



SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER
OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA

MEMBERSHIP IN THE ORDER OF MALTA REGULATIONS AND COMMENTARY

*Promulgated by H.M.E.H. the Prince and Grand Master
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and approved by the Sovereign Council
on February 18, 2011*

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Members of religious Orders are required to read and reread the Rule of their Order on a frequent basis.

The *Constitutional Charter and Code of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta* (1997) is a somewhat dry and legalistic document and the original Rule of Blessed Raymond du Puy is rather difficult to place in a modern context. Members of the Order need to have a work of reference which they can use to regulate their lives and it is for this reason that this new edition of the Regulations and Commentary has been produced.

A great deal of hard work and thought has been given to it and I and the Sovereign Council are most grateful to those who have made its publication possible. Various experts close to the Holy See have been consulted extensively so that we can be certain that it is in accordance with the teaching of the Church.

I commend the use of this document to all members of the Order. Please refer to it often – rather in the way of the monasteries of the Benedictine tradition where an extract from the Rule of St. Benedict is read everyday in choir. The end of the Rule of St. Benedict contains the following exhortation: *‘Whoever you may be, then, in your eagerness to reach your Father’s home in Heaven, be faithful with Christ’s help to this little Rule which is only a beginning.’* Please use it to help you to achieve perfection in your lives as Christians and as members of the Order of Malta.



Fra' Matthew Festing

“ *B*iaux amis, vos requerés la compaignie de la maison et avés raison, car mostz de gentis homes font grans prieres et ont grant joe quant il pont metre aucuns de leur enfanis ou de leur amis en ceste religion. Et si vous avés volonté d'estre en si belle et si honorable compaignie, et en si sainte religion com cele del Hospital es, vos avés raison. Et ja soit ce que vous nos vées bien vestus et grans chevaux, et cuidiés ayens tous les aises, vos estes enginiés, quar quant vos voudrés mangier, il vous covendra à jeunier, et quant vos vourés jeunier, il vos covendra à mangier. Et quant vos vourés dormir, si vos covendra à veillier. Et quant vous voudrés veillier, si vos covenra à dormir, et vos mandara l'en desa et dela en plassa que non vos plaira pas, et vos covenra aler ia. Et si covendra que vos leisés toute vostre volontés por l'autrui faire, et pluros autres durtés que vos covenra souffrir en la religion que l'on non vos pot dire. ”

“ *V*os prometés et voés à Dieu et à Nostre-Dame, et à monseignor saint Johan Baptiste de vievre et de morir en obedience, et d'estre obedient à quelque soveiran que Dyeus vos donra. Et si prometés de vievre castement jusques à la mort. Et si prometés de vievre sans propre. Encor fasons nos autre promession, que nule autre gens non fan, quar vos prometés d'estre sers et esclaf de nos seignors malades. ”

Dear friends, you demand the company of the house and you are right, because many genteel men make great prayers and have great joy when they can put one of their children or of their friends in this religion. And if it is your will to enter in such a handsome and honourable company, and in such a holy religion as the one of the Hospital is, you are indeed right. And in case it is that you see us so well dressed, [with] big horses, and cared for with all eases, you are deceived, because when you will want to eat, it will be arranged for you to fast, and when you will want to fast, it will be arranged for you to eat. And when you will want to sleep, then it will be arranged for you to vigil. And when you will want to vigil, then it will be arranged for you to sleep, and you will be sent here and there in places you will not want to go to, and it will be arranged for you to go there. And also, it will be arranged for you to loose all your will, in order to act in favour of others. And many other hardships will have to be suffered in the religion, more that what one could say.

You promise and vow unto God and Our Lady, and unto Monsignor Saint John Baptist to live and to die in obedience, and to be obedient to that sovereign whom God will give you. And then you promise to live chastely till your death. And then you promise to live without properties. And moreover, we make another promise, which nobody else makes, that is you promise to be servants and slaves of our lords the sick.

Jugements (esgarts) et coutumes (usances) de l'Ordre de l'Hospital, 121:

"Ci dit coment l'en doit recevoir frere",

Judgements (esgarts) and customs (usances) of the Order of the Hospital, 121:

"Here it says how one should treat the brother"

in Cartulaire Général de l'Ordre des Hospitaliers de St. Jean de Jérusalem (1100-1310),

par J. Delaville Le Roulx, E. Leroux Editeur, Paris 1894-1906

Tome II 1897, pp. 556-557

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Preamble to the Document
“Regulations and Commentary”

- The Order of Malta originated in Jerusalem in the XI century as a *fraternitas hospitalaria* dedicated to the assistance of pilgrims and sick people. It was solemnly recognized in 1113 by Pope Paschal II with the Bull *Pie Postulatio Voluntatis*. A few years later, the second Master issued the first statutes known as the *Rule of Master Raymond du Puy*.

- The history of the Order proves its fidelity to the *patrimonium*¹ of its origins down through the centuries. The *Constitutional Charter* and the *Code* are the most recent expression of this fidelity to a patrimony, which has been vigilantly guarded and evolved by the Knights, always accompanied by the constant care of the Apostolic See.

The *Constitutional Charter* and the *Code* of the Sovereign Order of Malta are the fundamental laws of the Order, “true to the divine precepts and to the admonitions of our Lord Jesus Christ, guided by the teachings of the Church”². Both were revised in 1997 by the competent authorities. In some cases the *Constitutional Charter* and the *Code* require explicitly specific additional regulations³. These regulations also needed a revision in order to better serve the needs of the Order in today’s world. The *Regulations and Commentaries* in this document replace those approved by the Special Chapter General of 1969 and contain the *Regulations* ruling the Membership in the Order. The present *Regulations and Commentary* aim to reaffirm the normative structure of the Order and shall serve as a handbook for spiritual guidance to all Members of the Order. Therefore it should be considered not only as a juridical manual but also having a doctrinal and exhortative character.

- In order to avoid juridical misunderstandings some terms have nevertheless to be clearly defined:

- Art. 1 § 1 of the *Constitutional Charter* states that the Order of Malta “is a religious lay Order”. This term is not used in the *Code of Canon Law (CIC)* of

¹ “The mind of the founders and their dispositions concerning the nature, purpose, spirit and character of the institute which have been approved by the competent ecclesiastical authority, together with the its sound traditions, all of which comprise the patrimony of the institute itself, are to be faithfully observed by all” (CIC 578).

² CC art. 2 § 2.

³ The *Constitutional Charter*; at art. 6 § 3, 29 § 8, 33 § 2, 34 § 1, 35 § 2, asks for statutes and regulations. The *Code* for statutes and regulations for Noviciates (art. 27); for Conventual Chaplains (art. 58 § 2); for the activity of the Professed (art 88); for Members in Obedience (art. 101 § d); for Priorates (art. 223); for Delegations (art. 232); and for sub-Organizations of Associations and Priorates (art. 239 § 2-3).

1983. The expression in the **CIC** is “*Institutes of Consecrated Life*”. It includes Orders and Congregations whose members profess the Religious Vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. The Members of the First Class of the Order of Malta, known as Professed Knights or Knights of Justice and Professed Chaplains, belong to this category.

- The membership structure of the Order is unique⁴: in addition to the Members of the First Class, the Members in Obedience and of the Third Class, are also considered Members of the Order although they do not profess Vows. Furthermore the *Constitutional Charter* employs the word “Member” of the Order for all the three Classes.

Thus, the term “Religious Order” used to describe membership in the document *Regulations and Commentary* is to be understood in the following particular way:

- only Members of the First Class (Professed Knights or Knights of Justice and Professed Chaplains) are “Religious” with the Three Vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience.
- Members of the Second and Third Class also belong to the Order, but in different ways and degrees. This definition applies wherever the term “Member” is used in this document.
- The three Evangelical Counsels (Poverty, Chastity and Obedience) are lived by the Members of the three Classes, but according to the state of the individual Member. The Members of the First Class live the Counsels within the context of their Vows.
- Some terms, which do not correspond to the terms of the *Code of Canon Law* of 1983, are nevertheless retained in the present document because they are used in the present *Constitutional Charter* and *Code* of the Order. Footnotes usually indicate these cases.
- On the basis of religious status the first place in the document would appertain to the First Class. The order of the present document however starts with the

⁴ **CC** art. 8.

Third Class, which is the largest, followed by the Second and the First Classes. This follows the chronological order of the admission to the Third Class which precedes Membership in the other two Classes⁵.

- The document starts by explaining the step from the common call of all Christians to holiness as members of the Church to the specific vocation in the special institution that is the Order of Malta. The second part gives a brief introduction to the distinct charism⁶ of the Order of Malta before it deals with Membership in the Order and its regulations. The General Introduction, considering its breath and its doctrinal and spiritual motivations, may at first appear trivial with regard to the Members of First Class, since they are bound to a higher level of discipline in conformity with their state of life. However, the Introduction can also prove useful to the Members of the First Class, who must always exercise a role of example and often of responsibility towards the other two Classes.
- Finally, it should be remembered that the Order of Malta is also a Chivalrous Order. The term “Religious Order” points out to the unique nature of the Order of Malta compared with other Chivalrous Orders which do not share its particular religious characteristic.

Beside the legally binding *Regulations*, highlighted by a *banner* on the side of the page, the document also provides *Commentaries* to some of the relevant articles of the *Constitutional Charter* and *Code*. Additionally it comprises recommendations and guidelines in order to provide greater unity in the Order and to make allowance for the circumstances and traditions in different countries.

⁵ The ReC 1969 went about the other order, which made it more difficult to read and understand. Cf. C art. 9 § 1a and art. 95 § d.

⁶ *Vita Consecrata*, 36-37.

Introduction

I. THE UNIVERSAL CALL TO THE PEOPLE OF GOD AND THE SPECIAL VOCATION INTO THE SOVEREIGN MILITARY ORDER OF MALTA

1. THE UNIVERSAL VOCATION OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD TO HOLINESS (*LUMEN GENTIUM*, 39-43)

The Church, by divine mandate, calls on all mankind to be baptised in the name of the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit, and thus to become transformed into new persons. In His people God enables all people to live as one with Him. He wants His kingdom to dawn in His Church. We Christians are “*destined to be moulded to the image of His Son*” (Rom 8:29) and to imitate Him in all His virtues, but above all in love.

Through His countless Saints He reveals to us that holiness, to which all Christians are called⁷, is not unattainable. Taking seriously our faith in Jesus Christ means to again and again open our hearts and lives to God’s will: “*For this is the will of God, your sanctification*” (1Thes 4:3).

The purpose in life of all the baptized is sanctification, as St Paul repeatedly said (Rom 6:22; 2Cor 7:1; 1Thes 4:3), and that means to imitate Jesus, the Son of God made flesh. This is no utopian ideal, but it is our vocation as children of God, created to His image and redeemed by Jesus’ blood. This does not imply that we change in some mysterious way, but that we learn to love. We must learn to accept the will of God and to harmonize our will with His will, to let Him guide us. To achieve this is a life-long, never-ending process, but it is only thus that we can receive the gift to grow in the likeness of Christ. The more we open our hearts to God’s Grace and grow in love for God and our neighbour, the more we will discover our true vocation and real happiness.

2. THE MANIFOLD WAYS TO FOLLOW CHRIST

Every Christian is called upon to follow Christ. There is no privileged road. Everyone can follow this path. Jesus and the first Christians lived together in a close community. “*I cannot have Christ all to myself; I can belong to Him only in union with all those who have become, or who will become, His own*”⁸. We are called to a life in the community of the Church⁹ and in the manifold community units such as the family, the parish, charitable organizations, spiritual communities, family and prayer circles, secular institutes or orders. We can live as Christians as married or

⁷ *Lumen Gentium*, 40.

⁸ *Deus Caritas Est*, 14.

⁹ See JoS 7.

unmarried lay persons or as priests and religious. People have found their way to salvation by all paths and in all states of life¹⁰. There are different callings and different forms of commitment, to live a Christian life. Like the different limbs of the human body the different vocations in the Church belong together in a complementary way (1Cor 12:12-31a). In order to grow in perfection, each person has to find his or her own calling, which God has prepared for each one of us.

3. FOLLOWING CHRIST AS A MEMBER OF THE ORDER OF MALTA

“Put on the Armour of Light” (Rom 13:12) and “Wake Up from Sleep” (Rom 13:11)

One of the paths towards christian perfection (Mt 5:48), towards living up to our call to love God and our neighbour, is Membership in the Order of Malta¹¹.

Constitutional Charter art. 2 § 1

Purpose

The purpose of the Order is the promotion of the glory of God through the sanctification of its Members, service to the faith and to the Holy Father, and assistance to one’s neighbour.

Serving the Lord by serving “*the least of his brothers*” (Mt 25:40), the Order of Malta realises one of the fundamental precepts of Christian faith. The unity of love of God and love of neighbour (Lk 10:27) has always been practiced by the followers of Christ by serving the sick and the poor, whom Christ himself served and with whom He has identified himself. Since the days of the first hospital¹² in Jerusalem up to today, Members of the Order of Malta have responded to what Christ meant when He said: “*In so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did to me*” (Mt 25:40). Remembering this identification of Christ with the poor recalls our Order to its “*first love*”¹³, its original impetus.

¹⁰ See *Lumen Gentium*, 41; *Vita Consecrata*, 31 (*Relationship between the different states of Christian life*); and *Fraternal Life in Community*, 70.

¹¹ “*In the Church there are a great many institutes of consecrated life which have different gifts according to the grace which has been given them: they more closely follow Christ who prays, or announces the kingdom of God, or does good to people, or lives with people in the world, yet who always does the will of the Father*” (CIC 577). See *Mutuae Relationes*, 17-18. C. TOUMANOFF – G. ROCCA, *Sovrano Militare Ospedaliero Ordine di Malta*, in DIP, VIII, 1988, coll. 1934-1945. See also J. SARNOWSKY, *Hôpital, ordre de l’, in Prier et combattre. Dictionnaire européen des ordres militaires au Moyen Age*, sous la direction de N. Bériou et Ph. Jossierand, Fayard, Paris 2009, p. 445-452.

¹² J. IMBERT, *Ospedale*, in DIP, VI, 1980, coll. 922-942.

¹³ “*Yet I hold this against you: you have lost the love you had at first*” (Rv 2:4), in Revelations the Church at Ephesus is told.

To fulfil the Order's mission today Pope Benedict XVI urged the Members of the Order to *"Put on the weapons of light (Rom 13:12) ... fight against the evil and sin which darken our existence"*¹⁴. The *armour of light* is the weapon, the tool that allows us to carry out our double charism of *tuitio fidei* and *obsequium pauperum*¹⁵ and to fulfill the challenge to resist the seduction of the secular world and the culture of death. It consists of the Word of God, the Gifts of the Spirit¹⁶, the Grace of the Sacraments¹⁷ and both the Theological and Cardinal Virtues¹⁸.

4. THE WORD OF GOD

The fundamental basis of the Faith is the knowledge of the Word of God as revealed in the Old and New Testaments, and in the Tradition of the Church, the *Magisterium*: *"ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ"*, said St Hieronymus¹⁹. *"Such is the force and power of the Word of God that it can serve the Church as her support and vigour, and the children of the Church as strength for their faith, food for the soul, and a pure and lasting fount of spiritual life"*. The Church *"forcefully and specifically exhorts all the Christian faithful... to learn the surpassing knowledge of Jesus Christ (Phil. 3:8), by frequent reading of the divine Scriptures"*²⁰.

¹⁴ BENEDICT XVI *Homily*, in JoS 8, p.123. See also *Venice 2009*, p. 51-56.

¹⁵ See JoS 3.

¹⁶ Cf. CCC 1830-1832: *"The moral life of Christians is sustained by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These are permanent dispositions which make man docile in following the promptings of the Holy Spirit. The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. They belong in their fullness to Christ, Son of David (Is 11:1-2). They complete and perfect the virtues of those who receive them. They make the faithful docile in readily obeying divine inspirations. "Let our good spirit lead me on a level path" (Ps 143:10). "For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God . . . If children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ (Rom 8:14, 17)". The fruits of the Spirit are perfections that the Holy Spirit forms in us as the first fruits of eternal glory. the tradition of the Church lists twelve of them: "charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, chastity" (Gal 5:22-23)".*

¹⁷ The Seven Sacraments are: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Anointing of the Sick, Matrimony, Ordination. See CCC 1113-1134: *"The Paschal Mystery in the Church's Sacraments"*; and *ibid.* 1210-1666: *"The Seven Sacraments of the Church"*.

¹⁸ The Theological Virtues are: Faith, Hope, and Love; the Cardinal Virtues are: Prudence, Justice, Temperance, Fortitude. See CCC 1803-1845 (*"The Virtues"*), and JoS 9.

¹⁹ *"If, in fact, according to the Apostle Paul, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God (1Cor 1:24), and if he who does not know the Scripture does not know the power of God and the wisdom of God, to be ignorant of the Scripture is to be ignorant of Christ" (Commentarium in Isaiam Prophetam libri duodeviginti, Prologus, PL XXIV, 17 A-B, quoted in Dei Verbum, 25).*

²⁰ *Dei Verbum*, 21 and 25; *Verbum Domini*, 85-86.

5. THE GRACE OF THE SACRAMENTS

“Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”. By our Baptism each of us is adopted as God’s child and brother or sister of Jesus (Gal 4:4-7). We participate in His death and resurrection since *“We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life”* (Rom 6:4). This new life in union with Jesus Christ and in love for God and neighbour, given to us in the holy Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, is constantly renewed within us by the Holy Spirit through the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist. The Spirit enables every person to respond to God’s call in a unique way, at the same time building up in a special way the Church as the Body of Christ (Rom 12:4-8) in the Sacrament of the Eucharist²¹.

In the Sacraments of Penance and of the Anointing of the Sick God’s grace brings forgiveness, healing and comfort. Finally the *“Sacraments at the Service of Communion”*²², Holy Orders and Matrimony, enable those who are called into them to celebrate, to live and to pass on God’s Holy Presence and the faithfulness of His Love.

II. THE CHARISM OF THE ORDER OF MALTA:

TUITIO FIDEI ET OBSEQUIUM PAUPERUM

For nine centuries, the mission of the Order has been *“the promotion of the glory of God through the sanctification of its Members, service to the faith and to the Holy Father, and assistance to one’s neighbour”* (CC art. 2 §1). The Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of Malta fulfils this mission as *“a religious lay order and, by tradition, it is at the same time military, chivalrous and nobiliary”* (CC art. 1 §1). It is devoted to its charism of nurturing, witnessing and protecting the faith (*tuitio fidei*), and of serving the poor and the sick representing the Lord (*obsequium pauperum*)²³.

²¹ See the Encyclical of Pope John Paul II *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*.

²² Thus they are called in CCC, before 1533 Part. II, Section II, chapter III, *“The Sacraments at the Service of Communion”*. For a global presentation of the Sacraments, see also CCC 1117-1134.

²³ In the past the order of *tuitio fidei* and *obsequium pauperum* was never fixed, and was altered according to the context. The order used in this document, placing *tuitio fidei* first, does not implicate a priority and only reflects a recent practice.

1. HOSPITALLER ORDER

The first article of the *Constitutional Charter* specifies the nature of the Order, and defines it as a Hospitaller Order²⁴, and clarifies: it “*arose from a group of hospitallers of the Hospice of Saint John in Jerusalem*”. The term “Hospitallers” refers to the medical activity, but means more than this, since it explicitly refers also to the virtue of hospitality, highly esteemed in the past²⁵. Those who are received into the Order, besides considering themselves to be members of a religious order, must realize that they are, although with different forms of Membership, Members of a Religious Lay Order, whose mission is to be an Order of “Hospitallers”²⁶.

Constitutional Charter art. 2 § 2

Purpose

True to the divine precepts and to the admonitions of our Lord Jesus Christ, guided by the teachings of the Church, the Order affirms and propagates the Christian virtues of charity and brotherhood. The Order carries out its charitable works for the sick, the needy and refugees without distinction of religion, race, origin and age.

The Order fulfills its institutional tasks especially by carrying out hospitaller works, including social and health assistance, as well as aiding victims of exceptional disasters and of war, attending also to their spiritual well-being and the strengthening of their faith in God.

²⁴ P. BAILLY, *Hospitaliers*, in DS, VII, 1969, coll. 784-808; B. BRAZZAROLA – G. ROCCA, *Ospedalieri*, in DIP, VI, 1980, coll. 975-981.

²⁵ Pope Paschal II thus addresses Blessed Gerard in 1113: “*Nos itaque, piis hospitalitatis tuae studiis delectati...*” (“*And therefore we, delighted by the pious zeal of your hospitality...*”). And the *Code de Rohan*: “*Fra tutte le opere di pietà e umanità, per consenso di tutto il popolo cristiano, l'ospitalità tiene il primo luogo, come quella che abbraccia tutte le altre. Se questa con grande studio da tutti i buoni deve essere esercitata e riverita, quanto maggiormente da quelli che col cognome di Cavalieri Ospitalarj vogliono essere conosciuti? Per lo che niuna cosa dobbiamo procurare maggiormente che di eseguire realmente e con effetti quello che proferiamo col nome*” (“*By general consensus of the Christian people, hospitality takes the first place among all actions of piety and humanity, as the one which embraces all others. And if it has to be realized and revered by all good people with great emphasis, how much more by those who want to be known by the name of Knights Hospitallers? Because more than everything we must implement what we say in the name*” (Dell’ospitalità, Titolo Quarto, in *Code de Rohan*, p. 109-128, quote at p. 109). See also *Populorum Progressio*, 66-75; P. MIQUEL - P. VIARD, *Hospitalité*, in DS, VII-1, 1969, coll. 808-831; A. DE VOGÜÉ – R. GAZEAU, *Ospitalità*, in DIP, VI, 1980, coll. 1014-1021.

