mercy.’
After the First World War erupted in 1914, new upheavals battered the institution of St Lazarus. In the Near East, the Turkish Government massacred Christians, imprisoned bishops and sentenced Patriarch Cyril VIII to death because of his opposition to the Ottoman government. He evaded execution by escaping to Egypt, where he died at Ramleh on 11 January 1916.

When the Ottoman Empire was defeated, Demetrios I Cadi was elected Patriarch on 29 March 1919, and became the new Spiritual Protector of the Order of St Lazarus. Under his protectorate, recruitment resumed, Canon Pierracini became Chaplain of the Order and the Marquis de l’Eglise de Férier de Félix became Juge d’Armes. The Patriarch died on 25 October 1925, and Cyril IX Mogabgab was elected to succeed him on 8 December 1925. He was a great Francophile and a Commander of the Légion d’Honneur. The Order developed under his spiritual protection, and on 17 March 1926, the Patriarch wrote a lengthy letter from Beirut to the members of the Order, in which he said: ‘The work of the recruitment of priests and their support in poverty-stricken villages... accomplished by my beloved hospitaller sons of St Lazarus of Jerusalem, is a work of essentially missionary character and worthy of their traditions. God will assuredly reward them a hundredfold, for they shall have the merit of saving thousands of souls for God. In especially commending all these endeavours to you, I send to you and to all your confrères in the Order my paternal benediction.’

On 10 June 1926, Mgr Attié, the Melkite Patriarch’s archimandrite and rector of the Church of St-Julian-le-Pauvre in Paris, was installed as Chaplain of the Order. Recruitment intensified over the next two years. The year 1927 saw the official constitution under French law of the Association Française des Hospitaliers de Saint-Lazare, which then took the name of Association Française des Chevaliers de Saint-Lazare and which is now the Hospitaliers de Saint-Lazare de Jérusalem. The Marquis de l’Eglise de Férier de Félix became its president. In 1929 the Order continued its onward progress. More than fifty people, French and foreign, joined its ranks, among whom were Cardinal Liénart, Bishop of Lille, Cardinal Hayes, Archbishop of New York; Bishop Dubowski of Lutsk, General de Castelnau, Admiral Lacaze, General Weygand, Don Francisco de Borbón y de Borbón, the Duc de Clermont-Tonnerre, the Marquis de Migré, the Marquis de Bellevue and Colonel Raoul Hospital. This period also saw increased recruitment outside France, notably in Spain and Poland. A new edition of the Order’s Rules and Statutes was also published in 1929, adapting its ancient customs to modern times on the basis of the Fundamental Statute of the Knights and Hospitallers which had been drawn up at the time of the resumption of the links with the Melkite Patriarchate in 1841. Articles on the Hospitallers of St Lazarus were being published in various journals and conferences were held on the subject.

The expansion of the Order in Europe was so successful that it decided to explore the possibilities in the New World. Here again the Order thrived; among those received into the rank of Ecclesiastical Grand Cross were no less than four American Cardinals and a Bishop. A former Chief Justice of New York’s Supreme Court was also awarded its Grand Cross, as were the Presidents of the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Brazil, who officially recognized the Order.
In 1930 officers of the Order asked Don Francisco de Borbón y de la Torre, Duke of Seville, Grand Bailiff of the Order for Spain, to assume the governance of the Order, with the title of Lieutenant-General of the Grand Magistracy. The Duke, a descendant of the Kings of Spain and France, who distinguished himself on the field of battle during the Spanish Civil War and was known as the ‘Hero of Malaga,’ accepted the office. He worked for the revitalization of the Order by rallying the knights to its traditional double mission: aid to lepers and collaboration in the defence of the Christian faith. By a unanimous vote in 1935 he was elected as 44th Grand Master, re-establishing the office which had been vacant since 1814.

After the Second World War the Order’s expansion reached its zenith. Membership grew as did its charitable missions. The Duke of Seville melded some of the Order’s ancient traditions with modern reforms with evident success. The Order, wishing to revert to its original mission, became actively involved in the care of lepers in Spain. In 1952 the Duke of Seville died. His son and coadjutor, Don Francisco Enrique de Borbón y de Borbón, was initially named Lieutenant-General and elected as 45th Grand Master six years later. Because he was a serving officer in the Spanish army and resided in Spain, he was unable to devote himself fully to the Order. In 1956, he appointed Pierre Timoléon de Cossé, 12th Duc de Brissac, a member since 1954, as Administrator-General of the Order.

