

**Summary  
DC/Montgomery County Regions Order of Malta  
Town Hall Meeting**

On June 1, 2014, 62 members, candidates, and auxiliary of the Order of Malta Federal Association members from its DC and Montgomery County regions gathered for a Mass and Town Hall meeting. This meeting was the result of 3 months planning by a group of 25 members, listed in Appendix A, led by Montgomery County Regional Hospitaller Joan Glasgow, and DC Regional Hospitaller Dorothy Zolandz. This group provided input on the structure and content of the meeting, helped design a pre-meeting survey of members, helped arrange the Mass, and handled refreshments for the meeting. The Mass was concelebrated by Federal Association chaplains Monsignor John Enzler and Monsignor William English.

Meeting attendees were provided with background information consisting of basic demographic information on the two regions, a summary of a survey of members conducted before the meeting, a list of the regions monthly parish group meetings, and a list of the regions' local service projects. These can be found in Appendix B. The meeting consisted of brief presentations by Federal Association Commander Margaret Melady, Montgomery County Regional Hospitaller Joan Glasgow, and DC Regional Hospitaller Dorothy Zolandz, followed by breakout discussions on the topics of:

- Spirituality
- Service
- Fellowship
- Membership.

The meeting agenda can be found in Appendix C.

The opening presentations focused on the past and the present of our local regions. When the Association began in 1974, the greater DC metro area defined the organization. Today, the association has 25 regions in various areas east of the Rockies. Because of this, the nature of the administration of the local sections and their activities is evolving. The association's professional staff is less available to plan events for the DC metro area. This work is now falling to the local members, under the guidance of their regional hospitallers. To accommodate this reality, local regions now receive a budget of \$50 per member that is drawn from dues payments and sent back to the local region. This money is to be used to support spiritual and service activities in the local region.

After these brief opening remarks, the remainder of the meeting was devoted to breakout discussions as noted above. Key points from those breakout sessions are summarized below.

Spirituality

Spirituality and service are the cornerstones of the Order, but are sometimes disconnected. In large regions such as DC and Montgomery County, most members encounter spirituality together most frequently in their parish groups. But these parish groups differ in how they utilize their monthly meetings, leading to some fragmentation in the regions as a whole. A similar structure for these groups might be useful—some spend most of their time on business rather than reflection, others do not take time for necessary business. Outside speakers might draw more attendance to these parish gatherings. These groups might also be used to teach members more about the Order and its works.

The difficulty of scheduling spiritual activities was noted. There is no one day and time that works for all; working members and retired members have different schedules. Younger members, candidates,

and auxiliary may not be able to take time for a full weekend retreat—perhaps days of recollection could be a practical alternative for this group. There was a desire for more opportunities to worship together, connected to some social time to develop fellowship. The need to care for and include elderly members was also noted. Personal outreach to members was also suggested to increase participation in spiritual events.

### Service

Members expressed the need for service opportunities in which groups of members can work together in community. Duties of projects should be defined and explained to members in order to recruit them. Each project needs a captain who actively oversees the number and frequency of volunteer opportunities and tracks the volunteer participation. Communication about service opportunities is not currently meeting the members' needs for information.

In addition to on-going projects, there is a desire for single event projects, especially those that can engage a group of members in service together. These events can also be used to recruit new members. Personal outreach is needed to recruit members to these and other service activities. The need for service to our elderly members was noted, as was the possibility of designing some service that could be conducted by members who were not able to get out to events.

### Fellowship

Participants noted that the best opportunities for fellowship that they had experienced came during extended large group service projects like the New Orleans rebuilding project and the Lourdes pilgrimage. The need to work together and to socialize together were identified as keys to building fellowship among the members. The importance of personal contact—one individual reaching out to another to invite him or her to an event—was emphasized. The need to proactively involve our candidates and new members in activities—through mentoring and personal outreach—was noted. Outreach to inactive members was suggested, and mentoring to help them get involved in the spiritual and service works of the Order.