²⁶ “*The Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta arose from a group of hospitallers of the Hospice of Saint John in Jerusalem*” (CC art. 1 § 1). See also ReC 1969, p. 12.

2. RELIGIOUS LAY ORDER

Since the time of its confirmation in Jerusalem in 1113 by Pope Paschal II, the Order of Malta has been a religious order of the Catholic Church with Professed Members who make the Three Vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience and who constitute the First Class²⁷; the Order of Malta has always been a lay Order, although priests also belong to the First and Third Class, in a different way than the lay Members. According to Canon Law religious orders are referred to as “*religious institutes of consecrated life*” and defined as societies in which Members, according to proper law, pronounce public vows, either perpetual or temporary²⁸. The Christian faithful freely assume this form of living in institutes of consecrated life. Through vows or other sacred bonds according to the proper charisms of the institutes, they profess the Evangelical Counsels of Chastity, Poverty, and Obedience and, through the Charity²⁹ to which the Counsels lead, are joined in a special way to the Church and its mystery³⁰. These Christians are called “Religious”. In the Order of Malta they form the “First Class” and are called “Professed Knights” or “Knights of Justice” and “Professed Chaplains”. The public witness rendered by Religious to Christ and the Church entails a separation from the world proper to the character and purpose of each institute³¹.

“The life consecrated through the profession of the Evangelical Counsels is a stable form of living by which the faithful, following Christ more closely under the action of the Holy Spirit, are totally dedicated to God Who is loved most of all, so that, having been dedicated by a new and special title to His honour, to the building up of the Church, and to the salvation of the world, they strive for the perfection of Charity in the service of the kingdom of God and, having been made an outstanding sign in the Church, foretell the heavenly glory”³².

“By its very nature, the state of consecrated life is neither clerical nor lay”³³ That institute is called lay which has by virtue of its nature, character, and purpose a proper function defined by the founder or by legitimate tradition, which does not include the exercise of sacred orders”³⁴.

²⁷ JoS 5, p. 13-33; JoS 9, p. 27-35, Venice 2009, p. 23-29.

²⁸ CIC 607 § 2; *Essential Elements*, 13-17.

²⁹ See JoS 2.

³⁰ CIC 573 § 2.

³¹ CIC 607 § 3. See *Regulations for Professed Chaplains*.

³² CIC 573 § 1.

³³ CIC 588 § 1.

³⁴ CIC 588 § 3.

3. SOVEREIGN ORDER

The Order of Malta is at the same time a religious lay order and a sovereign order. It is a subject of international law and exercises sovereign functions³⁵. It is acknowledged by more than 100 States and accredited as Permanent Observer at the United Nations. The sovereignty of the Order is also acknowledged by the Holy See, to which the Order accredits an Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador³⁶.

Its sovereignty enables the Order to perform its duties anywhere in the world in great political and economical independence, and ensures the Order's neutrality and impartiality. Rightly in regard of the exceptional *status* which the Order of Malta enjoys at a supranational level, its Members are called to an intellectual and personal integrity which manifests itself in their willingness to engage themselves for the aims of the Order, regardless of the honours or fear, and to serve the sick and to defend the faith in a state of intellectual freedom³⁷ undeterred by corruption, blackmail or extortion. This imposes a great and weighty responsibility for the Members.

4. BY TRADITION MILITARY, CHIVALROUS AND NOBILIARY

“By Tradition Military” Order

The threats to pilgrims from their enemies soon led the first Members to protect the faith and the faithful, and to defend them against external attacks. Although the Order has no literal military tasks anymore³⁸, the duty of practical and spiritual battle-readiness is still valid: the Order has to fight the “*noble battle for the defence*

³⁵ CC art. 3 § 1.

³⁶ *Il carattere sopranazionale*, in DE MOJANA p. 27-31.

³⁷ ReC 1969, p. 23: “*The representatives of our Order to Foreign Governments (Ambassadors, Ministers, Chargé d’Affaires), should be imbued with the spirituality of the Order, and it is to be recommended that Knights in Obedience be at the disposal of the Order for this type of assignment. In this way, an apostolate of particular worth could be realized, an apostolate which might spread its effects to certain parts of society, otherwise unreachable, thus opening a path through sectors of the world that are in critical need of activities inspired by the Order’s aims*”. See also *Gaudium et Spes*, 73-90: *The Life of the Political Community*; and again *Gaudium et Spes*, 83-90: *Setting Up and International Community*.

³⁸ “*Utrum aliqua religio ordinari possit ad militandum*”, in ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Summa Teologica*, II^a-II^{ae}, q. 188, art. 3; G.G. MEERSSEMAN, *Le varie milizie di Gesù Cristo*, in *Ordo fraternitatis. Confraternite e pietà dei laici nel Medioevo*, Roma, 1977, vol. III pp. 1233-1272; A. LINAGE CONDE, *Militari, Ordini*, in DIP, V, 1978, coll. 1287-1299; F. MACOLLI, *Militari, Ordini* (Architettura), in DIP, V, 1978, coll. 1300-1319; J. AUER, *Militia Cristi*, in DS, X, 1980, coll. I 1210-1223.

and development of the human person”³⁹. Furthermore the Order Members are participants in the spiritual fight of the Christians “against princes and powers, against the rulers of this dark world, against evil spirits in high places” (Eph 6:12f). Since the Members of the Order recognize the image of God in every single individual, they are obliged to perform their service wherever the God-given dignity of human life⁴⁰ is endangered.

Chivalrous Order

The noblest chivalrous service to God and His Kingdom is today no longer conducted with the sword, but with word and deed, in public life and at home, in response to the indifferent, the mocking and all adversaries. The chivalrous person strives to be upright, strong and clear, unselfish and distinguished, simultaneously serious and joyful. Chivalrous service is given the weak, the poor and the lonely in service to God and His kingdom⁴¹. It may thus be said that God has placed His honour into the hands of “chivalrous” people. The Members of the Order of Malta are called to uphold this honour.

Nobiliary Order

While Members of the Order of Malta in former times traditionally belonged to the aristocracy, the emphasis today is on a nobility of spirit and conduct, which places duty above rights. Nobility⁴² in this deeper sense means: carrying more responsibility than others; knowing that one exists to stand up for the glory of God and for the God-given dignity of every person; being where the greater danger is; fighting base inclinations in oneself and in one’s surroundings. Such an attitude is realized in social responsibility, loyalty to the faith and the Church, readiness to uphold Christian tradition and commitment to a corresponding attitude to life and to the world in general.

³⁹ JOHN PAUL II, *Address*, 3.

⁴⁰ See the Encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*, and *Venice 2009*, p. 63-77.

⁴¹ *Christifideles Laici*, 41: “Through charity towards one’s neighbor, the lay faithful exercise and manifest their participation in the kingship of Christ, that is, in the power of the Son of man who ‘came not to be served but to serve’ (Mk 10:45)”.

⁴² See **C** art. 108 § 2: “Presentation of nobiliary proofs does not constitute in itself a right to be admitted to the Order”. See also DE MOJANA, p. 31-32.

5. THE PATRONS AND THE FOUNDER OF THE ORDER

Our Lady of Philermos

In the vicissitudes of their history, the Knights of the Order venerated on Rhodes the icon of the Mother of God of Mount Philermos. They honoured the Mother of God as Patroness of the Order, as portrayed in this sacred image, which has since accompanied the Order to Malta⁴³. On September 8th, the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Order today commemorates the Mother of God of Philermos. As Mother of Good Counsel, Mary calls on us all to do whatsoever the Lord says (Jn 2:5), and to serve Him. This is the perennial message of the Mother of God⁴⁴.

St John the Baptist

The Hospital of the young brotherhood in Jerusalem was under the patronage of St. John the Baptist⁴⁵ who in consequence became patron of the newly established Hospitaller Order. He is the greatest among the prophets (Mt 11:2-19), who steps aside and makes way for the Lord. By this example the Baptist encourages the Order of Malta to help to prepare the return in glory of the risen Lord (Mt 3:3, Is 40:3).

He calls the Members to conversion in remembrance of their Baptism (Mk 1:4), to look on “*the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world*” (Jn 1:29) and to witness the voice of Jesus Christ to His bridal people (Jn 3:29) “*as the friend of the bridegroom who listens to it*”. And he urges us not to take pride in ourselves, not to look for ours but for His honour: “*He must increase, but I must decrease*” (Jn 3:30).

Blessed Gerard

When the First Crusade entered Jerusalem in 1099, Blessed Fra' Gerard⁴⁶ was the *praepositus* of the Brotherhood and of the hospital near the church of St John the Baptist that he himself had founded, and out of which the Order developed. He is first mentioned as “*institutor ac praepositus Hierosolymitani xenodochii*”⁴⁷ in the Bull *Pie postulatio voluntatis* with which Pope Paschal II, on February 15th, 1113, took the hospital in Jerusalem under the Apostolic protection. We learn from him the

⁴³ The icon was kept in a special chapel in the church of St John at La Valletta. After the loss of Malta 1798 the icon was taken to Russia. Today it is found in the museum of Cetinje (Montenegro).

⁴⁴ See the Apostolic Exhortation *Marialis Cultus* and the Encyclical *Redemptoris Mater*.

⁴⁵ See JoS 6.

⁴⁶ C. D'AMATO, *Gerardo “de Saxo”*, in DIP, IV, 1977, col. 1056.

⁴⁷ The Latin text of the Bull *Pie Postulatio Voluntatis* can be found in *Cartulaire I*, p. 29-30. See also JoS 9, p. 17-26.

profound spirituality of servitude to the poor and sick, instructing us to perceive the Lord Himself in them (Mt 25:40) and to serve them as if they were Christ the Lord Himself. This is the origin of the ancient reference to the sick as “Our Lords the Sick”⁴⁸, and to the poor as “Our Lords the Poor”⁴⁹.

6. THE EIGHT-POINTED CROSS

Since the beginning the brothers of the hospital wore the cross on their Church Robes and mantles to honour God and the Holy Cross. In the tradition of the Order the eight-pointed white cross symbolises the eight Beatitudes⁵⁰ (Mt 5:3-12). By referring to the Sermon of the Mount (Mt 5:1-7, 29) the cross reminds the Members to follow this *Magna Charta* of Christian faith and to live in the new justice Christ demands.

The Rule of Raymond du Puy prescribes explicitly that “*all brothers from all Obediences, who now offer themselves, or in past times have already offered themselves, to God and the Holy Hospital of Jerusalem, wear on their breast, on their capes and mantles, the crosses for the honour of God and His Holy Cross; so that God, through this same sign, because of the faith, the action and the obedience, will keep us safe and defend us from the power of the devil in this century and in the future, in our soul and body, together with all our Christian benefactors*”⁵¹.

According to the ancient Ceremonials, the new Knights were given the mantle with the white cross with the following words: “*Here is the sign of the Cross, which you will wear on this mantle every day of your life in remembrance of Him Who suffered*

⁴⁸ “*Et quod fraters Hospitalis noctu dieque libenter custodiant infirmos tamquam eorum dominos*” (Statuta 1182, p. 427: “*And the brothers of the Hospital will care gratefully for the sick night and day, as if they were their lords*”). “*Encor fasons nos autre promession, que nule autre gens non fan, quar vos prometés d'estre sers et esclaf de nos seignors maladies*” (Esgarts, 121, in Cartulaire, II, p. 557: “*And moreover, we make another promise, which no other people make, that is you promise to be servants and slaves of our lords the sick*”). Also Jacques de Vitry, from outside the Order, witnesses: “*Pauperibus autem et infirmis, quos Dominos suos appellabant*”: “*To the poor and the sick, whom they called their Lords*” (J. DE VITRY *Histoire Orientale. Historia Orientalis*, introduction, éd. critique et traduction par J. DONNADIEU, Brepols, Turnhout 2008, c. LXIV: *De religione fratrum Hospitalis Sancti Joannis*, p. 254–260; the quote is at page 260).

⁴⁹ RAYMOND DU PUY, *Regula*, 2, p. 63. See also footnotes 152, 153, 186.

⁵⁰ *Vita Consecrata*, 33: *Bearing witness to the Gospel of the Beatitudes*. This passage is explicitly referred to consecrated life, but can be proportionally referred to all states of life.

⁵¹ “*Item omnes fratres omnium obedientiarum, qui nunc vel in antea offerunt se Deo et sancto Hospitali Jerosolimitano, cruces ad honorem Dei et sancte Crucis eiusdem in cappis et in mantellis secum defferant ante pectus, ut Deus per ipsum vexillum et fidem et operationem et obedientiam nos custodiat, et a diaboli potestate nos in hoc et in futuro seculo deffendat in anima et in corpore simul cum omnibus nostris benefactoribus Christianis*” (RAYMOND DU PUY, *Regula*, 19, p. 68).

death and passion on the Cross to save us, us sinners; may God through the cross and the obedience which you have vowed keep you safe and defend you now, in every time and forever from the devil's power. Amen"⁵².

The *Code de Rohan*⁵³ makes an explicit reference to the eight Beatitudes: "*This cross was given white to us as a sign of purity, which you must carry in your heart as you wear it externally, without spot or blemish. The eight points that you see in this are a sign of the eight beatitudes that you must always have in you, and they are: 1) to have spiritual contentment, 2) to live without malice, 3) to weep over your sins, 4) to humble yourself at insults, 5) to love justice, 6) to be merciful, 7) to be sincere and openhearted, 8) to suffer persecution. All these virtues you must engrave on your heart, for the consolation and preservation of your soul. And for that reason, I command you to wear it openly sewn on your clothing, on the left hand side of the heart and never to abandon it*".

7. THE THREE CLASSES OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE ORDER OF MALTA

Jesus Himself in the Gospel proposes two states of life. Celibacy "*for the Kingdom of Heaven*" (Mt 19:12) witnesses the hope of the fulfilment of God's promises in His heavenly Kingdom, where we "*neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like the angels in heaven*" (Mt 22:30). This state of life refers to the First Class in the Order of Malta.

In marriage, man and woman⁵⁴ refer to the sacred beginning of God's history with man. They live as it was "*in the beginning*" (Mt 19:4-8) when the hard-heartedness of man and woman had not yet destroyed their unity, and that of God and man. Marriage is also the sign of the love of God in Jesus Christ, faithful unto the very end even in His complete sacrifice on the Cross (Eph 5:25). This state of life regards the Second and Third Class of Members though these Classes also include unmarried Members.

In the Order of Malta these two complementary vocations can give a common witness for the redemption of fallen humanity, in order for it to return as it was "in

⁵² The Latin and Provençal Rituals of XIV and XV century say: "*Voici le signe de la croix que vous porterez sur ce manteau tous les jours de votre vie en remembrance de Celui qui a souffert mort et passion sur la croix pour nous sauver, nous pécheurs; que Dieu par la croix et par l'obéissance que vous avez promis vous garde et vous défende maintenant, en tous temps et à jamais du pouvoir du diable. Amen*". (Archives Départementales de la Haute-Garonne, Toulouse, mss. H10 e H12, provenienti dal Gran Priorato di Tolosa; Archives Départementales de la Drôme, Valence, ms. 20J94 del 1366; Archives Communales d'Arles, ms. GG 76 del XIV secolo, proveniente dal Gran Priorato di Saint-Gilles).

⁵³ *Code de Rohan*, p. 482.

⁵⁴ Regarding the role and dignity of women see: *Mulieris Dignitatem*.

the beginning” and as it is promised by God in His new forthcoming heavenly reality. This witness they owe especially to the poor, whom they serve according to their different obligations.

The **First Class** consists of the Professed Knights (or Knights of Justice) and Professed Chaplains (Conventual Chaplains), who make the **Profession** (CC art. 8A) of the Evangelical Counsels of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience (CIC 673-683 and CCC 915).

The **Second Class** refers to the Knights and Dames in Obedience (CC art. 8B), who, by virtue of their specific **Promise** of Obedience to their Superiors, bind themselves to the Order with the obligation to “*strive for the perfection of Christian life in conformity with the obligation of their state, in the spirit of the Order*” (CC art. 9 § 2). The **Third Class**⁵⁵ consists of the Members of the Order who – although not bound by religious vows (Profession) or the Promise (CC art. 8C) – give their **Commitment** to the mission of the Order, devoting “*themselves to the charitable activities of the Order according to the provisions of the Code*” (CC art. 9 § 3; C art. 116 and 236), and living as model Catholic Christians.

The charism of the Order of Malta proposes to every Member an engagement according to their different “*state in life*”⁵⁶ and canonical status. Irrespective of these differences all Members must be aware that they are Members of a religious order⁵⁷. The difference of *status* does not compromise the unity of the Order of Malta. As there is a universal vocation to sanctity which is answered in innumerable different (but simultaneously complementary) ways of life within one Church, there is a complementary relationship between the different ways and ranks of Membership⁵⁸. The Members of the First Class make the religious **Profession** according to the *Code of Canon Law*. The **Promise** of the Class in Obedience does not lead to a change of canonical status, but includes a religious obligation, which gives the Members in Obedience an *intermediate*⁵⁹ place between the First and the Third Class; and the **Commitment**⁶⁰ of the Members of the Third Class does not only create a moral

⁵⁵ JoS 5, p. 61-83.

⁵⁶ C art. 94 § 1.

⁵⁷ CC art. 8 § 1; ReC 1969, p. 11; see also above, chapter II § 2, and the Preamble.

⁵⁸ *Lumen Gentium*, 40: “*The Lord Jesus, the divine Teacher and Model of all perfection, preached holiness of life to each and everyone of His disciples of every condition. [...] Thus it is evident to everyone, that all the faithful of Christ of whatever rank or status, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity*”. And *ibidem*, 41: “*The classes and duties of life are many, but holiness is one*”.

⁵⁹ ReC 1969, p. 20: “*The Knights of Obedience hold an **intermediate** position within the three classes of the Order*”.

⁶⁰ The Commitment is made during the Investiture Ceremony.

obligation but has also religious character, by giving them “*the Membership of a religious Order*”⁶¹. They participate in the decision processes of the Order and can assume some leadership functions such as Presidents of Associations.

The three Classes enable the Members to pursue the mission of the Order of Malta together but in different ways according to their Class of Membership and their personal vocations. They are three specific and complementary responses to the call given by God to the Order of Malta⁶².

III. FUNDAMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE ORDER

The mission of the Order of Malta is summarized in its two fundamental principles of its charism: the preservation, protection and witness of the faith (*tuitio fidei*) and the service to the sick and the poor (*obsequium pauperum*)⁶³. Those wishing to participate in this mission must:

- be faithful to the Church and be familiar with the faith of the Church as well as with the history and spirituality of the Order of Malta;
- consciously live their lives in the Church and in the Order as followers of Christ;
- be prepared to accept the obligations of the mission of the Order in accordance with their Class in the Order.

1. THE WORD OF GOD

The fundamental basis of the faith is the knowledge of the Word of God as revealed in the Scriptures. Regular reading of the Bible is therefore essential. It is especially recommended to read and contemplate the Readings of the Holy Mass of the Day⁶⁴.

⁶¹ ReC 1969, p. 11: “*Regulations for the Members of the Third Class*”.

⁶² The Chapter General of Margat celebrated on March 14, 1181 under the Master Roger des Molins, list as participants clerics, lay-professed and “convers”, members in a wider sense, who promised to do good for the Order; to protect the Order and to keep the patrimony safe. See K. KLEMENT, *Gottes Gastgeber. Die Ritter des Hospitals von Jerusalem. Die vatikanische Handschrift Vat. Lat. 4852*, 2010, p. 41.

⁶³ JoS 3.

⁶⁴ In some countries monthly published booklets like “*Magnificat*” are available and recommended for this purpose.

2. KNOWLEDGE OF THE FAITH OF THE CHURCH AND OF THE HISTORY AND THE TRADITION OF THE ORDER OF MALTA

The participation of the baptized Christian in the mission of the Church⁶⁵, and also in the Order of Malta, with the charism entrusted to it⁶⁶, presupposes that the baptized know What and Whom they believe (2Tm 1:12) and that they desire to deepen their familiarity with the tradition and teachings of the Church.

All Members must be deeply committed to the principal of “*sentire cum Ecclesia*”⁶⁷, that is “*to be in consonance with the Church*”.

In addition, all Members of the Order must be familiar with the rules, history and spirituality of the Order of Malta, in order to understand ever more profoundly its mission in today’s times and to find their own place within it⁶⁸.

3. SPIRITUAL LIFE

Knowing Christ is not only an intellectual process; the life of the faithful must also be stamped by a vital relationship with Jesus Christ, the Word of God made flesh, made possible by the Holy Spirit. The Christian is thus formed by living and praying with the Church, and even more strongly by the Sacraments, especially regular Confession and frequent reception of the Holy Eucharist. This will enable the Members “*to put on the amour of light*”, to live the Virtues⁶⁹ and to receive the Gifts of the Holy Spirit⁷⁰.