The Order Today

St. Lazarus is one of the earliest of the Christian Orders of Chivalry. It is considered to have been founded in Jerusalem as a Military and Hospitaller Order of monks, somewhere between 1098 and 1120, at a time when any knight contracting leprosy was obliged to leave his order and go to the Saint Lazarus hospital. Legend has it that the Order's first Grand Master was the Blessed Gerard, the warrior monk who originally founded the Order of Saint John. When he contracted leprosy himself and was obliged to leave his own order, he organised the leper knights already in the hospital into a new military order, which had the responsibility of both caring for lepers and fighting for the Cross. These "living dead" as they referred to themselves, were never very large in number, but were valiant warriors, who usually died to a man in battle. When the Holy Land was eventually lost, the Order moved to France and from there, spread throughout Europe, founding leper hospitals wherever they went.

Originally Roman Catholic, the Order it is now ecumenical, with members from all Christian walks of life. Although founded specifically to care for sufferers from leprosy - still one of the Order's aims today, other skin diseases are now included. The Order's aims have also widened, to encompass many other forms of humanitarian aid. These include help for victims of natural and man-made disasters, the care of the terminally ill, of the homeless, orphans and primary health care worldwide. As the decline in Leprosy has not been as rapid as predicted by the World Health Organisation, the Order is once more putting emphasis on its work in that area.
Central Organisation

To be revised

National Jurisdictions.

Each national jurisdiction is known as a Grand Priory, Grand Bailiwick, or Commandery, the head of which is appointed by the Grand Master and is designated a Grand Prior, Grand Bailiff or Commander. These national jurisdictions, some of which have their own churches as well as established headquarters, all hold annual chapter meetings at which progress reports of the past year’s activities and audited financial accounts are presented. They also hold at least one investiture, as well as several fund-raising and social events each year. Many jurisdictions issue a regular newsletter to inform members of Grand Magistral Decrees, international news, forthcoming events, and reports of national activities and interesting articles.

Local Commanderies.

Each national jurisdiction has the power to create local Commanderies where a sufficient number of members warrant it. The Commander is chosen and appointed by the Head of Jurisdiction. The Commandery officers are chosen and appointed by their Commander. Each Commandery organises a minimum of one church service each year, usually more, as well as social and other fundraising events for both the charitable works of the Order and for local charities of its choice.

International Jurisdictions.

These may be found in Australia, Austria, Belgium, China, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, England and Wales, France, Germany, Guatemala, Hungary, Isle of Man, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United States and Venezuela. New Jurisdictions and Commanderies are regularly being founded as the Order goes from strength to strength.

In summary

The Order of Saint Lazarus is an ecumenical organization of Christian hospitalers whose spirit goes back to the Holy Land and the Crusades.

Thousands of members and volunteers continue to work in Grand Priories, Priories, Commanderies and Delegations in the five continents. The Order's traditional humanitarian activities are in the field of leprosy. It maintains leprosaria and dispensaries and sends medical supplies to various medical missions in Africa, and in the Pacific islands. A recent thrust of the American Grand Priory is the support of organ donation, led by its Hospitaller, the Deputy Surgeon General of the US. The Order is also involved in geriatric care for the
needy, it operates several Volunteer Ambulance Corps including one for young drug addicts and directly supports a medical and religious mission in Kenya. Among the more noteworthy projects undertaken by the Order has been the weekly transport of basic food and medical supplies to Poland, Russia, the former Yugoslavia and Kosovo.

There are two categories of membership in the Order: Justice, for individuals able to submit nobiliary proofs, and Magisterial Grace for those unable to do so. Christians may be admitted in the following grades: Officer Brother/Sister, Commander Brother/Sister, Knight or Dame, Knight or Dame Commander, Knight or Dame Grand Cross. Ecclesiastics have their own Chaplain ranks. As a mark of the Grand Master's special esteem, the Order may also award a Collar to a head of State and very occasionally to its high dignitaries. The Order also confers decorations of merit to its members and to individuals not necessarily members of the Order who have contributed, by their service, to its humanitarian work.

The order's badge is a green Maltese cross edged in gold, worn in different sizes according to rank. The decoration of merit is a green cross flory. In the English-speaking jurisdictions of the Order members, use post-nominal initials indicating their rank (OLJ, CLJ, KLJ/DLJ, KCLJ/DCLJ, GCLJ) on internal correspondence, and in the ranks of KLJ and above refer to and address one another as "Chevalier".