### Membership

The DC and Montgomery County regions have an untapped potential for recruiting new members. The need to recruit younger members, and care for our older members, were both noted. The importance of mentoring during formation and during the first few years of membership were noted as key to forming active members who help develop the service, spiritual, and fellowship aspects of the regions. Setting clearer expectations for participation in parish group meetings and in service activities would help to integrate candidates and new members into the Order. Assigning mentors to inactive members was suggested as a means of reviving their involvement in the activities of the Order. The importance of personal outreach to get members to participate in spiritual and service activities was noted. The potential for the Auxiliary as a recruitment tool was discussed, as well as ways in which to improve and reinvigorate the Auxiliary group.

## **Appendix A: Members of the Town Hall planning group**

Kathryn Abell  
W. Shepherdson Abell  
Anne Blum  
Michele Bowe  
David S. J. Brown  
John Butler  
Valencia Camp  
Adam Augustine Carter  
Nancy Clark  
Elizabeth Demaree  
Larry Demaree  
Hugh M. Dempsey  
Dennis DuFour  
Rev. Msgr. John Enzler  
Thomas A. Fink  
Thomas Gaspard  
Gerrald A. Giblin  
Carol Grefenstette  
Thomas G. Hughes  
Bill Lawler  
Margaret Melady  
Maris Moriarty  
Peter C. Schaumber  
Fra' James-Michael von Stroebel

## Appendix B: Meeting Handouts

### DC and Montgomery County Regions At-A-Glance

- DC and Montgomery County are **2 of the 25 regions** of the Federal Association
- Montgomery County has **more members** than any other region. DC has the **third largest membership**. (Northern Virginia is second.)
- Combined, **DC and Montgomery County represent about 25% of the Federal Association membership**. With Northern Virginia, the DC metro area represents about 36% of the membership.
- The **DC region has 93 members** and the **Montgomery County region has 135 members**. The average size of a region in the Federal Association is **13 members**.
- The **average age of a knight** in our two regions is **73 years**, and the **average age of a dame** is **70**. For the Association as a whole, those numbers are 67 and 69 years, respectively.
- The average tenure of membership in the Order among Montgomery County members is **16 years**, and for DC it is **15 years**. For the Association as a whole, the average is **12 years**.
- **73 members** (32%) of the two regions have been in the Order for **20 years or more**.
- DC and Montgomery County members combined contributed **31% of the total received for the 2013 Annual Fund**. **80%** of the DC and Montgomery County members contributed.
- **51%** of DC and Montgomery County members have attended the Lourdes pilgrimage at least once.

## Results of Questionnaire to DC and Montgomery County Regions

A sixteen-question questionnaire was distributed electronically to DC and Montgomery County Knights and Dames to provide input to this evening's Town Hall meeting. 45 members total responded. Below are key points from the questionnaire responses.

- **57%** of the respondents have been members for 10 years or less
- **65%** had taken part in at least one major Mass of the Order in the past year
- **78%** attend one of the Order's monthly parish groups
- **54%** have never attended an Association retreat
- **85%** have participated in a local service project of the Order in the last year, **29%** participating more than 6 times in the year
- Project SHARE, Service to Wounded Warriors, and Mercy Clinic were the **3** most popular local service projects
- **Almost ½** of respondents reported involvement in service that was not a project of the Order. Many of these individuals had multiple commitments, and these commitments ranged from hands-on service to service on boards.
- **65%** of respondents have supported the Lourdes pilgrimage in some way, either by attending, supporting with a donation, submitting petitions, or praying for the pilgrims
- **63%** have served on a Federal Association committee or provided other service to the Order and its affiliated organizations
- **73%** have sponsored 3 or fewer candidates for the Order. **43%** have never sponsored a candidate
- **94%** of respondents are willing to pay an extra \$50-200 regional dues per year to support local service projects and activities.