Thus, besides spiritual training, ongoing spiritual life is required. This includes praying⁷¹, in its different forms, and the discernment of the will of God for personal decisions as well as decisions for the Order.

These two fundamental requirements (“*spiritual training*” and the “*school of spiritual life*”) are not to be confused with the practice of *tuitio fidei*, which is an outward-going service of nurturing, witnessing and defending the faith. The *tuitio fidei*

⁶⁵ *Lumen Gentium*, 33.

⁶⁶ See *Perfectae Caritatis*, 1.

⁶⁷ ReC 1969, p. 24-25. *Religious and Human Promotion*, 20-27; *Vita Consecrata*, 46; *Potissimum Institutioni*, 21-25; *Service of Authority and Obedience*, 13f; JoS 7.

⁶⁸ For the formation to the Order’s specific charisma the following are useful: the *Constitutional Charter and Code*; the *Missal Proper* of the Order (2005²), the *Spiritual Recommendations* (1993), the regularly issued *Journals of Spirituality* (JoS) of the Order (2000-2010), the *Ceremonials* for admission to the three Classes, under way of publication.

⁶⁹ See JoS 8.

⁷⁰ See above, footnote 16.

⁷¹ See JoS 10.

presupposes a *schola fidei* (knowledge of the faith of the Church) and an *exercitium fidei* (formation and experience in spiritual life).

It is the task of the Pories, Subpories and Associations to provide appropriate theological and spiritual formation⁷² for their Members in the context of an annual programme.

4. OBSEQUIUM PAUPERUM

The *Constitutional Charter* and *Code* dedicate several articles to the commitment of the Members to the charism of the *obsequium pauperum*. All Members of the Order are obliged “to devote themselves to the charitable activities of the Order, according to the provisions of the Code”⁷³.

Code art. 236

“Obsequium pauperum”

Par. 1 — In search of a tangible response to the love of Christ, the first Members of the Order recognized the Lord and served Him in sick pilgrims in the Holy Land. *Obsequium pauperum* has its origin in the divine compassion for the misery of the world, which obliges the Members of the Order to serve Jesus Christ, who is present in the sick.

Par. 2 — With respect to the other purpose of the Order, *tuitio fidei*, the Members of the Order, recognizing the image of God in each individual, are especially called upon to become involved in those situations where human life is threatened in its God-given essence and dignity.

Par. 3 — Consequently, the Order is the tangible way for its Members to fulfil the supreme commandment of love for God and neighbour, to honour God and sanctify themselves in the imitation of Christ and in communion with the Church.

Par. 4 — The charisma of “*obsequium pauperum*” leads Members to encounter the Lord in the sick through personal service. All Members are, therefore, called on to practice, personally and regularly, the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

⁷² With this regard, see *Some Points Regarding the Formative Aspect (Mutuae Relationes, 23-35)*.

⁷³ CC art. 9 § 3.

By serving the sick and the poor, the Members of the Order put into practice the Word of the Lord: “*For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me*” (Mt 25:35-36)⁷⁴.

This service demands a personal commitment by every individual, in order to enter into a concrete relationship with those in need. This relationship must not be condescending, but must be marked by friendship and real respect for those being assisted, for their own sake. Service to the needy must have priority in the works of the Order. Although the tasks can vary according to the nature of the work as well as the training and abilities of the Members, the personal relationship to those being served should never be absent⁷⁵.

*“When a sick person arrives, he shall be received thus: to begin with, he shall confess, religiously, his sins to a priest, he shall take Holy Communion, then he shall be taken to bed, and then each day, as if he were the Lord, according to the possibilities of the house, he shall be fed in a spirit of charity, before the brothers break their fast; and each Sunday, the Epistle and the Gospel shall be sung in that house, and holy water shall be sprinkled on him during the procession”*⁷⁶.

It is always insufficient to describe the charism of *obsequium pauperum* in words. In its deep and real sense it can only be experienced during and in service. It is alive in the Order and in the Members only insofar as it is implemented.

All Members should have or acquire the necessary skills for their service of the needy. For example, they should be trained in “First Aid”, in order to be skilled as the good Samaritan has been according the standards of his time. But they also “*need a ‘formation of the heart’: they need to be led to that encounter with God in Christ which awakens their love and opens their spirits to others. As a result, love of neighbor will no longer be for them*”

⁷⁴ In the old statutes, the expression “*Our Lords the Sick*” is repeatedly found: “*How the Lords the Sick must be received and served*” (RAYMOND DU PUY, *Regula*, 16, p. 67); “*The brothers have to care for the Sick as our Lords*” (*Statuta 1182*, p. 427); “*Because you promise to be the servants and slaves of our Lords, the Sick*” (*Esgarts*, 121, p. 557). The prayer in the palace of our Lords the Sick at Acco, where the invocation: “*You, our Lords the Sick, pray...*” is repeated eleven times” (*Consuetudines 1251-1271*; L. LE GRAND, *La prière des malades dans les Hopitaux de l’Ordre de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem*, in “*Bibliothèque de l’Ecole de Chartres*”, 1986, vol. 57, p. 325-338; E. NASALLI ROCCA, *La preghiera collettiva dei malati negli Ospedali Medievali e particolarmente negli Ospedali Gerosolimitani*, in “*Atti e Memorie dell’Accademia di Storia dell’Arte Sanitaria*”, XL, 1941, fasc. 3, p.1-7; ReC 1969, p. 22. See above, footnote 48.

⁷⁵ There are countless possibilities, e.g., visiting sick or lonely elderly people, caring for homeless or terminal ill people, helping children in distress, assisting (illegal) immigrants. See DE MOJANA, p. 25-27.

⁷⁶ RAYMOND DU PUY, *Regula*, 16, p. 67: “*...cum venerit ibi infirmus, ita recipiatur, primum peccata sua presbitero confessus religiose, communicetur, et postea ad lectum deportetur et ibi quasi dominus secundum posse domus omni die, antequam fratres eant pransum, caritative reficiatur, et in cunctis dominicis diebus epistola et evangelium in ea domo cantetur et cum processione aqua benedicta aspergatur*”. See also *Statuta 1182*, p. 427-428.

a commandment imposed, so to speak, from without, but a consequence deriving from their faith, a faith which becomes active through love (cf. Gal 5:6)⁷⁷.

Tuitio fidei and *obsequium pauperum*⁷⁸ must be understood as a unity in diversity. The witness and protection of the faith remain incomplete without the devotion to “God’s poor”. Besides, this is the privileged place where Christ wants to be sought and found: here is the place where He wants His disciples to witness His presence and the God-given dignity of every human being. “Consequently, the best defence of God and man consists precisely in love”⁷⁹. In defending the Faith, the chivalrous person stands up for the true divinity of Christ, who shared in the flesh all the sufferings of mankind. In standing by those who are suffering⁸⁰ he serves the true humanity of Christ who, also in suffering, death and resurrection, is God. *Tuitio fidei* and *obsequium pauperum* are service to the whole Christ and whole service to mankind. The identification of Christ with the poor (Mt 25:35-37) “is not a simple invitation to charity: it is a page of Christology which sheds a ray of light on the mystery of Christ. By these words, no less than by the orthodoxy of her doctrine, the Church measures her fidelity as the Bride of Christ”⁸¹. The Popes have always emphasized the spiritual dimension of the service of the Order of Malta, realized especially in the commitment to respond to all forms of poverty. Pope John Paul II encouraged the Knights and Dames to keep up “the praiseworthy initiatives that your Order carries out in various areas of moral and spiritual poverty. They are inspired by a great availability to the needy,” and, said the Pope, they help “establishing a new world where dignity and hope are restored to whoever is oppressed by modern forms of slavery and wounded in body and spirit”⁸².

⁷⁷ *Deus Caritas Est*, 31a.

⁷⁸ See JoS 3; Venice 2009, p. 43-50, 57-62, 79-85.

⁷⁹ *Deus Caritas Est*, 31c.

⁸⁰ See the Letter of John Paul II *The Dignity of the Suffering Person*.

⁸¹ *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 49; JoS 1. See also *Christifideles Laici*, 53: “The sick and the suffering “...from century to century the Christian community in revealing and communicating its healing love and the consolation of Jesus Christ, has re-enacted the gospel parable of the Good Samaritan in caring for the vast multitude of persons who are sick and suffering... At times the lay faithful’s presence in these institutions is total and conclusive. It is just such people that the call becomes the living sign of Jesus Christ and His Church in showing love towards the sick and suffering”. And *Ibidem*, 54: “...This presence is not simply an object of the Church’s love and service, but as an active and responsible participant in the work of evangelization and salvation...”.

⁸² JOHN PAUL II, *Address*, 2. Therefore it is necessary to be aware of the manifold forms of modern poverty: the easily overseen “new forms of poverty in the world” that cannot be overcome only by political instruments (*Centesimus annus*, 10), the “moral and spiritual poverty caused by ‘overdevelopment’” (*Redemptoris Missio*, 59) and the “many other forms of poverty” including “the denial or the limitation of human rights” (*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 15). The whole Church must be aware of the “preferential option for the poor, which is [...] not limited to material poverty, since it is well known that there are many other forms of poverty, especially in modern society — not only economic but cultural and spiritual poverty as well” (*Centesimus Annus*, 57).

Recognizing that the Members of the Order of Malta are called to render an important service to the sick and to society, a service which demands a great sacrifice, Pope Benedict XVI reminds them: *“In every one who is sick, no matter who, you must recognize that you serve Christ; let them perceive through your actions and words the signs of His merciful love... To carry out your ‘mission’ ”* – the Holy Father recommends – *“you must seek [...] to ‘put on the weapons of the light’ (Rom 13:12): the Word of the Lord, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the grace of the Sacraments, the theological and cardinal virtues; you must fight against the evil and sin which darken our existence”*⁸³. Thus the Members have also to promote the “culture of life” by respecting and protecting life from conception to natural death, by declining ethically unacceptable ways of biological or medical approaches, and by caring for family values.

5. WAY OF LIFE

- All Members of the Order are obliged *“to conduct their lives in an exemplary manner in conformity with the teachings and precepts of the Church”* (CC art. 9 §3)⁸⁴, and follow the specific rules for their Class in the Order set out in the *Constitutional Charter*, the *Code* and this document.
- All Members, as Members of the Order of Malta, are called upon to make a clear and open declaration of their Catholic faith. This applies especially wherever there is hostility, and in dealing with persons who do not know Christ and the Church. The form of this witness to faith depends on the particular personal, family and professional situation and on the character and level of formation and experience of the individual. But in all cases, chivalrous candour (Act 4:31; Eph 6:19) should be accompanied by humility: *“so be shrewd as serpents and simple as doves”* (Mt 10:16).
- All Members should know the social teachings of the Church and in their public and professional life have to promote a just order in accordance with their position and opportunities⁸⁵.

⁸³ See above, chapter III § 3 and BENEDICT XVI, *Homily*, p. 119.

⁸⁴ E.g., divorced and remarried persons, whose previous marriage has not been annulled by the Church, cannot become nor remain Members of the Order of Malta.

⁸⁵ The Popes have never failed to point out this theme: see, e.g., the Encyclical Letters *Populorum Progressio*, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, and *Caritas in Veritate*, and the document *Compendio Dottrina Sociale*.

- All Members of the Order should participate in the life of their local church to work as a leaven in society and to promote the coming of God's kingdom (Mt 13:33).
- All Members should constantly remind themselves that, everywhere and at all times, they are members of the Church and representatives of the Order. They should be aware that, in their public and private behaviour, not only their own reputation but also that of the Order is at stake.
- Members of all three Classes are called to live and act as a "family". As the first Christians they should be identified by "*how they love one another*"⁸⁶. They should avoid disputes among themselves, nor speak ill of one another, and live in unity.
- The *Regula* of Raymond du Puy extorts, in the spirit of the Gospel: "*If two or more brothers are together, and one of them behaves badly in his life, the other brother must not slander him, neither openly, nor with the prior; but first, he should reprimand the brother privately, and if the brother will not amend, then he should take with him two or three more brothers to reprimand him. And if the brother amends, then the other will be very glad; if not, then he should write about the guilt in secret to the Master, and it will be done to him according to the orders of the Master will have ordered. And no brother will accuse another brother, unless he can well prove the accusation; if he does it, then he is not a good brother and he will have to serve the same punishment which would have been served by the accused one, if the accusation had been proved*"⁸⁷

⁸⁶ "I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn 13:34-35).

⁸⁷ RAYMOND DU PUY, *Regula*, 17, p. 67: "*Si duo vel amplius fratres insimul fuerint, et unus illorum nequiter male vivendo se habuerit, alter frater non eum diffamare debet neque populo neque priori, sed primum per se ipsum castigare eum, et si se noluerit castigare, adhibeat secum duos vel tres ad eum castigandum. Et si se emendaverit, inde gaudere debet; si autem emendare noluerit, tunc culpam suam scribens secreta mittat magistro, et secundum hoc quod magister iusserit, de eo fiat. Atque ullus fratrum alium fratrem suum non accuset nisi bene posset probare; si fecerit, ipse frater bonus non est et eandem penam sustineat quam accusatus, si probari posset, sustineret*". And compare Mt 18:15-17: "*If your brother sins (against you), go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that 'every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell the church. If he refuses to listen even to the church, then treat him as you would a Gentile or a tax collector*"; and Gal 6:1-5: "*Brothers, even if a person is caught in some transgression, you who are spiritual should correct that one in a gentle spirit, looking to yourself, so that you also may not be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so you will fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he is deluding himself. Each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason to boast with regard to himself alone, and not with regard to someone else; for each will bear his own load*". The passage of the Rule of Raymond du Puy here quoted, as well as a few others, is very near to the Rule of St Agustin: cf. AUGUSTIN *Regula*, I, pp. 426-427, §§8-9; RMO pp. 23-24 § 6. Paragraph 4 of the Rule of Raymond du Puy is taken from the same paragraph 4 of the Rule of St Agustin.

- Before any legal steps are taken against another Member, the Superiors in the Order are to be given the opportunity to resolve the dispute. An ongoing breach of this obligation can lead to expulsion from the Order.
- Members should treat their Superiors with respect and goodwill. If a Member sees any cause for criticism, this should be put forward in an appropriate manner, avoiding harm to the authority of the Order⁸⁸.

⁸⁸ ReC 1969, “*Spiritual Guidelines for All Members of the Order*”, p. 29-31.

Third Class

IV. FUNDAMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE THIRD CLASS

Constitutional Charter art. 8 § 1C

The Classes

The Third Class consists of those Members who do not make religious vows or the Promise but who live according to the norms of the Church and are prepared to commit themselves to the Order and the Church.

Code art. 116

Duties

In accordance with the Constitution, Members of the Third Class shall conduct themselves so as to give Christian example in their private and public lives, thus putting into effect the tradition of the Order. It is incumbent to them to collaborate effectively in its hospitaller and social works.

1. MEMBERSHIP IN THE ORDER

The Rules of the Order underline that all its Members, whatever their canonical status is, belong to this unique “family”, and are invited to live its charism *tuitio fidei* and *obsequium pauperum*⁸⁹.

Those who request or are invited to enter the Order, in one of the categories of the Third Class, must be aware that although they do not become religious – strictly speaking – like the Professed Knights, and are not bound by a special religious Promise (like the Members in Obedience), yet they become Members, in a different way, of a religious order⁹⁰. This real participation of all Members in a religious order has to be in reference to the teaching of the Second Vatican Council about the call to “*the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity*” common to all the baptized “*of every condition and rank*”⁹¹. Consequently every Member, “*by virtue of his Christian vocation and the special charism of the Order of Malta, is called to witness to the Faith and to Charity, to know and observe special duties and the rule of Spirituality, in order to glorify God, to sanctify himself and to build up the kingdom of*

⁸⁹ The following paragraphs partly repeat what has been described earlier in this document, in order to make the explanation for the Third Class better understandable.

⁹⁰ See CC art. 8 § 1; ReC 1969, p. 11. The membership in the Order of the Members of the Third Class can be compared to that of the Third Orders of the Mendicant Orders and of the Oblates, while “*the bond established by the promise is stronger than the promise of the Tertiaries or Oblates*” (ReC 1969, p. 20). See also footnote 133.

⁹¹ *Lumen Gentium*, 40; and see above, chapter I § 1-2.

God in the world"⁹². There is no "spirituality" specific to Members of the Third Class distinguishing them from the other two Classes, but only differences in the ways of living this unique call to baptismal sanctity. The Members of the Third Class are often involved in a demanding professional life, in family duties with all that these imply, and are also expected to take part in the local activities of the church.

2. WITNESSING THROUGH AN EXEMPLARY LIFE

The Members of the Order are to conduct their lives in an exemplary manner in conformity with the teachings and precepts of the Church⁹³. The *Constitutional Charter* acknowledges fully the teachings of the Constitution *Lumen Gentium* of the Second Vatican Council on the role of the secular faithful in the Church. A teaching elaborated again in the Decree *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, and further expounded by Pope John-Paul II in his Post Synodal Exhortation *Christifideles Laici*. The first call Members of the Order should hear, is the one addressed to all faithful, to "exercise the apostolate... by their activity directed to [...] the penetrating and perfecting of the temporal order through the spirit of the Gospel. In this way, their temporal activity openly bears witness to Christ"⁹⁴. Even before any specific involvement in the Order's charitable work, the commitment of its Members' must be exercised in the first place in "the ordinary conditions of life... Neither family concerns nor other secular affairs should be irrelevant to their spiritual life"⁹⁵. The same Council text underlines the fundamental human virtues: "They should also hold in high esteem professional skill, family and civic spirit, and the virtues relating to social customs, namely, honesty, justice, sincerity, kindness, and courage, without which no true Christian life can exist"⁹⁶. The Council further underlines that moved by the spirit of divine charity the

⁹² *Spiritual Recommendations*, p. 6.

⁹³ **CC** art. 9 § 3; and **C** art. 116.

⁹⁴ *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 2.

⁹⁵ *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 4.

⁹⁶ *Ibidem*; and see JoS 8. The rite of the Perpetual Profession contains many references to the virtues of the Knight. What the *Code de Rohan* proposes for the Knights of Justice is proportionally proposed, according to the different states of life, to the Members of the Second and of the Third Class: "Holding a light-up torch signifying the **Charity** which a true Knight should always have" (*Code de Rohan*, p. 476); "Take this sword in your hand, so that you can observe what you have promised with the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, with whose help you will be inflamed by **Hope, Justice and Charity**" (*Code de Rohan*, p. 479); "The Knight must be pure and neat from every vice and love all virtues, particularly **Honour**, which is always accompanied by the four Cardinal virtues: because with **Prudence**, which is the first, you will consider the past, ordain the present and foresee to the future; with **Justice**, which is the second, you will keep public and private things, keeping the balance level; with **Fortitude**, which is the third, you will show the grandness of your soul in all occasions worth of a true and Religious Knight; and with **Temperance**, which is the last one, you will regulate your senses and affections to make yourself an accomplished and honoured Knight, therefore you will strive to adorn and charge yourselves always with these virtues" (*Code de Rohan*, p. 478).

faithful will “really [...] express the spirit of the beatitudes in their lives”⁹⁷, words which those who bear the eight-pointed cross cannot but fully appreciate.

3. LIFE OF PRAYER AND CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Among the practical directives given for the Members of the Third Class very important are those concerning the life of prayer and Christian formation. Many of them are relevant to every baptized. The Synod of the Bishops (2008), dedicated to the Word of God, strongly recommends to everybody the reading of Holy Scriptures⁹⁸. Prayer has to be complemented by Christian formation. Many texts of the Second Vatican Council “earnestly exhort laymen - each according to his own gifts of intelligence and learning – to be more diligent in doing what they can to explain, defend, and properly apply Christian principles to the problems of our era in accordance with the mind of the Church”⁹⁹, terms in which one would have no trouble recognising the *tuitio fidei* dear to the Order¹⁰⁰.

The protection and witness¹⁰¹ of the faith concerns all Members of the Order of Malta. Members often find themselves in a situation of facing doctrinal deviations, especially in the ethical field. The Apostle Peter exhorts: “always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope you have” (1Pt 3:15).

⁹⁷ *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 4.

⁹⁸ *Verbum Domini*, 24, 75, 84-88.

⁹⁹ *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 6; see also the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*. ReC 1969, p. 23: “The history of the Order teaches us to be outposts of the Church and to place ourselves on the battle-line beyond which the Church is in danger of being attacked by a hostile world. Through the centuries we have fought with the weapons that were at the time most adequate. At present, we use the most modern scientific means to help the sick as well as those who are in danger, and especially where the danger is the greatest. Let us train ourselves and our friends to be ready in case of war and disaster. Let us take care of our friends and of our enemies, bearing witness to Christ wherever we happen to be. The poorest leper in a distant jungle, as well as anyone who suffers and does not know Christ or denies Him, is our neighbour. Whatever we do for the sick in our homeland, every training course we follow which begins with the teaching of the elements of first aid and with an introduction to the wonders of Christian truth, must be subordinate to the aims of those great and ancient, but always present traditions: the care of the sick, the assistance to the poor and the apostolate among those who are away from Christ, particularly in cases of emergency”.