Chart of the Grand Priory of the Mediterranean

Grand Priory of the Mediterranean

Commandery of Gozo
Commandery of Malta
Commandery of Tripolitania (Libya)
Commandery of Marseille (France)
Commandery of L'Isle-Adam
Commandery of Catania
Commandery of Taormina

Grand Priory of the Mediterranean

The Grand Prior: Monsignor Anton Gauci ECLJ.
The Chancellor: Dr. Massimo J Ellul KCLJ, CMLJ
The Secretary General: Chevalier John Grima KLJ
Aide de Camp to the Chancellor: Confrere Robert Vella CLJ.
The Marshal: Confrere Robert Farrugia CLJ
The Deputy Marshal: Confrere William Acton OLJ
The Procurator General: Confrere Joseph E Deguara CLJ
The Almoner: Confrere Ronald Ellul OLJ
The Chaplain: The Reverend Anthony Mercieca ChLJ
As already mentioned, the Order of Saint Lazarus was originally created by the militarisation of an order of monks, who as followers of St Basil, had chosen to work amongst those suffering from leprosy. During the time of the crusades all knights who were members of the great military orders found to be suffering from the dreaded leprosy were forced by their own rules to leave their order. As most were warrior monks, and still quite able to fight, they usually joined their confreres fighting under the banner of Saint Lazarus. The early Grand Masters of the Order were themselves amongst those knights so afflicted. These knights, who classed themselves as "living dead", while never large in number, were ferocious in battle, always choosing to die rather than face surrender.

Today the Order is still heavily involved with the relief of leprosy, working in conjunction with other official bodies which have been set up to provide relief for leprosy patients. The World Health Organisation currently estimates that there are fifteen million sufferers today of whom only three and a half million are receiving any form of treatment.

The Order gives aid to leprosy hospitals in Africa, India, South America, the Pacific Islands and Romania. It also supports hospitals in Syria, the Lebanon, Israel, Benin, Malaysia, Turkey and Nepal. It has missions working in Madagascar and in what was known as Biafra. It also provides equipment for the leprosy hospital outside Katmandu in Nepal. Funds have also been made available for research which has led to a breakthrough in healing neural disorders in leprosy patients. In the distant past, many of those who were afflicted by a wide variety of other skin diseases joined the Order. As a result, in more recent times, the Order has become involved with the treatment of all types of skin diseases, and, to this end, the Grand Priory of England and Wales collaborates with other charities working in this field. Help for the handicapped and the aged has been added to our traditional concerns, and to this has been help for the terminally ill, thus bringing the Grand Priory into the realms of the hospice movement. The Order is active in all aspects of international relief complementing the work of similar bodies such as the British Red Cross and the Order of St John in a collaborative way. In some countries the Order has a Volunteer Emergency Corps which operates ambulance services.

Contributions from the Grand Priory of England and Wales towards these charitable works have been substantial, and members of the Order are expected to continue to contribute to this work according to their ability. The Hospitallers of the Grand Priory are in the forefront of the Order’s activities, possess up-to-
date information on all aspects of the charitable works, and make this information available to the membership through the Grand Priory’s regular newsletter.

In November 1991, at the request of the Grand Master, the Grand Hospitaller of the Order convened a meeting of European Hospitallers to consider the danger to Christian civilization posed by restlessness and instability in the countries of Eastern Europe, at that time being plagued by famine, disease and economic catastrophe. As a result, the Order has distributed a huge quantity of relief supplies throughout Eastern Europe, including Russia, Poland, the Czech and Slovak Republics, Hungary and Croatia. Particularly prominent in this work has been the Lazarus-Hilfswerk based in Germany, which working under the auspices of the E.E.C., dispatched over 20 million dollars worth of aid in over 300 convoys to the needy of Poland. In 1992 the E.E.C. decided to send 125 million dollars worth of aid to the needy of Russia, and gave the responsibility for its distribution jointly to the Red Cross and the Order of Saint Lazarus. This humanitarian work in Europe was particularly well supported by the Order's Jurisdictions in the USA and Canada.

In Germany there are two fundamentally different organizations within the Order. The first is the Grand Bailiwick, which is the conventional chivalric arm of the Order, which consists of voluntary workers who provide funds and material aid on a very large scale, both locally and internationally. The second is called the Lazarus Hilfswerk, an humanitarian offshoot of the Order, to which the German state provides two thirds funding, the remainder coming from donations and modest charges for services. These humanitarian services are rendered to the community by young men and women who volunteer to serve in the Lazarus Hilfswerk, which is classed as an alternative to military service. They volunteer to serve for a longer period than they would be obliged to do had they chosen to do their conscription time in the Armed Forces. Within the Lazarus Hilfswerk, these young people are under a military style discipline, wear a distinctive uniform and are paid as they would have been if they served in the military. They have at their disposal fleets of vans, ambulances, mobile kitchens, 'buses, lorries and rolling stock. A highly sophisticated control centre, located in Hurth, a suburb of Cologne, organizes their local and international aid missions. In addition to these young people, who are only obliged to work locally, are volunteers who, together with the Red Cross, take large quantities of aid on behalf of the European Community, to Russia, Poland, and other parts of the former USSR, as well as other disaster areas.

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