Open-ended questions brought the following comments on:

### Spirituality within the Order

- Needs to be meaningful to everyday life
- Need a renewed focus on prayer
- We should celebrate all the major feasts of the Order

### Fellowship within the Order

- We lack sufficient opportunities for relationship-building with other members, or a sense of team-building within the Association

- We need to enable participation across and between the DC, Montgomery County, and Northern Virginia regions

### **Service**

- Improved communication about available service projects and volunteer opportunities is needed
- Better coordination, that is, a central point of contact or coordinator for each service project is needed
- Desire for group projects, in order to foster community within the Order and with our Lords the Poor and Sick, and to encourage members to try new projects for potential individual service

### **Membership**

- Aging of membership is a concern
- Care for aging members is a concern
- Low participation rate relative to number of members (about 50% participation rate overall in DC and Montgomery County) is a concern
- Need to strengthen auxiliary
- Need to recruit younger members
- Need for group service projects to attract new members
- Emphasize service over status in recruiting new members
- Have an annual meeting of the local region(s) once per year to keep members informed.

### **Most Thought-Provoking Comment**

**“Have more joy”**

## Monthly Parish Group Meetings, DC and Montgomery County Regions

Holy Trinity Group: Second Fridays after the 8:00 a.m. Mass. Contact Ann Fox ([mafox9@aol.com](mailto:mafox9@aol.com)) or Tom Hughes ([tghughes42@gmail.com](mailto:tghughes42@gmail.com)) .

Downtown Group: Second Wednesdays, 7:30 a.m. at St. Matthew's Cathedral. Contact Adam Carter ([ACarter@employmentlawgroup.com](mailto:ACarter@employmentlawgroup.com)) .

Annunciation/St. Stephen's/Our Lady of Victory: Schedule varies between the second and third Saturdays of the month, after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at Annunciation Church. Contact David Brown ([millwood@aol.com](mailto:millwood@aol.com)) .

Blessed Sacrament Group: Second Saturdays following the 8:00 a.m. Mass. Contact Margaret Melady ([margmelady@yahoo.com](mailto:margmelady@yahoo.com)) .

Our Lady of Mercy/Little Flower/St. Bart's: Second Wednesday of the month after the 7 am Mass at Mercy. Contact Tom Gaspard at [tcgaspard@aol.com](mailto:tcgaspard@aol.com) or Joe Giere at [JOEMARYGEE@aol.com](mailto:JOEMARYGEE@aol.com)

Holy Redeemer: Contact Michael Conley at [michaelconley.bt@gmail.com](mailto:michaelconley.bt@gmail.com) or Mary Anne Clancy at [clancy6@aol.com](mailto:clancy6@aol.com)

## **DC and Montgomery County Region Projects, Order of Malta Federal Association**

### **Gift of Peace Homeless Shelter/Hospice**

Volunteers are welcome at the Gift of Peace convent and residence in NE Washington DC. There are opportunities to serve, pray with and be companions to men and women who otherwise would be homeless. One section includes residents with HIV/AIDS and another section has residents with other chronic illnesses. Coordinator from the Order is Shep Abell, [wsabell@fdalaw.com](mailto:wsabell@fdalaw.com).

### **Washington Home Eucharistic Ministry**

This nursing home is located in upper NW DC on Upton Street, behind the Friendship Heights post office. Members are part of a team that takes turns bringing Eucharist to Catholic patients at the home on Sundays. Members generally serve one to two times per month, bringing Eucharist to 10 to 20 patients each visit. Coordinator from the Order is Sid Spencer, [sdfls@msn.com](mailto:sdfls@msn.com)

### **St. Ann's Center for Children, Youth and Families**

This center in Hyattsville, MD provides residential care and support services to abused and neglected children and to pregnant and parenting adolescents in crisis. Holiday parties (Valentine's, Easter, Summer, Halloween, and Christmas) are hosted for the children and teen mothers in the program. Members of the Order plan, prep, and serve at the parties. Each party is 2-3 hours in length, excluding prep, set-up and clean-up. Mentors are also needed for these special families on an on-going basis. Contact for the Order is Chrissy Page, [cnmpage@aol.com](mailto:cnmpage@aol.com).

### **Malta House**

This assisted living facility for low-income clients is located in Hyattsville, MD. Malta House is also part of the Pastoral Field Education Program at Mount St. Mary's Seminary. Seminarians come to pray the rosary and give a homily to the residents. Friendly visitors are needed to play cards, chat, or pray with residents. Volunteers are also needed for holiday parties at Christmas and July 4. Contact for the Order is Valencia Camp, [valenciayvonnecamp@gmail.com](mailto:valenciayvonnecamp@gmail.com).