¹⁰⁰ “Today the defence of the Faith is expressed most of all by bearing witness to Christian truth through one’s words and life. This presupposes, as preliminary condition, that one should be well instructed in those truths and well convinced that they must be professed bravely and firmly, as it is requested to a Knight which honours the word he has given. In this perspective, it is dear to me to entrust ideally to the Members of the Order of Malta the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which has recently been published in Latin” (JOHN PAUL II, *Address on the Occasion of the Presentation of the Credential Letters*, October 13, 1997, in “L’Osservatore Romano”, 13-14 ottobre 1997).

¹⁰¹ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 21- 24 and 41.

4. PARTICIPATING CONCRETELY IN THE WORKS OF THE ORDER

“To devote oneself to the charitable activities of the Order” is an essential part of the Members’ duties¹⁰². Of course, and the texts speak in this sense, the participation in the works of the Order must take into account family or professional duties; the priority being with these obligations.

The generosity of the Members of the Order should manifest itself, preferably, in the charitable activities of the Order itself. Such participation will be all the more effective, if the Members take the trouble to acquire the necessary qualifications¹⁰³. Of course, the fullness of participation is achieved when one has direct contact with our Lords the sick or the poor. When doing so, it is Christ Himself Whom we recognize and worship in them.

V. REGULATIONS FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE THIRD CLASS

Members are obliged to work on and deepen their own spiritual life continuously. Therefore it is firmly recommended to them:

1. To receive frequently and regularly the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Penance.
2. To observe daily prayers, especially morning and evening prayers and the daily prayer of the Members of the Order. The Rosary¹⁰⁴, the Angelus and parts of the Prayer of the Hours¹⁰⁵, are recommended as well as the tradition to pray for each other especially the Members and friends of the Order who are ill, or in need or who are deceased.
3. To participate yearly at a retreat aimed at deepening the inner spiritual life and to look for regular guidance from a spiritual director and/or confessor. This also

¹⁰² CC art. 9 §3; and see above, chapter III § 4: “Regulations for All Members of the Order”.

¹⁰³ See *Spiritual Recommendations*, 5, p. 10: “As far as their family and professional duties allow, Members of the Third Class should qualify themselves in first-aid, life saving or other activities. This is in accordance with article 136 of the Code, wherein they are obliged to collaborate where possible in hospitaller or social welfare works”.

¹⁰⁴ *Marialis Cultus*, 40-55; *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*.

¹⁰⁵ “The laity, too, are encouraged to recite the divine office, either with the priests, or among themselves, or even individually” (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 100). “It is recommended [...] to celebrate, according to circumstances, some parts of the Liturgy of the Hours: it is a prayer of the Church and makes one heart and one soul of all, wherever they are dispersed. The same exhortation is also addressed to the lay people” (*IGLH*, 32 and 27).

provides for a good occasion to reflect on and examine, whether the Membership in the Order is given enough importance shaping one's life.

4. To keep themselves informed about the concerns and topics of the Church in its dealings with society at large and with respect to the life of the individual.
5. The Members shall take part regularly and frequently at the meetings and religious celebrations of the national or regional organisation of the Order they belong to.
6. The Members of the Third Class shall make use of the specific initiatives offered by the Pories or Associations, aimed at helping them to deepen their knowledge of the faith and of the history, traditions and spirituality of the Order and to grow in spiritual life.
7. The Members of the Third Class must involve themselves in the works of the Order according to their own possibilities and individual talents and to the recommendations and request of their Superiors in the Order¹⁰⁶. Also in the surroundings of their own family, parish and local community¹⁰⁷, the Members of the Third Class are called upon to serve the sick and the poor.
8. Each Member must make efforts to lead a life appropriate to his or her social position, but marked by a degree of moderation. Luxury and excessive expenditures are to be avoided. The Members are called upon to make sacrifices in order to support those who are suffering, following the precept of the Gospel, "*quod superest date eleemosynam*" ("from the plenty give to the poor", cf. Lk 11:41), They are expected to support financially the works of the Order having regard to their family duties (see the following paragraph). In this spirit they will promptly pay the annual contributions and also, as far as possible, donate additionally to the works of the Order.
9. The Members must not neglect their obligations towards their families with respect to their duties in the Order. They are also called upon to set an example of love and fidelity in their own family to counteract the decline in family culture. "*Where Christianity pervades the entire mode of family life, and gradually transforms it, one will find there both the practice and an excellent school of the lay apostolate*"¹⁰⁸.

¹⁰⁶ The term "Superior" in this context extends to the functions of "legal" Superiors like Priors, Regents and Presidents and includes - according to their mandate - regional Delegates etc.

¹⁰⁷ The obligation within the sphere of the Order shall not detach the Members from their parish and diocese.

¹⁰⁸ *Lumen Gentium*, 35.

10. Married people decide individually to become a Member of the Order of Malta. The entrance of one part does not affect the free choice of the other. For those couples, of whom both have taken their decision to join the Order, Membership can be an occasion and help to progress together in their spiritual life and to serve the needy in harmony of common purpose. Married Members, their families and houses can also become a vital vineyard for the Order's spiritual life, its charitable actions and a birthplace for vocations of young people to all three Classes of the Order¹⁰⁹.
11. The Members of the Order of Malta should be role model citizens and exercise Christian influence within their circles. *“The laity, by their very vocation, seek(s) the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God. They live in the world, that is, in each and in all of the secular professions and occupations. They live in the ordinary circumstances of family and social life, from which the very web of their existence is woven. They are called there by God that by exercising their proper function and led by the spirit of the Gospel they may work for the sanctification of the world from within as a leaven. In this way they may make Christ known to others, especially by the testimony of a life resplendent in faith, hope and charity [...] Christians must be to the world what the soul is to the body”*¹¹⁰. In so far as it is within their influence, the Members of the Order have to witness the social teachings of the Church¹¹¹.

VI. ADMISSION TO THE THIRD CLASS

Code art. 108

Admission of Members of the Third Class

Par. 1 — For admission to the Order, the candidate must be proposed to the Grand Master either by a member of the Sovereign Council with the consent of the Prior or the President of the Association, through the Chancery of the Grand Magistry, or by the Prior or the President of the Association.

Par. 2 — Presentation of nobiliary proofs does not constitute in itself a right to be admitted to the Order.

¹⁰⁹ *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, 41: “The Christian family, which is truly a domestic Church (*Lumen Gentium*, 11), has always offered and continues to offer favourable conditions for the birth of vocations”.

¹¹⁰ *Lumen gentium*, 31, 38; *Gaudium et Spes*, 33-39. See also the Encyclicals *Deus Caritas Est* and *Spe Salvi*.

¹¹¹ *Compendio Dottirna Sociale*.

1. REGULATIONS OR THE SELECTION OF CANDIDATES

- New candidates have to be aware that they are about to join a religious order. In the past, the admission to the Order has sometimes been misunderstood as an award for past merits or the admission to an honorific Catholic circle. They have to be conscious of the serious consequences of admission to the Order.
- Candidates must have a suitable and distinguished personal background and be fitting for Membership in the Order.
- Candidates have to be steadfast and loyal in their Catholic faith and be prepared to commit themselves for their faith and for the Church.
- Candidates must be willing and able to play an active part in the Order. Previous activities for the Church or the Order are the best proof of this qualification.
- The candidate's qualification has to be confirmed by those Members who take the responsibility of presenting the candidate (sponsors).
- The Order should become a spiritual home for new Members, who must be well aware that they are becoming Members of a religious Order. Persons who are much engaged with other Catholic orders, secular institutions or New Communities or Movements, and see the Order simply as an additional field of activity or even worse as an additional decoration, cannot become convincing and reliable Members capable of living the true nature of the Order.
- Membership in organisations hostile to the Church – such as Free Masonry – is an impediment for Membership in the Order of Malta. The same criterion should be applied if Membership in a specific organisation would put the reputation of the Order at stake.

The admission of Chaplains to the Order shall be considered with regard of the pastoral needs of the Members, Volunteers, employees, and works of the Order¹¹².

¹¹² See *Regulations for Chaplains*, art. 6.

2. THE PREPARATORY YEAR

Code art. 109

Preparatory year

The reception of Knights, Dames and both male and female Donats must be preceded by a preparatory period of one year during which the candidate becomes acquainted with the history of the Order and participates in its works and programmes. The Sovereign Council has the power to dispense with this requirement in individual cases.

3. REGULATIONS FOR THE PREPARATORY YEAR

For the preparatory period of one year prior to the admission into the Third Class, the Pories and Associations establish rules in which the measures for introduction into the charism and nature of the Order as well as participation in the life and services of the Order are compulsorily regulated.

The rules must contain the following elements:

- The obligation of the candidate to participate in a course of initial formation. The course will have to last two continuous days; or, alternatively, more single days within a longer period of time. The course will take place in the first half of the preparatory year and, according to the regulations of each Priory and Association, it will offer to the candidate a general introduction into the spirituality, works, rules, history, and tradition of the Order.
- The strong recommendation to the candidate to participate in a spiritual retreat to discern his vocation to join the Order.
- The nomination of at least two sponsors, who accompany the candidate during the Preparatory Year and who are responsible for his or her integration and involvement in the Order; this responsibility will continue also for the first years following admission.
- The obligation of the candidate to take part in the Order's events and initiatives and to perform, whenever possible, charitable works within the works of the Order.

- The recommendation to participate in a pilgrimage of the Order to Lourdes during the Preparatory Year. Should this not be possible, the obligation to make up this pilgrimage within the three years following admission.
- The candidate must make himself familiar with the main texts of the Church regarding the Lay Apostolate:
 - the Catechism of the Catholic Church
 - Second Vatican Council’s Constitution *Lumen Gentium*;
 - Second Vatican Council’s Decree *Apostolicam Actuositatem*;
 - Pope John Paul II’s Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici*;
 - Pope Benedict XVI’s Encyclical Letters *Deus Caritas Est*¹¹³ and *Caritas in Veritate*.
- The decision of the Priory and Association requesting the admission of a candidate by the Grand Master and the Sovereign Council cannot be taken earlier than 11 months after the formal decision of the Priory and Association admitting the candidate to the Preparatory Year. The dates of begin and end of the Preparatory Year must be noted in the application.

4. FURTHER DETERMINATIONS FOR THE ADMISSION

Code art. 110

Reception of Priests

Par. 1 — The favourable opinion of the Prelate is required for the admission of Conventual Chaplains *ad honorem* or Magistral Chaplains.

Par. 2 — The favourable opinion of the *Cardinalis Patronus*, with the advice of the Prelate, is required for the admission of Grand Cross Conventual Chaplains *ad honorem*.

Par. 3 — With the advice of the Sovereign Council, the Grand Master may receive or promote a Cardinal of the Holy Roman Catholic Church to the rank of Bailiff Grand Cross of Honour and Devotion.

The admission as a Chaplain of the Order shall not be considered an honorific title but as commitment to a ministry in and for the Order. For the regulations and commentary for the Chaplains of the Third Class, refer to the “*Regulations for Conventual Chaplains ad honorem and Magistral Chaplains*”¹¹⁴.

¹¹³ Especially the second part, dedicated to the charitable action of the Church (chapters 19-29), and to the multiform structures of said charity service in the present social context (chapters 30-39).

¹¹⁴ See *Regulations for Chaplains*, art. 2-9.

Code art. 111

Holders of Awards

Those decorated with the award *Pro Merito Melitense* do not become thereby Members of the Order.

Code art. 112

Nobiliary Requisites

The nobiliary requisites for those who aspire to be received into the Order must be examined on the basis of a special regulation which will be issued by the Grand Master, with the advice of the Sovereign Council, within one year after this Code becomes effective.

Code art. 113

Requirements for Admission

Par. 1 — To comply with the requirements for admission, the aspirant Knight or Dame must provide proof of profession of the Catholic religion.

Par. 2 — The request for admission, signed by the candidate, must be supported by the following additional documents:

- a) a certificate of Baptism, a birth certificate which proves age of majority, and a certificate of family status;
- b) special titles of merit either received or expected;
- c) a letter of recommendation from the proper Ordinary regarding the candidate's life and conduct;
- d) a certificate of completion of the Preparatory Year.

Par. 3 — For Priests, it is sufficient to present a letter of recommendation or nihil obstat from the proper Ordinary or the Superior of his Order and a certificate of ordination.

Code art. 114

Admission

Admission to the Order pertains to the Grand Master with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council.

5. CEREMONY OF ADMISSION

Code art. 118

Rite of Reception

The reception of Members of the Order is to take place during Mass in accordance with the Ceremonial. The presentation of the decree may be made after the rite.

It is recommended that the candidates read and diligently meditate on the Ceremonials for the Admission¹¹⁵. The Admission has to be performed by the Prior or President of the Association or their Delegate.

VII. REGULATIONS REGARDING THE PRINCIPAL FUNCTIONS OF PRIORIES AND ASSOCIATIONS TOWARDS THE MEMBERS

The principal functions of the Pories and Associations towards the Members are to help their sanctification by furthering their participation in the spiritual life, formation programs, and works of the Order and to instill the consciousness of belonging, and fidelity to a worldwide Order under the leadership of the Grand Master.

- The different ways of formation (initial formation for candidates and permanent formation for Members) have to be provided by the Pories and Associations. Therefore suitable priests are to be selected who are familiar with the history, the spirituality, the works and today's challenges of the Order. Members of the First and Second Class should be involved in this duty of formation. It is of great importance that the Order's own unmistakable profile in the areas of spiritual life and service should be brought to expression. This *proprium* must be revealed and intensified with reference to the sources and tradition of the Order and in the light of contemporary challenges.
- It is the duty of the Pories and Associations to provide Members with the opportunity to come together in gatherings in an accessible geographical environment (in regional Delegations), in which both communal exchange and brotherly help take place, and where spiritual life and common service can also be intensified. Pories and Associations have to determine additional rules for the

¹¹⁵ Under way of publication.

character of these regional gatherings and their degree of obligation and they should be adapted to their regional and historical circumstances.

- Priors and Associations must encourage broad Membership participation in the Order's activities and initiatives for instance by celebrating the Order Feasts in a way that attracts the participation of families with their children and the younger generations.
- An annual or half-yearly calendar of the Order events has to be circulated.
- Priors and Associations have to establish activities in which the Members can fulfil their duties of *obsequium pauperum*¹¹⁶.
- The Superiors of Priors and Associations have to inform themselves about the abilities, qualifications and interests of individual Members, to offer them the opportunity and continuous encouragement to take up activity in the works of the Order, as well as providing whatever formation may be necessary for this.
- Members play an important role in guiding volunteers¹¹⁷ and staff in the works of the Order and providing them with Christian formation. The Superiors must select sufficient suitable Members for this purpose.
- The Superiors have also to assist and to encourage the Members to live according to their duties as Members of the Order. If needed Members must be individually exhorted and be reminded of the commitment they accepted with their admission to the Order. If a Member should constantly fail to observe his duties, the disciplinary provisions foreseen by the *Code* (art. 119-129) must be applied.
- The activities and programs of the Priors and Associations must not evoke the impression to be separated from the local Church. On the contrary it is necessary that they be open with the Dioceses and their pastoral activities and liturgical life, and they must encourage Members to participate in them.

¹¹⁶ JoS 9, p. 89-106.

¹¹⁷ The Apostolic Exhortation *Vita Consecrata* (31; 54-56), and other pontifical documents underline how the charism of an Institute can be shared, in different grades, by the lay people.

Second Class

With the *Motu proprio Praecipuam curam* of the 21st of November 1956¹¹⁸ Pope Pius XII introduced a new “Second Class” in the Order, which was subsequently included in the *Constitutional Charter* of 1961 and reformed in the *Constitutional Charter* of 1997. The introduction of this new Second Class (Members in Obedience)¹¹⁹ has to be seen against the background of the worldwide expansion of the Order after World War II, and the need of support for the Members of the First Class to lead a growing institution. Additional Members were needed to carry out functions which formerly could only be exercised by Professed Members. Since together they would form a group imbued by a religious character, which leads a religious and sovereign Order, it was considered important that these additional Members possess certain qualities and make a Promise of Obedience¹²⁰.

The Members of the Second Class engage themselves to a deeper commitment through the Promise of Obedience. This Promise, made to God, concerns all aspects of the spiritual life and activities in the Order, following the example of Christ who lived in permanent obedience to his Heavenly Father: “*My food is to do the will of the one who sent me*” (Jn 4:34); “*The world must know that I love the Father and that I do just as the Father has commanded me*” (Jn 14:31).

The institution of the Second Class has extended the possibility, for “non-Professed” Members, to follow a path to Christian perfection in the spirit of the Order’s charism. This path requires a higher degree of obligation and readiness to dedicate oneself to the Order. The community of Members in Obedience in the Pories and Subpories (or Associations, where a Pory or Subpory does not exist) is therefore not primarily a community of prayer, although it is one too¹²¹. The Second Class is an innovation within the norms of the Church, opening up a path with a higher commitment.

The Members in Obedience, like the Professed Members, are only subject to their appropriate Superiors in the Order¹²².

¹¹⁸ *Constitutional Charter of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta*, Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana 1989, p. 4-8.

¹¹⁹ JoS 5, p. 35-60; JoS 9, p. 45-62. See also *Venice 2009*, p. 31-36.

¹²⁰ To understand the different forms and grades of obedience, see J.-M. TILLARD, *Obéissance*, in DS, XI, 1982, coll. 535-563 (starting with Jesus’ obedience it gets to ponder on some historical kinds of obedience within religious Orders: Pacomius, Basil, Agustin, Cassian, Benedict through the Tridentine Orders); G. ODOARDI, *Obbedienza*, in DIP, VI, 1980, coll. 491-494.

¹²¹ For the interdependence of “obedience” and “community”, see *Service of Authority and Obedience*, 17-20. This document of the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life is addressed to the religious, but in the introduction of the document (5-14) useful indications on obedience for the other states of life can be found.

¹²² CC art. 4 § 2: “*Religious members through their vows, as well as members of the Second Class through the Promise of Obedience, are only subject to their appropriate Superiors in the Order. In accordance with the Code of Canon Law, the churches and conventual institutions of the Order are exempt from the jurisdiction of the dioceses and are directly subject to the Holy See*”. See also “*The Pastoral Meaning of Exemption*”, *Mutuae relationes*, 22.

Knights and Dames, who wish to enter into Obedience, should be resolved to fulfil more generously their Baptismal Promise, and to deepen their commitment and fidelity in the Order. They freely commit themselves to embrace more seriously the Christian call to holiness by a more binding obedience to their Superiors. Thus they imitate our Lord, Jesus Christ, who “*humbled Himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross*” (Phil 2:8).

The first generations of the Order had conceived this deeply and even included it in one statute of the Chapter General of Margat: “*All the brothers of the hospital, contemplating Jesus Christ, have to obey their Master*”¹²³. This wonderful statute identifies the most profound reason of obedience in the imitation of the obedience of Christ and does not refer only to human, disciplinary or military reasons.

With the help of communitarian discernment, the assistance of a Spiritual Director, and stimulated by an authentic desire of sanctification based on prayer, humility, and obedience, the members in Obedience will give the best of themselves for the service of the Order and its charities. In this way, they will be ready to assume the duties and responsibilities asked of them by the Order in virtue of their Promise.

VIII. FUNDAMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE SECOND CLASS

Those who make the Promise of Obedience profess openly their desire to follow the path to Christian perfection in the community¹²⁴ of a Priory, Subpriory, or in direct dependence on the Grand Master *in gremio religionis* in an Association, with special observance of the Evangelical Counsel of Obedience and using their temporal goods in the spirit of the Gospel¹²⁵. The three Evangelical Counsels (Poverty, Chastity and Obedience), in their multiplicity, are proposed to every disciple of Christ¹²⁶. They have to be put in practice by each Christian according to his vocation. While the religious follow these Counsels according to the Vows¹²⁷, the other faithful should

¹²³ “*At fratres omnes Hospitalis contemplatione Jhesu Christi suo Magistro obedire tenentur*” (*Statuta 1204-1206*, p. 33).

¹²⁴ The term “community” is used with a spiritual sense and doesn’t have any juridical connotation.

¹²⁵ Cf. **C** art. 94 § 2.

¹²⁶ The Evangelical Counsels are practiced by the Members of the Three Classes **according to one’s own state**. “*The perfection of charity, to which all the faithful are called, entails for those who freely follow the call to consecrated life the obligation of practicing chastity in celibacy for the sake of the Kingdom, poverty and obedience. It is the **profession** of these counsels, within a permanent state of life recognized by the Church, that characterizes the life consecrated to God*” (**CCC** 915). See footnote 143.

¹²⁷ Their root is in the Word of Jesus and the Apostles (see Mt 19:12.21.27-29; Lk 14:26; 1Cor 7:32 -33; Phil 2:5-8), and include “*a form of poverty that excludes any personal property, [...] chastity in the state of celibacy, and [...] obedience towards the Superior of [one’s] Order*” (ReC 1969, p. 21). By following

follow the spirit of the Counsels: Poverty as a free and non-possessed relationship towards temporal goods; Chastity as a way of love that does not use the other person's body and soul for one's own desires or passions; and Obedience as the decision to accept God's word that became flesh in Jesus Christ. It is the profession of these Counsels, in a steady state of life acknowledged by the Church, which characterizes the life consecrated to God¹²⁸.

With regard to admission into the Third Class, the Promise of Obedience thus means a more far reaching personal obligation to strive for Christian perfection. Accepting the obligation to live according to a particular spiritual rule in a particular Order of the Church entails a more decisive form and a clearer testimony of a life in accordance with the Gospel and as a disciple of Christ¹²⁹. The Promise of Obedience sharpens the conscience as to what the call of this stronger obligation entails. But it must not be misunderstood and reduced to an instrument of undue pressure on the one who has given it. The Promise is a bilateral obligation between the Member in Obedience and the Church (represented by the Superiors of the Order) and thus with God. Therefore the Promise of Obedience includes not only the dedication of the candidate, but also the Grace needed to fulfill the content of the Promise¹³⁰.

IX. COMMENTARY TO ARTICLE 9 § 2 OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL CHARTER AND TO ARTICLE 94 OF THE CODE

Constitutional Charter art. 9 § 2

Obligations of the Members

By virtue of the promise, Members of the Second Class oblige themselves to strive for the perfection of Christian life in conformity with the obligation of their state, in the spirit of the Order.

literally the way of life of Jesus and most of the Apostles, the Professed Members of the Order aim to "dedicate themselves with greater ease to the greatest good, which is the love of God and of their fellow men" (ReC 1969, p. 21).

¹²⁸ *Lumen Gentium*, 42-43.

¹²⁹ *Spiritual Recommendations*, 1-9, 12-16.

¹³⁰ For an introduction to Obedience, see *Service of Authority and Obedience*, 1-12. *Ivi*, 3: "The present Instruction... is addressed to Members of institutes of consecrated life who live a community life, that is to all men and women who belong to religious institutes, to which societies of apostolic life are very similar. **However, other consecrated persons, in relation to their type of life, can also cull useful information from it.** This document hopes to offer help and encouragement to all those, called to witness to the primacy of God through free obedience to his will, to live their yes to the Lord in joy" (emphasis is ours).

Code art. 94

Promise and Obligations

Par. 1 — According to their state in life and in conformity with their own vocation and the directives of their legitimate Superiors, Knights and Dames in Obedience oblige themselves by a special promise, which binds in conscience, to a life leading to Christian perfection in the spirit of the Order and in the sphere of its works. Conscious of the spiritual value of such a commitment before God, they must diligently observe the divine law and the precepts of the Church so as to be a constant example of piety and virtue, of apostolic zeal and of devotion to the holy Church.

Par. 2 — Knights and Dames in Obedience undertake to utilize their temporal goods according to the spirit of the Gospel.

Par. 3 — Knights and Dames in Obedience do not enjoy privileges or precedence with respect to other Members of the Order.

“... according to their state in life...”

Contrary to the Vow of Obedience given in the Profession, the Obedience promised by the Members of the Second Class can be limited by other, overriding obligations of “*their state in life*”¹³¹. Those may result for example from the sacramental binding of Marriage or from the duty towards children. Therefore it is wise that Members in Obedience cannot be assigned to any duties that would impair the fulfilment of the obligations of their state in life, i.e. their professional or family duties. The Superiors must know and take into consideration these obligations.

The regulations for the Membership of married Members in the Third Class¹³² are also valid for those in the Second Class. Moreover the stronger obligation of the Knights and Dames in Obedience opens a new opportunity for married couples to witness the special charism of the Order of Malta: they stand in the common obedience toward the Order and its mission and, at the same time, in the sacramental unity of spouses.

“... in conformity ... with the directives of their legitimate Superiors...”

As it is reflected in the name “Knights and Dames in Obedience” the emphasis is on obedience as a distinctive and important characteristic of the Second Class. In their desire to grow in Christian perfection the Members of the Second Class make the Promise of Obedience and limit their full freedom within the frame of their

¹³¹ C art. 102.

¹³² See above, chapter V § 9.

professional and family duties. *“The spirit in our Order, which is at the same time religious and military, therefore, should be closely adhered to, and Members should be aware that it is not their will, but that of the Superiors, which should be obeyed at all times”*¹³³.

This is not a call to put aside one’s own personality and integrity, but a call to follow the path by which we voluntarily entrust our personal being to the Lordship of Christ.

Obedience towards God and His Word is in the centre. *“Faciem tuam, Domine, requiram: your face, O Lord, I seek (Ps 27, 8)”*¹³⁴. *“God manifests his will through the interior motion of the Spirit, who ‘guides to all truth’ (Jn 16:13) through multiple external mediation”*¹³⁵. Thus the Superior can only play a role as an instrument, an intermediary of God. The one speaking and the one listening both stand under the word and authority of God. Therefore, those appointed in authority are also listeners. It is their task to speak with authority as part of their act of listening. This implies that the Superior is first of all a listener: to the voice of God but also to the voice of the Member of the Order who, with his or her family and professional obligations, has chosen the path of Obedience in the Second Class¹³⁶.

In light of the concrete situation of the Members of the Second Class in their various professions and ways of life Obedience, and in their different geographical areas, will yield spiritual fruit above all where the counsel and the guidance of Superiors is not passively awaited but actively requested.

“... their legitimate Superiors”

The rightful Superior of Members in Obedience who belong to a Priory is the Prior or one who exercises his functions. For the Members of a Subpriory, the rightful Superior is the Regent. For the Members in Obedience who only belong to an Association and neither to a Priory nor a Subpriory, the rightful Superior is the Grand Commander. As a consequence, those Members in Obedience are listed as *“aggregated in gremio religionis”*¹³⁷. The same applies to the Members in Obedience residing in a country where the Order has no organization unless they are aggregated to an organization of another territory.

¹³³ BERTIE, *The Rule of St Benedict*, p. 4. This letter of the Grand Master is for the greater part a commentary to chapter VII of the *Rule* of St Benedict on humbleness.

¹³⁴ *Service of Authority and Obedience*, 1 and 7.

¹³⁵ *Service of Authority and Obedience*, 9: *“Obedient to God through Human Mediation”*.

¹³⁶ *Service of Authority and Obedience*, 20a.

¹³⁷ See **CC** art. 10 § 5, and **CC** art. 150 § 3.

“... oblige themselves by a special promise, which binds in conscience, to a life...”

*“The Church has always given permission and has accepted the fact that a special group of faithful might spontaneously bind themselves by a particular promise to pursue a useful spiritual objective”*¹³⁸.

With the constitutional reform in 1997 the Promise has been further strengthened and its fundamental finality as a life decision before God has been underlined. Until that time it was permissible to withdraw unilaterally from the Promise, but now this is no longer possible. A withdrawal from the Promise can now only be applied for to the Grand Master “for important personal reasons”¹³⁹.

“...which binds in conscience...”

For the meaning and value of this expression, advice had been requested from the Commission of Cardinals, at that time established for the Order. The Secretary of the Commission answered that *“the bond established by the promise is stronger than the promise of the Tertiaries or Oblates”*¹⁴⁰. The Members in Obedience *“hold an intermediary status within the three classes of the Order”*¹⁴¹. They are lay and not religious, but according to the *Constitutional Charter* they can be called to charges immediately connected with the religious nature of the Order¹⁴².

“... to a life leading to Christian perfection...”

According to the teaching of the Church, every Christian has the duty to strive for Christian perfection observing the Commandment to love God and thy neighbour: *“So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect”* (Mt. 5:48). Striving to perfection means “to bring to completion” (from the Latin *perficere*) our Christian life, which began in the Baptism: *“all the faithful of Christ of whatever rank or status, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity; by this holiness as such a more human manner of living is promoted in this earthly society”*¹⁴³. *“The classes and duties of life are many, but holiness is one — that sanctity which is cultivated by all who are moved by the Spirit of God”*¹⁴⁴.

In order to make it easier to achieve this aim, some people commit themselves to follow the Evangelical Counsels, more specifically in different ways and forms of commitment. In creating the Second Class, the Holy See¹⁴⁵ has conceded to the

¹³⁸ ReC 1969, p. 20.

¹³⁹ C art. 104 § 1.

¹⁴⁰ ReC 1969, p. 20.

¹⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴² CC art. 11 § 3; CC art. 29 § 5; CC art. 32 § 4.

¹⁴³ *Lumen gentium*, 40.

¹⁴⁴ *Lumen gentium*, 41.

¹⁴⁵ ReC 1969, p. 22.

Order of Malta the possibility to institute a Class whose Members are bound by the observance of one of the three Evangelical Counsels namely, Obedience, and this not by a temporary or perpetual vow, but by a special Promise.

“... in the spirit of the Order ...”

To live “in the spirit of the Order” is the responsibility also of the Members of the Third Class. But with the Promise of Obedience, Members of the Order express their desire for their spiritual life, their witness to the faith and their service to their neighbour to be even more strongly influenced by the Order.

The Christian, who chooses to become a member of a religious order, proclaims that he will follow the traditions of his Order. The Decree *Perfectae Caritatis* indicates that: “[...] it redounds to the good of the Church that institutes have their own particular characteristics and work. Therefore let their founders’ spirit and special aims they set before them as well as their sound traditions—all of which make up the patrimony of each institute—be faithfully held in honour”¹⁴⁶. To live in Obedience to the spirit of the Order requires the witness of faith and loyalty towards the Pope and the Catholic Church. It should also foster the faith and the ability to support an environment in which faith can grow, life can flourish and the dignity of the human being can be developed and protected. To this aim Members of the Second Class should feel even more obliged than the Members of the Third Class to become knowledgeable of the doctrine of the Church and actual Church teachings to be able to “always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope” (1Pt 3:15). Personal piety and energy directed to work in the world are two sides of the same coin. From the special spirituality of Obedience the Member draws strength for public action, to play his part in shaping and changing things, wherever it is necessary to help ethical values to be observed. As “salt of the earth” (Mt 5:13) the Order also has a mission in society.

During a private audience granted in Rome, on June 22, 1960 to the first Knights in Obedience Pope John XXIII, passed on to them as a guiding principle the tight bond which exists between obedience and peace, referring to his own motto “oboedientia et pax”¹⁴⁷.

¹⁴⁶ *Perfectae caritatis*, 2b; *Mutuae relationes*, 11-12: “The Distinctive Character of Every Institute”. “Only in this way will you be able to reawaken hearts to truth and to divine love in accordance with the charisms of your founders who were raised up by God within His Church. Thus the Council rightly insists on the obligation of religious to be faithful to the spirit of their founders, to their evangelical intentions and to the example of their sanctity. In this it finds one of the principles for the present renewal and one of the most secure criteria for judging what each institute should undertake” (*Evangelica testificatio*, 11). See also **CIC** 578 quoted in footnote 1.

¹⁴⁷ C. W. GRAF VON BALLESTREM, *Das Subpriorat der Hl. Hedwig, seine Gründung und seine Entwicklung in den ersten XXV^o Jahren seines Bestehens*, in «Festschrift zum XXV^o Jahr nach der Gründung des Subpriorats der Hl. Hedwig 1961-1986», p. 29. See also “The Fostering of Peace and the Promotion of a Community of Nations” in *Gaudium et Spes*, 77-90.

It is only in obedience with respect to the laws of God that an atmosphere of mutual trust, love of the Church and the Order and also love of one's own country, the neighbour and neighbouring countries, can grow and develop: both inner and outer peace. If the Members live in the *"spirit of the Order"*, that for which they ask in the daily prayer of the Order, *"the peace of the world"*, will come to pass¹⁴⁸.

"... and in the sphere of its works..."

Members of the Third Class are asked for commitment to work in the social and charitable institutions of the Order¹⁴⁹. Members of the Class in Obedience are obliged to follow this charitable commitment even more fervently and with a personal engagement¹⁵⁰, *"engaging themselves especially for the promotion of the peace among the peoples"*¹⁵¹.

This work often demands sacrifices. It is not enough merely to show a certain interest, as this alone does not fulfil the spirit of the Order. Fidelity to the religious Promise demands self-denial: should this element be missing, it would be better for the Member in Obedience to request a return to the Third Class in the Order.

"... undertake to utilize their temporal goods according to the spirit of the Gospel..."

The Members of the Second Class have especially to pay attention on how to deal in an appropriate way with their temporal goods. The striving for Christian perfection does not exclude the possession of substantial property and its successful establishment and accumulation by the honourable means that are available in today's economic order. But Members in Obedience must, in the spirit of the Evangelical Counsel of Poverty, and according to their state in life, avoid doing anything that might cast doubt on their moral responsibility, and must always consider that everything they possess has been granted to them by God to use in

¹⁴⁸ *Service of Authority and Obedience*, 1: *"Faciem tuam, Domine, requiram"*: your face, O Lord, I seek (Ps 27:8). A pilgrim seeking the meaning of life, enwrapped in the great mystery that surrounds him, the human person, even if unconsciously, does, in fact, seek the face of the Lord. *"Your ways, O Lord, make known to me, teach me your paths"* (Ps 25:4): no one can ever take away from the heart of the human person the search for him of whom the Bible says *"He is all"* (Sir 43:27) and for the ways of reaching him. [...] *A search that leads to the experience of peace – 'in his will is our peace'* (D. Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy, Paradise, III, 85*)".

¹⁴⁹ C art. 116 and 236.

¹⁵⁰ ReC 1969, p. 23 mentions one example: *"The representatives of our Order to Foreign Governments (Ambassadors, Ministers, Chargé d'Affaires), should be imbued with the spirituality of the Order, and it is to be recommended that Knights in Obedience be at the disposal of the Order for this type of assignment. In this way, an apostolate of particular worth could be realized, an apostolate which might spread its effects to certain parts of society, otherwise unreachable, thus opening a path through sectors of the world that are in critical need of activities inspired by the Order's aims"*.

¹⁵¹ *Gaudium et Spes*, 73-90.

accordance with the fundamental principles of righteousness and love. Every inner dependence on possessions, power, luxuries or particular forms of leisure activity stands in the way of God's wish to grant us His riches. "What do you possess that you have not received? But if you have received it, why are you boasting as if you did not receive it?" (1Cor 4:7). The real problem of the rich young man (Mt 19:22) was not his great wealth but that he was unable to follow the call of Jesus because these riches had him in their grip. And St. Paul makes very clear, that greed is no "peccadillo" but true idolatry (Col 3:5), separating us from God and His gifts of Grace. The chapter XV of the Rule of Raymond du Puy declares formally that the whole of the religious life of the Hospital is "commanded" by God Almighty, Blessed Mary, Blessed John but also "by the poor" (*ex parte pauperum*): this is a specific aspect of the Rule of the Hospitallers of St John which cannot be found in other Rules¹⁵². In an original and peculiar spirit the Rule recommends: "And the clothes be humble, because our lords the poor, who we say we serve, go naked and sullied. And it is vile that a serf were superb, while his lord were humble"¹⁵³.

"...Knights and Dames in Obedience do not enjoy privileges or precedence with respect to other Members of the Order."

"The fact that one holds or has held a position of responsibility within the Order or has taken a religious vow or promise should not mean that therefore one expects to be seated at the first place at table, or to be given precedence over all others"¹⁵⁴. The admission to the Second Class is in no way an award or promotion. It is the answer to a call. "The haughty eyes of man will be lowered, the arrogance of men will be abased, and the Lord alone will be exalted, on that day. For the Lord of hosts will have his day against all that is proud and arrogant, all that is high, and it will be brought low" (Is 2, 11-12).

¹⁵² "Et haec omnia, uti us supra scripsimus, *ex parte* Dei omnipotentis, et beate Mariae, et beati Johannis, et *pauperum* precipimus" (RAYMOND DU PUY, 15, *Regula*, p. 67).

¹⁵³ "Et vestitus sit humilis, quia Domini nostri pauperes, quorum servos nos esse fatemur, nudi et sordidi incedunt. Et turpe est servo ut sit superbus, et Dominus ejus humilis" (RAYMOND DU PUY, *Regula*, 2, p. 63). *Domini nostri pauperes* can be translated either as "our Lord the poor", or as "the poor of our Lord".

¹⁵⁴ BERTIE, *The Rule of St Benedict*, p. 4.

X. COMMENTARY AND REGULATIONS TO ARTICLE 101 OF THE CODE

Code art. 101

Spiritual Duties

The Knight or Dame in Obedience should:

- a) collaborate with their fellow Members in prayer and works and to this end is bound to recite daily the Credo and one Pater, Ave and Gloria.
- b) attend Holy Mass frequently and diligently approach the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist according to the advice of their own spiritual director and participate in parochial life;
- c) take part each year in a course of spiritual exercises of at least three full days in an approved place, and take part in courses and meetings for formation and instruction called by the Superiors;
- d) follow the spiritual rule of life approved by the Grand Master, with the consent of the Sovereign Council.

1. COMMENTARY TO ARTICLE 101 § A OF THE CODE

“...the Knight or Dame in Obedience should collaborate with their fellow Members in prayer and works...”

This means that the spiritual duties are prefixed with the demand that the Members in Obedience should consider themselves as a community even though they do not live their daily lives together at one place. Their community is nourished by daily prayers in close communion with all of the Saints.

With the creation of the Second Class the institution of Sub-Priories has simultaneously been established in the *Constitutional Charter* to provide the Members of the Second Class with a formal framework for the realization of their community in those countries where a Priory does not exist.

*“The Church is God’s family in the world”*¹⁵⁵, This universal family embraces many large and small families. The Members of a Priory, Subpriory but also those *in gremio religionis* see themselves within the larger family of the Order of Malta, and eventually their Association, as a family of God. The small family is the best place where the love between God and men is extended towards one’s neighbour¹⁵⁶. Real spiritual growth consists of learning to love one another as Jesus loved us. And we

¹⁵⁵ *Deus Caritas Est*, 25b.

¹⁵⁶ *“To want the same thing, and to reject the same thing—was recognized by antiquity as the authentic content of love: the one becomes similar to the other, and this leads to a community of will and thought”, Deus Caritas Est*, 17.

cannot learn to love like Jesus if we have no relationships to other persons. Christian perfection is all about love – love of God and love of thy neighbour. Loving Jesus always means also love those for whom He has given His life. Therefore every spiritual community is not only a community of persons with the same goal, but also a school for the love of God and love of neighbour.

Therefore Knights and Dames in Obedience make an effort to serve the deepening of the religious life of the other Members of the Order. They can animate regional groups of prayer; they can give spiritual encouragement at regional meetings. Ultimately they should encourage others through their prayers and through their good works to discover their own spirituality and to realize it.

Together with the communal character of Obedience the spiritual duties of the Knights and Dames are summarized in art. 101 of the *Code*. They should take everything said particularly in this article very seriously in order to develop their spiritual life.

2. REGULATION TO ARTICLE 101 § A OF THE *CODE*

Article 101 § a prescribes the minimum prayer duties, in case of impediment, which are compulsory for the Members in Obedience. It is obvious that these minimum requirements are not sufficient to live a spiritual life. They aim to strengthen the spiritual bonds of the community and guard us, especially at hectic times¹⁵⁷, from losing sight of the Lord in the course of the day. But Members of the Second Class should become people of prayer. They should therefore follow the recommendations for the Third Class with even greater devotion and zeal and discipline. For many Members in Obedience and in some of the Pories or Sub-Pories it has become a tradition to recite at least one part of the Liturgy of the Hours¹⁵⁸.

Whomever sets out in the aspiration for Christian perfection (from the Latin *perficere*, i.e. *to bring to completion*), the desire will grow to become a person of prayer. Since it is God's will to draw us ever closer to Him, He will arouse in us again and again the yearning to stay longer and more often with Him in prayer. What matters is to sense this call and to answer directly. Directness is the decisive point. And so He guides us, if we are willing, step by step towards an ever richer life of

¹⁵⁷ "Listening to God for half an hour every day is important, except when we are particularly busy. Then a whole hour is necessary" (Maxim attributed to St Francis of Sales).

¹⁵⁸ "By the venerable tradition of the universal Church, Lauds as morning prayer and Vespers as evening prayer are the two hinges on which the daily office turns; hence they are to be considered as the chief hours and are to be celebrated as such" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 89 and IGLH, 37-54). "And the laity, too, are encouraged to recite the divine office, either with the priests, or among themselves, or even individually" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 100). See also *Verbum Domini*, 52-69.

prayer¹⁵⁹, until hopefully we are one day so transformed that in our hearts we pray without ceasing (see 1Thes 5:17).

3. COMMENTARY TO ARTICLE 101 § B OF THE *CODE*

“...attend the Holy Mass frequently and diligently approach the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist...”

Frequent attendance at Holy Mass during the week will depend on professional and family obligations and on the accessibility of the place where Holy Mass is celebrated. The sacrament of Penance is at least to be celebrated assiduously in the high times of the Liturgical Year.

“...according to the advice of their own spiritual director...”

While the Members of the Third Class are advised by the additional regulations to look for guidance of a Spiritual Director, the *Code* presupposes that Members of the Second Class have a Spiritual Director, whose advice is regularly sought. Finding a good and experienced Spiritual Director is not easy. Sometimes intensive prayer is necessary in order to find the right person¹⁶⁰. This rule in the *Code* underlines the importance of being accompanied on the way so as not to remain inattentive to human, spiritual and ethical questions and to be assisted in the difficulties of life and of faith.

“... and participate in the parochial life...”

Participation in the life of the parish is requested from everyone according to the Decree of the Lay Apostolate *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (especially chapter 10). The form or intensity of this participation depends on individual possibilities and talents. Especially for those who are very active in the Order itself it might be difficult to assume additional duties.

4. REGULATION TO ARTICLE 101 § C OF THE *CODE*

“...take part each year in a course of spiritual exercises of at least three full days in an approved place...”