### **Project SHARE**

This food bank in Hyattsville, MD has regularly scheduled times for volunteers to bag and distribute food each month. This is a particularly good project for families. Contact for the Order is Bob Branand [rbibranand@aol.com](mailto:rbibranand@aol.com).

### **On-going service opportunities at Navy Med/Walter Reed/, Ft Belvoir and Ft Meade.**

Members of the Order of Malta are actively engaged at all three bases in supporting the Wounded Warriors, other hospitalized military personnel, their care givers and staff. Activities



range from an annual BBQ, sponsoring prayer breakfast, lunch and dinner meetings with all three groups and providing speakers or priest. The volunteers have supplied religious articles for distribution, and assisted with personal issues such as finding housing, house blessings, employment, immigration, child care, baby sitting, respite, education, working to get SHARE on the bases, assisting with the Military Pilgrimage to Lourdes and recruiting for our Lourdes Pilgrimage. If you are interested in becoming involved in this service please contact Larry Demaree at [larry@demareeassociates.com](mailto:larry@demareeassociates.com) and he will put you on the mailing list as service opportunities arise.

### **Mercy Health Clinic**

Mercy Health Clinic is a community health clinic serving low-income uninsured adults through primary and specialty care, medications and health education, all free of charge. The majority of Mercy Health Clinic's patients are immigrants, more than 2/3rds are women and approximately 2/3rds are from Latin America. Of the many volunteers, 5 Order of Malta doctors and another 5 volunteer regularly at the Clinic. One of the founders of the Clinic is a Dame of Malta. The Clinic is located in Gaithersburg, Maryland and was started in 2000. There are numerous volunteer opportunities if this ministry is of interest to you. Please contact Alvina Long at [alvina.long@verizon.net](mailto:alvina.long@verizon.net) or Nancy Ripp Clark at [rippclark@gmail.com](mailto:rippclark@gmail.com).

### **L'Arche**

L'Arche is a community of people with and without intellectual disabilities who share their lives together. Their mission is comprised of three elements: community, services, advocacy. L'Arche has two group homes in Washington, DC and two in Northern Virginia. The Order of Malta has brought Sunday evening meals to the homes in DC, usually four times a year. The Order has also given L'Arche Grant Funds to help to make the homes more accessible for the handicapped. Please contact Joan Glasgow, [glasgow778@gmail.com](mailto:glasgow778@gmail.com) if interested in volunteering.

### **Prison Ministry**

The Federal Association has been asked by the Grand Master to establish a Prison Ministry. The Order is working with prison chaplains and delivers bibles and other religious reading materials. This ministry is lead by Michael McGarry at [jmichaelsmv@gmail.com](mailto:jmichaelsmv@gmail.com) and Collins Whitfield at [cwhitfield@wmklaborlaw.com](mailto:cwhitfield@wmklaborlaw.com).

### **Auxiliary**

Elizabeth Demaree has become very active with the Auxiliary here in Washington, DC. The goal of the Auxiliary is to support the greater work of the Order of Malta. If you know someone who would like to be involved, or have a child or grandchild who may be interested please have them contact Elizabeth at [demaree.liz@gmail.com](mailto:demaree.liz@gmail.com) or 301.346.4332.

**Appendix C: Town Hall meeting agenda**

**Agenda**  
**DC/Montgomery County Regions, Order of Malta Federal Association**  
**June 1, 2014**

- 5:00 p.m. Opening Prayer, Monsignor John Enzler
- 5:05 p.m. Welcome, Margaret Melady, Commander, Federal
- 5:15 p.m. Overview of DC and Montgomery County regions; Joan Glasgow, Montgomery County Regional Hospitaller, and Dorothy Zolanz, DC Regional Hospitaller
- 5:30 p.m. Breakout discussions on
- Spirituality
  - Service
  - Fellowship
  - Membership
- 6:30 p.m. Closing prayer, Monsignor Enzler