The course of spiritual exercise must at least last for three full uninterrupted days. It must be conducted in silence. The Members must whenever possible attend a

¹⁵⁹ JoS 10.

¹⁶⁰ A Spiritual Director cannot be in the meantime a Superior of the person concerned.

common course especially organized for them. It has proved to be very fruitful for the Members and for the new candidates, if the two courses at the beginning and the end of the preparatory year (the *Code*, at article 97 § 2, establishes “five days”) are combined with the annual spiritual exercise for the Members. The Members might also try to attend for the full five days, to profit from the opportunity to really break the normal routine for spiritual reflection and prayer.

The spiritual exercises which may be prescribed by the Superior cannot be dispensed without his explicit approval¹⁶¹.

The same applies to additional courses and meetings organised by the Superiors for the Members in Obedience and for all the Members of an organisation of the Order. Without deepening religious knowledge, the spiritual life tends to wither. “*The Apostolate can attain its full efficiency only through a multiform and integral formation, required not only in virtue of a continuous spiritual and doctrinal progress of the lay people, but also (thorough) through different circumstances of things, people, tasks to which its activities must be adapted*”¹⁶².

5. COMMENTARY TO ARTICLE 101 § D OF THE *CODE*

“...follow the spiritual rule of life approved by the Grand Master, with the consent of the Sovereign Council.”

The rules demanded by the *Code* are comprised in this document.

XI. REGULATIONS TO ARTICLES 102 AND 103 OF THE *CODE*:

CRITERIA FOR ASSIGNMENT OF DUTIES

Code art. 102

Criteria for Assignment of Duties

In the assignment of duties to a Knight or Dame in Obedience, Superiors must take into account the obligations of their state in life, their abilities, their special professional training and their availability.

¹⁶¹ The dispensation can only be given for just and important reasons, e.g., illness, advanced age, etc.

¹⁶² *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 28.

Code art. 103*Change of Tasks*

A Knight or Dame in Obedience who, for just cause, has difficulty in fulfilling a prescribed task, should notify the competent Superior who is to assign another activity.

In this context it must be stressed, that the Members in Obedience – like the Professed Knights – shall carry out their activity of assistance within the organizations of the Order dedicated especially to charitable work. According to Article 237 § 1 of the *Code* these are the Associations except for countries where only Pories and no Associations do exist.

In countries where an Association exists beside a Priory or Subpriory it is the task of the Prior or the Regent as legitimate Superiors of the Members of the First and Second Class to organize their involvement in the activities of the Association in unity and harmony with the President of the Association.

The Members in Obedience must be aware that they do not enjoy prerogatives in the Order's charitable organizations. They share rights and duties with all the other Members, in accordance with the Statute of the organizations. They can advance themselves only on the basis of an exemplary activity relevant to the aims of the Order. The legitimate Superior can dispense Members in Obedience from their activities in the Order only for a limited period of time, for special family, health or professional reasons. The personal activity cannot be substituted by naming a representative or giving a donation, however good and appropriate the latter may be. Naturally, a Member who, because of age or other reasons, is prevented from following a certain activity, ought not for these reasons to leave the Second Class of the Order, but remaining in it, may continue to offer his collaboration by prayer, advice and example.

XII. COMMENTARY TO ARTICLE 104 OF THE CODE:**WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROMISE****Code art. 104***Withdrawal from the Promise*

Par. 1 — The Knight or Dame in Obedience may withdraw from the Promise for important personal reasons. The request must be presented to the appropriate Superior who will forward it to the Grand Master

together with his opinion and that of the respective Chaplain. The Grand Master, with the consent of the Sovereign Council, is to decide upon the request.

Par. 2 — Upon notification of the dispensation from the Promise, a Knight or Dame in Obedience ceases to be part of the Second Class and returns to his or her original class. If the dispensation is denied, the Knight or Dame may remain in the Second Class or withdraw from Membership in the Order.

A Member of the Second Class wishing to withdraw from the Promise for important personal reasons is required to submit a request the Grand Master. If the request is agreed upon, the Member returns to the Third Class. Otherwise he has the choice of remaining in Obedience or leaving the Order¹⁶³.

Code art. 105

Disciplinary Sanctions

Culpable failure to observe the obligations which derive from the Promise incurs the application of the disciplinary sanctions specified in Art. 120 and following.

Code art. 106

Use of the Habit and Insignia

The use of the habit and insignia by Knights and Dames in Obedience is specified and fixed by the Ceremonial.

Code art. 107

Passage to Religious Profession

Par. 1 — The norms of Title II, Chapter I apply to a Knight in Obedience who asks to be admitted to religious profession in the Order and is canonically free to do so.

Par. 2 — The favourable outcome of the process indicated in Par. 1, enables the Knight to commence the Novitiate immediately.

¹⁶³ Until the reform of 1997 a Knight in Obedience could withdraw from the Promise unilaterally. It has been one focus of this reform to strengthen and enhance the Second Class and to underline the binding character of the Promise given to God. In this context the unilateral possibility of withdrawing from the Promise has been abolished.

XIII. ADMISSION TO THE SECOND CLASS

1. COMMENTARY AND REGULATIONS TO ARTICLE 95 OF THE *CODE*

Code art. 95

Requirements for Admission of Knights and Dames in Obedience

To comply with the requirements for admission the aspirant to Knight or Dame in Obedience must provide proof:

- a) of professing the Catholic religion;**
- b) of not being subject to any canonical or moral impediment;**
- c) of having completed twenty-five years of age;**
- d) of belonging to the Order for at least one year;**
- e) of having the written consent of the spouse, if marriage has been contracted.**

The Membership in Second Class must be seen as a vocation and as a chivalrous readiness to be at God's disposal in service, testimony and spiritual life. The Promise must have the traditional values, as in the past, to oblige and to obey. It must also be considered as an engagement of all aspects of a person's spiritual life. From there a special life style should proceed in harmony with the Beatitudes of the Gospel as well as a more generous service in line with the charism of the Order of Malta (*tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum*)¹⁶⁴.

Before pronouncing the Promise of Obedience the candidate needs to undertake a profound examination of his conscience considering his motives and his ability to comply with the commitment of deeper service to the Order. He should remind himself of the words of St. John the Baptist¹⁶⁵, the Patron of the Order: "*He must increase, but I must decrease*" (Jn 3:30).

"... professing the Catholic religion..."

This obviously means more than a "formal belonging" to the Catholic Church. A Member of the Second Class has to be knowledgeable of the doctrine of the faith. Without being a specialist in theology the Member in Obedience should be well-informed Christians who are ready to give simple, free and brave answers to everyone who asks. "*Be always prepared to answer everyone who asks you to give reasons for the hope you have*" (1 Pt 3:15).

¹⁶⁴ JoS 3.

¹⁶⁵ JoS 6, p. 49-61.

“... belonging to the Order for at least one year...”

One year is the minimum legal requirement set down in the *Code*. Generally five years of Membership in the Order are required. A shorter period is accepted for candidates who have been exceptionally active for the Order before their admission to the Order.

“... having the written consent of the spouse, if marriage has been contracted.”

This provision has been introduced with the reform of 1997. As the obligations deriving from the Sacrament of Marriage and family obligations have priority before the obligations deriving from the Promise it is obvious that the commitment of a Member of the Second Class cannot be fulfilled without the consent of the spouse. The Superiors have to ascertain that the spouses of the candidates are informed about the implications of the Promise.

2. ARTICLE 96 AND REGULATIONS TO ARTICLE 97 OF THE *CODE*

Code art. 96

Procedure for Admission to the Promise

Par. 1 — A member of the Order who wishes to be admitted to the Promise must submit a written request to the Prior or the Regent and to the President of the Association to which the member belongs together with the documents specified in Art. 95.

Par. 2 — The authority indicated in Par. 1, having heard the opinion of the respective Chapter or Council, proposes to the Grand Master the admission of the candidate to the year of preparation.

Par. 3 — Admission is granted by the Grand Master, with the consent of the Sovereign Council and the *nihil obstat* of the Prelate.

Code art. 97

Preparation of Candidates

Par. 1 —The preparation must be carried out under the guidance of a Professed Knight or, in his absence, of a Knight or Dame in Obedience of proven zeal and prudence or by a priest, preferably a Chaplain of the Order, designated by the respective Superior with the agreement of the Grand Master.

Par. 2 — The candidate is to begin and conclude the period of preparation with a course of spiritual exercises of at least five full days in an approved place.

Par. 3 — During the period of preparation, the Knight, Dame or priest to whom the guidance of the candidate has been entrusted must take care that the candidate learn about the regulations, history and traditions of the Order. He must form and initiate the candidate in pious practices, in the exercise of the apostolate and in all obligations proper to the Promise. To this end, the candidate must practice charity in visiting the sick and the poor, if possible within the framework of the Order’s works.

Regulation to Article 97 § 2 of the Code

“...spiritual exercises of at least five full days in an approved place.”

The spiritual exercises during the period of probation are the most important means for the enrichment of the candidate’s religious life. they serve spiritual formation by deepening the faith, and consequently, the closer union with God who dwells in him. During this period, the candidate has to retire to a religious house or other place where such exercise may take place.

The spiritual exercises have to last for at least five uninterrupted days. A Retreat Master chosen very carefully by the Superior of the Order or his representative, in agreement with the Principal Chaplain, shall hold conferences on appropriate subjects, with special regard to the Liturgy and the Liturgy of the Hours. The candidate shall devote the time not taken up by conferences to prayer, to contemplation and to readings which might enrich the prayer and deepen the religious understanding. A deep meditation on the Promise the candidate is about to pronounce is strongly recommended, in order to carefully discern one’s own vocation. Complete silence from the participant during these retreats is appropriate.

Regulation to Article 97 § 3 of the Code

The candidate should be in regular contact – if possible by meeting – with the person assigned to him as his “guide” for the Preparatory Year. The guide should take care that the candidate completes the tasks described in art. 97 § 3 of the Code. In addition to these, the candidate should be helped to read the Scriptures, to recite the Divine Office, to learn contemplation, to practice the adoration of the Blessed

Sacrament, and to establish a regular prayer life. He should reflect on the required obedience and be “trained” by his guide: the candidate should realize that obedience without delay is the first degree of humility while ambition is the last resort of failure. He should assiduously remember the Statute: “*All the brothers of the Hospital, contemplating Jesus Christ, have to obey their Master*”¹⁶⁶ The candidate should also become aware of the need for discretion and general benevolence towards the fellow Members in the Order.

“... in the exercise of the apostolate...”

For the work of the apostolate – the *tuitio fidei* (nurturing, witnessing and protecting the faith) – the candidate shall consult the texts of the Decree on the Lay Apostolate *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, in order to meditate on the counsels of the Teaching of the Church, for the direction of his activities. He, who intends to fulfil a work of apostolate consonant with the charism of the Order, must continuously and effectively nourish his religious knowledge, so that the Spirit of the Lord may actively operate in him¹⁶⁷.

“... practice charity in visiting the sick and the poor...”

These words are to be understood in the spirit of the specific aims of the Order, and the candidate is always to bear them in mind and, with sound judgment, put them into practice. He shall, first of all, take part in the work of the organization of the Order to which he belongs. In order to fulfil these duties skilfully, appropriate training might be necessary. If not yet done, he shall try to acquaint himself with First Aid and with what must be done in case of accidents, taking part if possible in the courses prepared for this purpose. He shall endeavour to accompany the sick to places of pilgrimage¹⁶⁸.

However, he who would like to become a member of the Second Class must consider from the very beginning whether family and professional duties can allow him to fulfil also the duties of a member in Obedience. Otherwise, this aspiration might be recognized as not being inspired by the right motives and, therefore, not to be pursued.

¹⁶⁶ *Statuta 1204-1206*, p. 33.

¹⁶⁷ *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 1-4.

¹⁶⁸ See JoS 2, p. 39-46; JoS 4 (the theme of this issue is the Pilgrimage); JoS 7, p. 69-85; JoS 11, p. 93-102; and *Venice 2009*, p. 97-101.

3. REGULATIONS AND COMMENTARY TO ARTICLES 98 TO 100 OF THE *CODE*:
THE ADMISSION AND THE PROMISE

Code art. 98

Report on the Candidate

At the end of the year of preparation, the person charged with the spiritual guidance is to present to the competent Superior a report on the conduct of the candidate.

The report must deal with the candidate's:

- Spiritual maturity
- Readiness and ability to witness the faith
- Practice of the *obsequium pauperum*
- Understanding and knowledge of the Order
- Attitude towards the Order and the Superiors
- Respect for and affinity with fellow Members
- Humility and discretion

Code art. 99

Admission of Candidates to the promise

At the end of the year of preparation, with the agreement of the respective Chapter or Council, the Superior presents the proposal for admission to the Promise for acceptance by the Grand Master, after having heard the Sovereign Council and the Prelate.

The decision for Admission must take into consideration solely the spiritual qualities of the candidate, as well as the authenticity of his vocation, the sincerity and competence of his answer given to the call by means of his spiritual life and his commitment to take a more active role in the Order. This is clearly incompatible with any ambitious motives.

Code art. 100

Promise and Related Acts

Par. 1 — The aspirant admitted to the Promise pronounces the following formula:

“I, NN, calling on the name of God, promise faithfully to observe the laws of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem,

of Rhodes and of Malta, in particular to carry out the duties proper to Knights and Dames in Obedience and to render due obedience to whatever Superior shall be given to me. So help me God, the Immaculate Virgin, Saint John the Baptist our Glorious Patron, Blessed Fra' Gerard our holy founder, and all the Saints of the Order.”

Par. 2 — The Promise must be received by the Grand Master, Prior or Regent or by his special delegate, in the presence of two witnesses.

Par. 3 — The document attesting to the Promise is to be signed by the Knight or Dame who has made the Promise, by the person who has received the Promise and by two witnesses.

Par. 4 — The original document is to be kept in the archives of the Grand Magistracy and a certified copy in the archives of the Priory, Subpriory or Association.

Par. 5 — The ritual of the Promise is regulated by the Ceremonial¹⁶⁹.

¹⁶⁹ Under way of publication.

First Class

XIV. FUNDAMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE FIRST CLASS

The aim of the Order is laid out in the *Constitutional Charter*: “*The purpose of the Order is the promotion of the glory of God through the sanctification of its Members, service to the Faith and to the Holy Father, and assistance to one’s neighbour, in accordance with its ancient traditions*”¹⁷⁰.

The *Constitutional Charter* thus defines the duties of the Members of the First Class:

Constitutional Charter art. 9 § 1

Obligations of the Members

The Knights and Chaplains belonging to the First Class profess the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience in accordance with the Code, thus aspiring to perfection according to the Gospel. They are religious for all purposes of Canon Law and are governed by the particular rules which concern them. They are not obliged to live in community. Although the Members of the Second and Third Classes of the Order are also full Members of it, only the Professed are Religious in terms of the Canon Law of the Church and the Professed Knights are thus the essential core or heart of our Religious Order.

The Members of the Second and of the Third Class of the Order are – although by means of a different form of membership - members of a religious order: but only the Professed are Religious¹⁷¹ in the canonical sense. Consequently, the Professed Knights and Chaplains are the core, the heart, of our religious order. Like all Religious, the Knight of Justice freely and voluntarily “*intends, by the profession of the Evangelical Counsels in the Church, to free himself from those obstacles, which might draw him away from the fervour of charity and the perfection of divine worship. By his profession of the Evangelical Counsels, then, he is more intimately consecrated to divine service*”¹⁷².

¹⁷⁰ CC art. 2 § 1.

¹⁷¹ *Lumen gentium*, 43-47.

¹⁷² *Lumen gentium*, 44. The *Code of Canon Law* (CIC 573 § 1), thus defines consecrated life: “*Life consecrated by the profession of the Evangelical Counsels is a stable form of living by which the faithful, following Christ more closely under the action of the Holy Spirit, are totally dedicated to God who is loved most of all, so that, having dedicated themselves by a new and special title to His honour, to the building up of the Church, and the salvation of the world, they strive for perfection of charity in the service of the Kingdom of God and, having been made an outstanding sign in the Church, foretell the heavenly glory*”. See above chapter II § 2, and footnote 31.

The rights, duties and obligations of Knights of Justice are set out in art. 61 to 93 of the *Code*, but must be read in conjunction with the rest of the *Constitutional Charter* and *Code* as well as the relevant sections of the *Code of Canon Law* and of the texts of the *Magisterium* of the Church.

XV. CONSECRATED LIFE BASED ON THE EVANGELICAL COUNSELS

*“In the Church’s tradition religious profession is considered to be a special and fruitful deepening of the consecration received in Baptism, inasmuch as it is the means by which the close union with Christ already begun in Baptism develops in the gift of a fuller, more explicit and authentic configuration to him through the profession of the evangelical counsels. This further consecration, however, differs in a special way from baptismal consecration, of which it is not a necessary consequence”*¹⁷³. The Knight of Justice, called by God, lives the divine gift of his vocation in faith and charity. By his consecration¹⁷⁴ and by taking on the practice of the Evangelical Counsels¹⁷⁵, with the Three Vows, the Knight of Justice detaches himself from all earthly interests through the love of Christ (cf. Mk 10:28) and desires, as the only necessary thing, the perfect love of God, to which nothing is to be preferred¹⁷⁶. To conform ever better to his vocation, the Knight of Justice unites himself with the sacrifice of Christ, in which he consecrates himself to the Father in the grace of the Holy Spirit. He renews this consecration and deepens it at every Eucharist. The three Evangelical Counsels of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience¹⁷⁷, chosen and embraced by the Knight of Justice with Solemn¹⁷⁸ Vows, bind him canonically to their observance in complete dedication to the sick and the poor¹⁷⁹. His life of Profession¹⁸⁰ of the Evangelical Counsels must be lived as a consecration to God and to mankind¹⁸¹ in union with the love the Father through the Son and the souls saved by Him in His unique and eternal sacrifice.

¹⁷³ *Vita Consecrata*, 30; see also *Essential Elements*, 5-12; OPR, I, 1.

¹⁷⁴ *Essential Elements*, 5-12; *Redemptionis Donum*, 7-8; *Potissimum Institutioni*, 10.

¹⁷⁵ *Redemptionis Donum*, 9-10; *Potissimum Institutioni*, 11-12; *Spiritual Recommendations*, 7-11, p. 30-37.

¹⁷⁶ *Perfectae Caritatis*, 5-6.

¹⁷⁷ *Spiritual Recommendations*, 7-11, p. 30-37.

¹⁷⁸ The *Code of Canon Law* in force (1983), uses the expression “Perpetual Vows”, taken up in the *Code* of the Order of Malta, but for the ancient Orders the expression “Solemn Vows”, as done sometimes in this text, can be used.

¹⁷⁹ See the texts of the Order of Malta with regard to “*Domini nostri pauperes*” (cf. footnotes 48, 152, 153, 186), and to “*Domini nostri infirmi*” (cf. footnotes 47, 74, 76); see also *Vita Consecrata*, 82-83.

¹⁸⁰ *Renovationis Causam*, 6-9; *Potissimum Institutioni*, 54-57.

¹⁸¹ *Vita Consecrata*, 73.

1. POVERTY

He who takes the Vow of Poverty¹⁸² lives in the spirit of poverty and takes every opportunity to live *sine proprio*¹⁸³, except for what is necessary to lead a decent but not luxurious life¹⁸⁴. By His life and teachings Christ preached the blessedness of the poor, and invited us to experience the one richness: God, the Father, full of solicitude for His sons who are entrusted to Him. Jesus asks of the Professed Knight, as he asked of the Apostles, a radical detachment from worldly goods and to share with his brethren in true community all that the Father gives.

In the personal practice of poverty, each one willingly detaches himself from worldly goods, leads¹⁸⁵ a sober and simple life¹⁸⁶, not excluding more convenient options that quench the fervour of his heart. According to his state of life, the Knight is to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit and make a careful distinction between what is necessary and what is superfluous. The Knight is called to testify by his lifestyle that he is a follower of “*Our Lord Jesus Christ, that for your sake became poor although he was rich, so that by his poverty you might become rich*” (2Cor 8:9). Poverty must be given witness and given expression in observing the common law of work and commitment and through the generous fulfilment of the duties of one’s office, all towards the common good. Let the Knight of Justice have the intimate conviction that to evangelize the poor and help the sick¹⁸⁷, he must share their sufferings.

2. THE VOW OF POVERTY: COMMENTARY ON ARTICLES 69 TO 83 OF THE CODE

Code art. 69

The Vow of Poverty

By the temporary vow of poverty, the Professed renounces the independent use of temporal goods, in accordance with the norms of this Code.

¹⁸² *Evangelica Testificatio*, 16-22; *Redemptionis Donum*, 12; *Potissimum Institutioni*, 14; *Vita Consecrata*, 89-90.

¹⁸³ RAYMOND DU PUY, *Regula* p. 63.

¹⁸⁴ *Perfectae Caritatis*, 13; *Vita Consecrata*, 89-90.

¹⁸⁵ *Evangelica Testificatio*, 30-39.

¹⁸⁶ “*Et vestitus sit humilis, quia Domini nostri pauperes, quorum servos nos esse fatemur, nudi et sordidi incedunt. Et turpe est servo ut sit superbus, et Dominus ejus humilis*” (RAYMOND DU PUY, *Regula*, 2, p. 63). *Domini nostri pauperes* can be translated either as “our Lord the poor”, or as “the poor of our Lord”.

¹⁸⁷ *Religious and Human Promotion*, 2-4; *Vita Consecrata*, 82-83.

Code art. 70

Effects of the Temporary Vow of Poverty

The Professed in Temporary Vows retain the ownership of their goods and the capacity, even through inheritance, to acquire other goods.

Code art. 71

Prohibition against Donations

The Professed in Temporary Vows cannot make gifts of their goods *inter vivos*.

Code art. 72

The Will prior to Profession

Par. 1 — Before profession, the Novice must make a Will disposing freely of his present and future goods. After profession, the Will cannot be changed without the permission of the competent Superior of the Order.

Par. 2 — The original Will or a copy, under sealed cover, is to be submitted to the Superior of the Order, who must see that it is properly kept.

Par. 3 — The candidate for profession must give an inventory of his estate to the Superior, who is to ensure that it is sealed and kept confidential.

Code art. 73

Rights of the Order over the Goods of the Professed

Everything which the Professed acquires through his activity or by reason of his membership in the Order (*intuitu religionis*) devolves to the Order.

Code art. 74

Goods acquired “intuitu religionis”

In the absence of a specific declaration to the contrary, it is assumed that any gift or legacy to the Professed is intended to be *intuitu religionis*.

Code art. 75

Use and Usufruct of Personal Goods

Par. 1 — In accordance with the Code of Canon Law, before temporary vows and for their duration, the Novice must cede to a person of his

choice the administration of his goods and arrange for their use or usufruct. The Novice, after making temporary vows, must keep a part of the income from his property to maintain his standard of living and to support the works of the Order.

Par. 2 — With the consent of the Grand Master, and the deliberative vote of the majority of the Professed Knights of the Sovereign Council, the Professed Knight may retain the administration of his goods even after making temporary vows, in conformity with what is set out in par. 1.

Within the limits foreseen in this Code, he must always administer his goods, as regards their use and enjoyment, with the care and diligence of a good head of household.

Code art. 76

Conditions regarding the Privilege of Administration, Use and Usufruct of Goods

With the permission of the Grand Master, in accordance with Art. 75 and always under the direction of the Grand Prior or Prior, the Professed is to provide for:

- a) ordinary personal expenses, such as food, lodging, and clothing in accord with his social position, with the obligation to render an account every year to the aforesaid Superior;
- b) future needs with common prudence;
- c) the payment of an annual sum for the works of the Order.

Code art. 77

Permission for Extraordinary Expenses

According to circumstances, the Professed must obtain prior explicit permission from the Superior for extraordinary expenses.

Code art. 78

Donations to the Order or other Charitable Causes

After having provided for ordinary and extraordinary expenses, the Professed is obliged, with the consent of the Superiors of the Order, to distribute any excess to the works of the Order or to other charitable causes.

Code art. 79*The Spirit of the Vow of Poverty*

According to the evangelical spirit of poverty, the Professed, although living in the world, must limit his requirements, appropriately depriving himself not only of what is superfluous but also of that which is not truly necessary.

By the Vow of Poverty the Professed Knight renounces earthly goods, to imitate Christ. Possessions that can be evaluated in money, such as personal property or real estate or credits with a patrimonial value, are the object of this Vow. It excludes the possibility of disposing of one's temporal possessions without the consent of the Superior, which must be morally legitimate and indisputable. Disposition of any possessions of the Order without the consent of the owner or of the legitimate administrator of the goods compounds the sin against Justice and the sin against the Vow of Poverty. The Professed Knight in Temporary Vows who disposes of his possessions without authorization, commits a sin against Poverty. The Professed Knights of the Order of Malta are under no obligation to live a common life¹⁸⁸ but live in the world in order to carry out their apostolate: they are responsible for their own maintenance. The Superiors shall allow the Professed Knights in Solemn Vows, who maintain themselves through earnings or other income, to keep for themselves what is reasonably necessary for such maintenance. Any surplus shall go to the Common Treasure.

Code art. 80*Effects of the Perpetual Vow of Poverty*

With the perpetual vow of poverty, the Professed renounces not only the use and usufruct of his goods but also their ownership and the capacity to possess or acquire temporal goods.

Code art. 81*Renunciation of Goods before Perpetual Profession*

During the sixty days preceding perpetual profession, the Professed in Perpetual Vows must renounce all goods to which he has title in favour of whomever he wishes. This act is subject to actually making perpetual profession.

¹⁸⁸ CC art. 9 § 1.

As per the provision of art. 80 of the *Code*, a Knight should renounce ownership of his own properties before taking the Solemn (Perpetual) Vows¹⁸⁹. He should foresee the payment of a life annuity to be made by the person in whose favour the Knight has renounced his property.

Code art. 83

Request for an Indult regarding the Perpetual Vow of Poverty

When forwarding the request to the Holy See for admission to perpetual profession, the Grand Master, with the deliberative vote of the majority of the Professed Knights of the Sovereign Council, may for just reasons also request for the candidate the concession of a special provision concerning the observance of the vow of poverty.

If the Knight who intends to take Solemn (Perpetual) Vows should be the owner of real estate, securities or other possessions, the administration of which cannot, for sound reasons, be given up — for example it would jeopardize the rights of others involved, who might suffer losses, or local laws do not allow such a transfer, or for any other valid reason — the Grand Master may request the Holy See for a special dispensation in regard to the observance of the Vow of Poverty. In this case the Knight of Justice should be aware that he can administer his personal temporal possessions only in virtue of the dispensation from the Holy See, and shall accordingly administer them only as a trustee for the person he has designated in his will, redacted before the Solemn Profession, according with the provisions of can. 668 § 1 of the *Code of Canon Law*.

The legal position varies greatly from country to country and it is important that the Professed Knight take advice on the most efficient and effective way in his country of residence of renouncing his property whilst retaining sufficient income to live.

3. CONSECRATED CHASTITY

Consecrated Chastity “*for the Kingdom of Heaven*” (Mt 19:12) is a gift of God and must be lived with fervour and intense prayer. With the Evangelical Counsel of Chastity¹⁹⁰, the consecrated person offers to God his whole self – body, mind and heart. A special grace – of dedication and attraction to the Kingdom of God

¹⁸⁹ CIC 668 § 1.

¹⁹⁰ *Evangelica Testificatio*, 13-15; *Redemptionis Donum*, 11; *Potissimum Institutioni*, 13; *Vita Consecrata*, 88.

(Mt 19:12) – brings one to such a choice. Although this means renouncing the great good of having one’s own family, this grace lets one participate in the great mystery of Christ, born of a virgin, and given only to the things of the Father. The life of the consecrated person is not thereby impoverished, because God opens his heart of love to all those who suffer; transforming them into followers and witnesses of the life to come. Only the friendship of Christ can strengthen the efforts a Professed Knight needs to live generously in chastity and so to fulfil the void due to the renunciation of conjugal love: only a true calling from God, accompanied by the grace *proper to this state*, will make possible to live this charism. To this end, the Knight must bind himself, with God’s help, to avoid such occasions as would prevent him from achieving a mature and well-balanced chastity, serenely lived out in the reality of our humanity and our concrete situation. The Knight shall seek to conform to “*the virginal life which Christ our Lord chose for Himself and which His Virgin Mother embraced*”¹⁹¹. This Gift of God is preserved and enriched by prayer: by seeking the aid of Our Lord and the intercession of His Virgin Mother¹⁹².

4. THE VOW OF CHASTITY: COMMENTARY ON ARTICLES 67 AND 68 OF THE *CODE*

Code art. 67

The Vow of Chastity

Par. 1 — The vow of chastity binds the Professed, also by the virtue of religion, to live celibately and to avoid every internal or external act contrary to Christian purity.

Par. 2 — The temporary vow of chastity constitutes an impeding impediment and the perpetual vow of chastity constitutes a diriment impediment to marriage.

Code art. 68

Spiritual Aids for the Practice of Chastity

Par. 1 — In order to remain faithful to his vow of chastity, the Professed should make use of spiritual aids such as, principally, the frequent reception of the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist, a filial devotion to the Immaculate Virgin, mortification of the senses, and profound humility.

¹⁹¹ *Lumen Gentium*, 46; *Evangelica Testificatio*, 13-15; *Redemptionis Donum*, 11.

¹⁹² *Perfectae Caritatis*, 12.

Par. 2 — The Professed, not being bound to the common life, should be even more careful to avoid being involved in worldly social gatherings and entertainments. He must seek to give edification through his conduct, honouring his state as a religious in the Order of Malta.

The Vow of Chastity makes the Knight of Justice a person consecrated to God, so that any external and internal sin against chastity is a grave sin against the virtue and against the Vow. The Virtue and Vow of Chastity coincide. Any sins against the Virtue of Chastity are also against the Vow and, therefore, constitute acts which are doubly blameworthy. There is no essential difference between Temporary and Solemn (Perpetual) Vows, but, according to the provisions of Canon Law, Solemn Vows render null and void acts contrary to them – Marriage¹⁹³, for example – whereas Temporary Vows merely prohibit such acts.

5. OBEDIENCE

Christ Himself, who came to do not His own will, but that of His Father who had sent Him, is the model¹⁹⁴ of obedience (Jn 4:34; 8:29; Heb 5:8-9).

With the Profession of the Evangelical Counsel of Obedience¹⁹⁵, the Knight offers to God the complete renunciation of his own will as a sacrifice of himself, which is the firmest and surest way to unite oneself to the saving will of God¹⁹⁶. The Vow of Obedience binds him who pronounces it to obey his legitimate Superiors in anything he may be ordered to do in accordance with the *Constitutional Charter* and *Code* of the Order, as well as anything that concerns the observance of the Vows¹⁹⁷. The Knight of Justice recognises the Pope as the supreme authority, and obeys him in virtue of the sacred bond of Obedience¹⁹⁸. The Grand Master is the supreme head of the Order and to him special obedience is due. Although as a Member of an “exempt Order”¹⁹⁹ under Canon Law, and thus not under the direct authority of the Bishop of the place where he lives, the Knight owes him respect due to the essential unity of apostolic work; where appropriate, he shall collaborate

¹⁹³ CIC 1088.

¹⁹⁴ *Service of Authority and Obedience*, 8.

¹⁹⁵ *Evangelica Testificatio*, 23-29; *Redemptionis Donum*, 13; *Potissimum Institutioni*, 15; *Vita Consecrata*, 91-92.

¹⁹⁶ *Perfectae Caritatis*, 14; *Service of Authority and Obedience*, 4-7.

¹⁹⁷ *Service of Authority and Obedience*, 9-11.

¹⁹⁸ CIC 590 § 2.

¹⁹⁹ *Mutuae Relationes*, 22.

with him in diocesan activities²⁰⁰. Notwithstanding the different functions and responsibilities that may be held, the Knight of Justice must never forget his fundamental equality with his confreres, all fully sons of God, who have voluntarily offered their service to God and to their neighbour. The virtue of Obedience excludes all forms of personal ambition, and the Professed Knight must be prepared to live in humility and even obscurity²⁰¹.

Superiors must remember the nature and importance of their mandates, be faithful to their duties and be guides and examples to all²⁰², treating the confreres entrusted to them with affection and reverence. The Knight in Vows is constrained to be open and confident with his Superiors. He should, with a calm spirit, frankly and simply, give his opinion, and lay forth his plans and suggestions, ready, however, to obey the decision of his Superior²⁰³.

6. THE VOW OF OBEDIENCE: COMMENTARY ON ARTICLES 61 TO 66 OF THE *CODE*

Code art. 61

The Virtue of Obedience

The virtue of obedience moves the soul to the imitation of Jesus Christ who became obedient even unto death on the Cross.

“Religious obedience is at once an imitation of Christ and a participation in his mission. It is concerned with doing what Jesus did, and, at the same time, with what he would do in the concrete situation in which a religious finds himself or herself today. Whether one has authority in an institute or not, one cannot either command or obey without reference to mission. When religious obey, they offer this obedience in continuity with the obedience of Jesus for the salvation of the world. This is why everything which, in the exercise of authority or obedience, indicates a compromise, a diplomatic solution, the consequence of pressure, or any other kind of temporizing, is opposed to the basic inspiration of religious obedience, which is to align oneself with the mission of Jesus and to carry it out in time, even if such an undertaking is difficult”²⁰⁴.

²⁰⁰ *Mutuae Relationes*, 10-14; *Potissimum Institutioni*, 94-97.

²⁰¹ BERTIE, *To All Masters*, 4.

²⁰² *Perfectae Caritatis*, 14; *Service of Authority and Obedience*, 13-14.

²⁰³ CIC 618-619, 633; *Service of Authority and Obedience*, 18.

²⁰⁴ *Potissimum Institutioni*, 15; *Perfectae Caritatis*, 14.

Code art. 62

The Vow of Obedience

With the vow of obedience, Professed Knights and Chaplains bind themselves to obey the Holy Father and their legitimate Superiors in accordance with the Constitution and Code.

These are the Superiors who can impart orders by virtue of the Vow of Obedience

- the Pope, as the Supreme Superior of Religious²⁰⁵;
- the Sacred Congregation of Religious according to the dispositions of the *Code of Canon Law*;
- the regular Superiors: the Grand Master, the Grand Commander²⁰⁶, the Grand Priors and Priors, the Regents²⁰⁷;
- the deputies of the Superiors, but only in case of necessity.

Code art. 63

The Precept of the Vow of Obedience

Par. 1 — Superiors convey orders by virtue of the vow when they use the formula “in virtue...”, or “in the name of God...” or some analogous form.

Par. 2 — The command cannot be imposed except for serious and just cause and must be given in writing or in the presence of two witnesses.

Code art. 64

Observance of the Laws of the Order

The prescriptions contained in the laws of the Order of themselves do not contain a precept under pain of sin unless they concern a matter relating to the vows, or to divine law.

That which is prescribed in the laws of the Order of Malta does not constitute, of itself, a precept binding under the pain of sin. However, the violation of these laws constitutes a sin, when the Superior has expressly requested their observance in virtue of the Vow of Obedience.

The laws of the Order have an obligatory character. They however, do not bind in conscience, except in the cases foreseen in article 63 of the *Code* but the resultant penalty imposed by the Superior in case of transgression binds the Professed Knight

²⁰⁵ CIC 590 § 2.

²⁰⁶ The competent Superior of the Professed Knights *in gremio religionis* (CC art. 10 § 5) is the Grand Commander.

²⁰⁷ CC art. 11.

in conscience by virtue of his Vow of Obedience. The transgression of the laws of the Order can become sinful if they are connected with negligent or even contemptuous behaviour, or if they cause scandal or consequence detrimental to the Order itself. Through the observance of the laws of the Order, the Member of the Order practices the Virtue of Fidelity²⁰⁸.

Code art. 65

Relations with Superiors of the Order

The Professed must have religious respect for their Superiors, and must submit themselves to them in a spirit of love and devotion. Such respect does not conflict with the liberty to make known to such Superiors whatsoever they may think useful for the benefit of the Order.

Code art. 66

Spirit of Collaboration between Members and Superiors

In order to promote unity and harmony, the Professed are to maintain fraternal relations and confer regularly with their Superiors and be assiduous in attendance at meetings.

XVI. SPIRITUAL LIFE

1. THE HOLY EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE

Every time that the Sacrifice of the Cross on which Christ was sacrificed is celebrated on the altar, “we are given a foretaste of the future glory”²⁰⁹. The Eucharistic Mystery is “the centre of all Christian life, both for the Universal Church and the local community”²¹⁰. It is the apex towards which all the Church’s actions lead, and is, at the same time, the source from which all virtue proceeds²¹¹. Thus it shall be the central point in the life of a Knight of Justice who shall, therefore, assist assiduously at the Sacrifice of the Holy Mass and receive Holy Communion²¹².

²⁰⁸ *Vita Consecrata*, 36-37.

²⁰⁹ *Sacrosantum Concilium*, 83.

²¹⁰ CONGREGATION FOR RITES, *Eucharisticum Mysterium*, Instruction on the Cult of the Eucharistic Mystery, May 25, 1967, in AAS, LIX (1967), n. 7, pp. 539-573, 6-7; EV, 2, pp. 1084-1153. See also the Encyclical of Pope John Paul II *Ecclesia in Eucharistia*.

²¹¹ *Sacrosantum Concilium*, 10; see also the Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Benedict XVI *Sacramentum Caritatis* on Eucharist as the source and the apex of the life and the mission of the Church.

²¹² *Sacrosantum Concilium*, 48.

2. THE DIVINE OFFICE

*“Christ Jesus [...] taking human nature, introduced into this earthly exile that hymn which is sung throughout all ages in the halls of heaven [...] For he continues His priestly work through the agency of His Church, which is ceaselessly engaged in praising the Lord and interceding for the salvation of the whole world”*²¹³.

The Divine Office²¹⁴ has the characteristic of sanctifying the day and night hours²¹⁵ by divine praise. Therefore the Knights of Justice give it great importance and remember that in celebrating the Liturgy of the Hours they are taking part in *“the highest honour of the Spouse of Christ, because, in praising the Lord, he is standing before the throne of God in the name of Mother Church”*²¹⁶. From ancient times, Lauds and Vespers have been considered to be the two hinges of the daily Office²¹⁷, while Compline *“signals the end of the day and prepares the Knight to rest with Christ and to start another day in His service”*²¹⁸.

3. THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

The Sacrament of Reconciliation²¹⁹ was given by Christ to His Church in the person of the Apostles (Jn 20:22-23; 2Cor 5:18-21), and bears witness to the grace brought by Our Lord Jesus Christ in the mystery of His death and resurrection (Rom 5:10).

²¹³ *Sacrosantum Concilium*, 83.

²¹⁴ *Sacrosantum Concilium*, 83-101; IGLH, 1-9. With the Instruction of the Congregation for Rites *Inter Oecumenici* (80-83) of September 26, 1964 (in AAS, LVI, 1964, n. 14, pp. 877-900; EV, 2, p. 301-355), the Church has invited us to prefer the Liturgy of the Hours, even if only partially recited, rather than using the Little Offices. See also the *Motu Proprio Ecclesiae Sanctae* of August 6, 1966 for the application of some Decrees of Vatican Council II (in AAS, LVIII (1966), n. 11, p. 757-787; EV, 2, p. 696-769): *“Commendatur [...] Institutis [religiosis] ut, loco “parvi Officii”, divinum Officium sive ex parte sive ex integro absolvent, ita ut intimius participant vitam liturgicam Ecclesiae”* (*Norme per l'applicazione del Decreto Perfectae caritatis*, 20, AAS, LVIII (1966), n.11, p. 788-779; EV, 2, p. 749). Again, the Congregation for Divine Worship in 1988 has reaffirmed: *“Etsi religiosi, qui “officium parvum” rite probatum celebrant, partem habent in oratione publica Ecclesiae, commendatur tamen institutis celebratio Liturgiae Horarum, sive in toto, sive ex parte, loco “offici parvi”, ad vitam liturgicam Ecclesiae intimius participandam”*, in *Enchiridion documentorum instaurationis liturgicae*, t. II, Supplementum Roma, C.L.V., Edizioni Liturgiche, 1988, n. 2498. However in certain circumstances it is recognised that it may still be appropriate to pray the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Office for the Dead.

²¹⁵ *Sacrosantum Concilium*, 84; IGLH, 10-11.

²¹⁶ *Sacrosantum Concilium*, 85; *Spiritual Recommendations*, 14, p. 38-39.

²¹⁷ *“By the venerable tradition of the universal Church, Lauds as morning prayer and Vespers as evening prayer are the two hinges on which the daily office turns; hence they are to be considered as the chief hours and are to be celebrated as such”* (*Sacrosantum Concilium*, 89a; IGLH, 37-54).

²¹⁸ *Spiritual Recommendations*, 14, p. 39; IGLH, 84.

²¹⁹ *Spiritual Recommendations*, 15, p. 39.

It is a trusting meeting with the mercy of the Father and renews and reinvigorates the Knight of Justice's participation in the paschal mystery; it strengthens his love of his brethren in the Church, helps him to accept possible spiritual difficulties and sustains him on the way to freedom from sin and in the new life of Christ Risen. Humbly and trustingly before God, with confidence in his Spiritual Director, the Knight shall frequently approach the Sacrament of Confession and not neglect the recommendations of his Confessor or Spiritual Director.

To prepare himself worthily for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the Professed Knight shall make a daily examination of conscience, looking at his life towards God and his fellow man. This examination is best carried out at the start of Compline as laid out in the rubrics for that Office²²⁰.

4. PRIVATE PRAYER, MEDITATION, *LECTIO DIVINA*

By Baptism, every Christian becomes part of the Mystical Body of Christ and is in communion with the Trinity in a real way through sacramental grace and prayer (1Tim 2:1-4). The Knight of Justice shall welcome the exhortation of Our Lord to His disciples, to watch and pray in order not to fall into temptation (Mt 26:41), and he shall follow the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary in receiving humbly the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Meditation, contemplation and prayer renovate the soul and dispose towards dialogue with God and prepare to bear witness to the Faith. The spiritual life of the Knight is nourished by the reading of the Holy Scriptures, since the Word of God is, like the altar, the Lord's Table, from which He offers us food of eternal life²²¹. The writings of the Fathers of the Church, the lives of the Saints and the classical spiritual works, which have guided the souls of the faithful throughout the centuries from earliest times, shall have a special place in the readings chosen by the Knight²²².

He shall listen with joy and attention to the Word of God preached on liturgical occasions; and he shall pay special attention to the Encyclicals and Teachings of the Supreme Pontiffs. He shall accept with due respect the instructions of his Superiors. In order to deepen the knowledge of religious life and of the charism of the Order,

²²⁰ IGLH, 86.

²²¹ Cf. *Dei Verbum*, 21 and 25; and *Verbum Domini*, 83, 86-87: "In the first place they should have recourse daily to the Holy Scriptures in order that, by reading and meditating on Holy Writ, they may learn "the surpassing worth of knowing Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:8)" (*Perfectae Caritatis*, 6).

²²² In choosing spiritual readings, the daily Patristic readings proposed by the Church in the Liturgy of the Hours should be preferred, in order to be formed to the "*sentire cum Ecclesia*" (*Vita Consecrata*, 46; *Potissimum Institutioni*, 21-25; IGLH, 140-168).

the Rules of Raymond du Puy²²³ and St Augustine²²⁴, specific to the Order's tradition; as well as relevant parts of the Rules of St Basil²²⁵ and of St Benedict²²⁶, compatible with the kind of life and the aims of the Order of Malta, will be helpful.

The time taken up by spiritual reading – which should not be less than half-an-hour - shall be considered by the Knights of Justice as an essential part of their daily spiritual duties²²⁷.

5. ANNUAL RETREATS, DAYS OF RECOLLECTION AND SILENCE

“Following the example of Our Lord, who often retired into solitude to pray to His Father, and who was taken prisoner at the very moment when, alone, in the Garden of the Olives, he was submitting Himself to the Will of the Father, the Knight will strive to be alone to immerse himself in prayer and will frequently look for moments of interior silence when he can humble himself in the presence of God”²²⁸.

Blessed Adrian Fortescue recorded in his *Book of Hours* the maxim: *“Use much silence”*. To keep silent from time to time can demonstrate how many good reasons there can be for avoiding useless talk²²⁹. Moments of prayer and silence are provided for in the Liturgy of the Church; silence and prayer tend to revivify us spiritually. Of obligation²³⁰ is a yearly spiritual retreat of five complete days in a religious house²³¹. The Knight of Justice is obliged to inform the Grand Commander, through his religious Superior, that he has fulfilled this duty. When the retreat is not done with other Members of the Order, the Knight must get a letter from the person in charge of the religious house, to confirm the presence and participation of the Knight. A monthly Day of Recollection is also recommended.

6. OTHER EXERCISES OF DEVOTIONS

The Professed Knight shall dedicate some time to the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Inserted into the Mystical Body of Christ, that is the Church, the

²²³ RAYMOND DU PUY, *Regula*.

²²⁴ AUGUSTINE, *Regula*.

²²⁵ BASIL, *Regula*.

²²⁶ BENEDICT, *Regula*.

²²⁷ *Spiritual Recommendations*, 22, p. 42.

²²⁸ *Spiritual Recommendations*, 18, p. 40.

²²⁹ TH. A KEMPIS, *Imitation of Christ*, I, 10.

²³⁰ CIC 663.

²³¹ C art. 86 c.

Professed Knight shall see in it the “Communion of Saints”²³². The Professed Knight shall bear in mind that we are pilgrims on earth, with others who have passed on and are being purified, and yet others who are already in glory “*are all communicating, albeit in different states and ways, in the same charity of God and of one’s neighbour, and we are singing to our God the same hymn of glory*”²³³. Conscious of this communion which continues after death, the Knight shall not neglect to pray for late Members and benefactors.

Devotion to the Holy Cross shall have a special place in the pious practices of the Knight of Justice: the Stations of the Cross help the soul to live Christ’s Passion with Him²³⁴.

The Knight of Justice will have especially recourse to Blessed Virgin Mary²³⁵, in simplicity and faithfulness. He will honour Her by celebrating Her liturgical feasts and turning to Her with the prayers of the Church and with those traditionally used by the Order, especially the Blessed Rosary²³⁶, which he should pray daily.

The Professed Knight shall become familiar with the lives of the Saints and Blessed of the Order²³⁷ and shall cultivate a devotion to them, celebrating their feasts or at least praying the Collect of their Mass during their Feast Day.

XVII. THE APOSTOLATE

Constitutional Charter art. 2

Purpose

Par. 1 — The purpose of the Order is the promotion of the glory of God through the sanctification of its Members, service to the Faith and to the Holy Father, and assistance to one’s neighbour, in accordance with its ancient traditions.

Par. 2 — True to the divine precepts and to the admonitions of our Lord Jesus Christ, guided by the teachings of the Church, the Order affirms and propagates the Christian virtues of charity and brotherhood. The

²³² CCC 946-962.

²³³ *Lumen Gentium*, 49.

²³⁴ The stole of the Professed Knight, embroidered with the symbols of the Passion, is a remembrance of the the Death and Resurrection of Our Lord.

²³⁵ See the Apostolic Exhortation *Marialis Cultus*, the Encyclical Letter *Redemptoris Mater*.

²³⁶ See the Apostolic Letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*.

²³⁷ The Missal proper of the Order can be referred to (*Proprium Missarum*), and especially the introductions and the commentaries to the French edition (*Missel et Lectionnaire de l’Ordre de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem, de Rhodes et de Malte*, Paris 2002). See also BBS, at their respective entries.

Order carries out its charitable works for the sick, the needy and refugees without distinction of religion, race, origin and age.

The Order fulfils its institutional tasks especially by carrying out hospitaller works, including social and health assistance, as well as aiding victims of exceptional disasters and of war, attending also to their spiritual well-being and the strengthening of their faith in God.

Code art. 236

“Obsequium pauperum”

Par. 1 — In search of a tangible response to the love of Christ, the first Members of the Order recognised the Lord and served Him in sick pilgrims in the Holy Land. Obsequium pauperum has its origin in the divine compassion for the misery of the world, which obliges the Members of the Order to serve Jesus Christ, who is present in the sick.

Par. 2 — With respect to the other purpose of the Order, *tuitio fidei*, the Members of the Order, recognising the image of God in each individual, are especially called upon to become involved in those situations where human life is threatened in its God-given essence and dignity.

Par. 3 — Consequently, the Order is the tangible way for its Members to fulfil the supreme commandment of love for God and neighbour, to honour God and to grow in holiness in the imitation of Christ and in communion with the Church.

Par. 4 — The charism of *obsequium pauperum* leads Members to encounter the Lord in the sick through personal service. All Members are, therefore, called on to practice, personally and regularly, the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

All Religious have the duty to work “*to implant and strengthen the Kingdom of Christ in souls and to extend that Kingdom to every clime*”²³⁸. Consecration to God is their first apostolate²³⁹, which is expressed by witness nurtured by prayer and penance²⁴⁰. The charism of the Order of Malta is a gift of God, which finds its expression in the *obsequium pauperum*²⁴¹ and the *tuitio fidei*²⁴². The apostolate of the Knight of Justice, therefore, is stamped with the traditional spirituality of the Order²⁴³.

²³⁸ *Lumen Gentium*, 44.

²³⁹ *Redemptionis Donum*, 15; *Vita Consecrata*, 72, 76, 83.

²⁴⁰ See the Apostolic Constitution *Paenitemini* of Pope Paul VI.

²⁴¹ Cf. above, chapter III § 4 and below, chapter XX § 9.

²⁴² Cf. above, chapter III § 3 and below, chapter XX § 10.

²⁴³ *Spiritual Recommendations*, 24, p. 44-45.

Tuitio fidei is usually translated as “defence” of the Faith, but it implies more and can be better expressed by “nurturing, witnessing and defending the Faith”. The greatest way to promote the Faith is to truly live it and bear authentically witness to it. The Professed Knight shall not confine himself to taking part in the Order’s pilgrimages²⁴⁴, but shall give freely of himself in his dedication to the needy, and shall be close to suffering humanity²⁴⁵. Religious Profession in an Hospitaller Order implies continual contact with the poor²⁴⁶ and the sick²⁴⁷. The Professed Knight shall be close to the needy of all social classes and show, by his example and acts, that he is a humble member of the Kingdom of God, remembering that “*whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me*” (Mt 25:40). Care of the poor and the sick is not limited only to material help, but also includes spiritual help²⁴⁸.

XVIII. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ADMISSION TO THE FIRST CLASS:

ARTICLE 6 OF THE CODE

Code art. 6

Requirements for Admission to the First Class

Any Catholic may be admitted to the First Class of the Order who:

- a) is not subject to any impediment established by the Constitution, the Code or Canon Law;**
- b) is moved by right intention;**
- c) is suited to serve the sick and the poor of Jesus Christ and to dedicate himself to the service of the Church and of the Holy See according to the spirit of the Order;**
- d) meets other requirements prescribed by the Priories or Subpriories.**

Fitness for Profession entails the lack of canonical impediments as specified by the Code²⁴⁹. The right intention consists in the will to aspire to the principal aim of a religious order²⁵⁰, namely, evangelical perfection in a life led in conformity with the charisms and the Statutes of the Order of Malta. Right intention also includes

²⁴⁴ *Spiritual Recommendations*, 24, pp. 44-45 See footnote 168.

²⁴⁵ See the Letter of Pope John Paul II *The Dignity of the Suffering Person*.

²⁴⁶ Cf. footnotes 48, 152, 153, 186.

²⁴⁷ Cf. footnotes 48, 74, 76.

²⁴⁸ *Religious and Human Promotion*, 1-6; 14-19; 28-31.

²⁴⁹ **C** art. 9-10; cf. **CIC** 643.

²⁵⁰ “*Since the ultimate norm of the religious life is the following of Christ set forth in the Gospels, let this be held by all institutes as the highest rule*” (*Perfectae Caritatis*, 2 a).

the resolution to belong to the Order during one's whole life.

Those who are afflicted with serious psychological or physical diseases, and those who have character or moral defects are not to be considered fit for Admission to the First Class²⁵¹.

XIX. THE WAY OF ADMISSION TO THE FIRST CLASS FROM THE ASPIRANCY TO THE FIRST TEMPORAL VOWS

1. KNIGHTS FROM THE THIRD CLASS

Admission: Articles 6 to 16 of the *Code*

- A Knight of the Third Class who wishes to enter in the First Class must have examined the matter of entering into religious life with his Spiritual Director and with the Chaplain in charge of Vocation to the First Class within a Priory, Subpriory or Association. If no such Chaplain has been appointed, then any Chaplain of the Order should be consulted, or the Grand Magistracy must be contacted directly, so that appropriate advice can be given as to how to proceed. The Chaplain or the Professed Knight in charge must be familiar with all the articles of the *Constitutional Charter* and the *Code*²⁵² which refer to Members of the First Class.
- If the Knight resides in the area of a Priory or Subpriory, a formal request for admission must be submitted to the appropriate Superior, that is the Prior or the Regent. The Superior will need to ensure that the Knight fulfils the requirements of art. 6, 7, 9 and 10 of the *Code*.
- If there is no Priory or Subpriory in the area where the Knight resides, then the request must be presented directly to the Grand Commander, who will advise the Knight as to how to proceed.
- A Knight of Justice is appointed by the Grand Master as "Director of Vocations to the First Class". It is his responsibility, under the guidance of the Grand Commander, to assist and orientate the Knight in his passage towards Aspirancy and Noviciate. The Director of Vocations to the First Class can be contacted through the Grand Magistracy.

²⁵¹ **CIC** 642.

²⁵² **C** art. 6-93.

- Any Knight who thinks he may have a vocation to the First Class, or who would simply like to have more information, may write directly to the Director of Vocations to the First Class at the Grand Magistracy.
- After the deliberative vote of his Chapter, the appropriate Superior will ask the Grand Master for the Knight to be admitted as an Aspirant to the Noviciate. His request will be accompanied by the documents required for admission to the Noviciate, as specified by the *Code*²⁵³. The appropriate Superior will delegate a Professed Knight or a Spiritual Father, to whom the Knight can be entrusted for the period of Aspirancy²⁵⁴. Admission to Aspirancy is granted by the Grand Master, subject to prior deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council²⁵⁵.

Aspirancy: Articles 17 to 22 of the Code

- The period of Aspirancy lasts for a minimum of three months and a maximum of one year. Its purpose²⁵⁶ is to help the Knight continue discerning whether or not he has a vocation to the First Class, and it is a period of orientation and formation about the Order, with a particular focus on the requirements of those seeking to make Profession.
- In regular meetings, a programme will be followed under the guidance of a Professed Knight or a Spiritual Father, – usually an Order Chaplain – appointed under art. 17 § 1 of the *Code*. He will be the Aspirant Master for the Knight during his period of Aspirancy. It will be appropriate, during this period, to introduce the Knight to the demands of the spiritual and apostolic life which are part of the life of a Knight of Justice. In regions where there are no Professed Knights, one from another region may be assigned to assist in overseeing the Aspirant's progress.
- The Aspirant Master will inform the appropriate Superior about the personality, conduct and suitability of the Aspirant. A written report²⁵⁷ will be submitted to the Superior. This report shall be taken into account with the due consideration when deciding whether the Aspirant can apply to be admitted to the Noviciate.

²⁵³ C art. 12-16.

²⁵⁴ C art. 17 § 1.

²⁵⁵ C art. 8 § 2.

²⁵⁶ *Potissimum Institutioni, The Stage Before Entrance into the Noviciate*, 42-44.

²⁵⁷ C art. 17 § 2.

- Towards the end of the Aspirancy, and with the careful consideration of his Superior, the Knight must present a formal written request to be admitted to the Noviciate. After the deliberative vote of the competent Chapter, this request will be submitted by his Superior to the Grand Master, together with the documents required under art. 12 to 16 of the *Code*. The Aspirant will not be able to start his Noviciate until he has completed a course of spiritual exercises of eight full days in an approved place, beginning with a general confession, according the prudent judgement of the Aspirant's confessor²⁵⁸.
- It pertains to the Grand Master and the Professed Members of the Sovereign Council to admit Aspirants to the Noviciate²⁵⁹.
- The Novice will be assigned a Novice Master²⁶⁰ by the Grand Master who chooses the Novice Master from amongst the Chaplains of the Order. This Chaplain is responsible for the formation and the spiritual and apostolic instruction of the Novice. The Grand Master also chooses an Assistant from amongst the Professed Knights, who must be at least 35 years old.

**Noviciate and Admission to temporary profession:
Articles 23 to 42 of The Code**

- The Noviciate²⁶¹ begins with the Novice being clothed in the habit of a Knight of Justice. This is done in accordance with the proper Ceremonial, and it is recorded in a certified document²⁶².
- The Noviciate must last one uninterrupted year, and may not be extended beyond two years²⁶³. Changes of a Novice's residence and Master are regulated by art. 25 of the *Code*.
- The Novice will be formed according to these *Regulations*, promulgated by the Grand Master with the deliberative vote of the Professed Members of the Sovereign Council²⁶⁴.

²⁵⁸ C art. 22.

²⁵⁹ C art. 21 § 1.

²⁶⁰ C art. 20 § 1-2.

²⁶¹ *Potissimum Institutioni, The Novitiate and First Profession*, 45-53.

²⁶² C art. 23; OPR, II, 3-4.

²⁶³ C art. 24.

²⁶⁴ C art. 27.

- The Novice must meet regularly with his Novice Master, and shall follow a programme of religious formation, which shall also include the study of the Rule, the Statutes and the history of the Order. This programme shall include also any other requirements which the Novice will need in order to be ready for his religious consecration according to the charisms of the Order.
- The Novice must demonstrate that he knows and understands the chapters of the *Code* pertaining to "Professed Knights in Temporary Vows"²⁶⁵, to the "Religious Vows"²⁶⁶ and to the "Obligations of the Professed in General"²⁶⁷.
- The Novice Master, together with his Assistant, must ensure that the Novice is properly formed and is faithful to the religious observances prescribed for Professed Knights²⁶⁸.
- Every six months the Novice Master must provide a written report to the Novice's appropriate Superior, who in turn with his Council, will inform the Grand Master of the Novice's progress.
- Towards the end of the Noviciate, the Novice who intends to make Temporary Vows must present, through his Superior, having had the consent of the Chapter of the Priory or Subpriory, a written request to the Grand Master²⁶⁹. It pertains to the Grand Master, with the deliberative vote of the Professed Members of the Sovereign Council and having heard the opinion of the Prelate of the Order, to admit Knights to First Profession of Temporary Vows²⁷⁰.
- In preparation for Profession, the Novice shall undertake a course of spiritual exercises of eight full days in an approved place²⁷¹. For the validity of Profession, the Knight must have fulfilled the requirements stated in art. 34 of the *Code*.
- The Novice Knight, in accordance with the Ceremonial of the Order, must pronounce the Formula of Religious Profession before the competent Superior, or one delegated by him, in the presence of two witnesses. The Formula of Religious

²⁶⁵ C art. 34-44, chapter I, section III of the *Code: Professed Knights in Temporary Vows*.

²⁶⁶ C art. 61-84, chapter II of the *Code: Religious Vows*.

²⁶⁷ C art. 85-93, chapter III of the *Code: Obligations of the Professed in General*.

²⁶⁸ C art. 29.

²⁶⁹ C art. 31.

²⁷⁰ C art. 33.

²⁷¹ C art. 32.

Profession is contained in art. 37 of the *Code*. The Profession²⁷² shall normally take place during Mass. The document containing the Formula of Religious Profession, testifying to the Profession and the renewal of the Vows, signed by the Knight, by the one who received them and by the witnesses, must be kept in the Archives of the Grand Magistry, and a certified copy must be kept in the Archives of the respective Priory, Subpriory or Association²⁷³.

- The Grand Master, with the advice of the Professed Members of the Sovereign Council and the Novice's Superior, appoints a Spiritual Director of the Professed Knight in Temporary Vows, from amongst the Order's Chaplains. Under the guidance of his Spiritual Director, the Professed Knight in Temporary Vows shall continue to follow courses of formation and "*must dedicate himself to works of mercy 'as a servant of our Lords the poor and the sick' and to the defence of the Catholic faith*"²⁷⁴. At least once a year, the "Spiritual Director" must inform the competent Superior regarding the religious life of the Knight in Temporary Vows and his activities in the works of the Order²⁷⁵.

2. KNIGHTS FROM THE SECOND CLASS

Admission: Articles 21 § 2 and 107 of the *Code*

Members of the Second Class can ask for direct admission to the Noviciate without passing through the status of Aspirant.

As for the other requirements and the norms foreseen by the *Code*²⁷⁶, the *Regulations and Commentary* for Members of the Third Class admitted to First Class, as stated above²⁷⁷, can be referred to.

Before the Knight in Obedience begins his Noviciate, it will be appropriate for him to have undertaken a course of spiritual exercises of eight full days in an approved place, as prescribed in art. 22 of the *Code*.

²⁷² *Potissimum Institutioni*, 54-56.

²⁷³ C art. 38; OPR, II, 5 and 7.

²⁷⁴ C art. 40-41.

²⁷⁵ C art. 42.

²⁷⁶ C art. 6-16.

²⁷⁷ See above, chapter XIX § 1.

XX. REGULATIONS FOR ASPIRANTS AND FOR NOVICES: FORMATION
ARTICLES 17, 25, 27 AND 28 OF THE CODE

Code art. 17

Those Responsible for Aspirants

Par.1 – Once the application for admission has been accepted, the Aspirant is entrusted by the Superior to an expressly designated Professed Knight, or to a Spiritual Father, for a period of orientation and formation about the Order.

Par.2 – The delegated Knight or Spiritual Father must make a written report to the Superior on the personality, conduct and suitability of the Aspirant.

Code art. 28

Duties of Novices

The Novice under the direction of the Novice Master should apply himself to pious exercises and to his religious formation as the regulations provide. He must also study the Rule, the laws and the history of the Order. The Novice should also be active in works of mercy and, where possible, in the Order's works to which he is called by virtue of the religious vows he seeks to profess.

Those seeking to become Professed in the Order must undergo a programme of formation, which is more than an instruction, for it is a process whereby the Knight is "formed" in order to be able to live in the world as a Religious according to the charism of the Order.

The formation of Aspirants and Novices is the responsibility of the Director of Vocations, always under the guidance of the Grand Commander, and working with a Formation Committee in cooperation with a group of consultants. In accordance with Articles 12 to 16 of the *Code*, the Director of Vocations must obtain information regarding the candidate's religious life, as well as ascertain his level of religious instruction and his motivation. This may include a request for a candidate to undergo psychological testing.

The complete formation programme is intended to be a preparation of the Aspirant and of the Novice for religious life, which is formally expressed and focussed, but not exhausted, by the Three Vows. No Noviciate can make the Novice a perfect participant of the Liturgy, a perfect reader of Holy Scripture or, indeed, a perfect Christian. This is the work of the Holy Spirit and the work of a lifetime; but the

Noviciate will introduce the Novice to all of these and set him on the right path. To implement the requirements of Article 17 §1 and Article 28 of the *Code*, a common pattern of formation for all Aspirants and Novices is required. This formation will include the following areas of study:

1. THE LITURGY: MAIN SOURCE OF THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Aspirants to Profession must learn to participate in the main, official source which nourishes the life of the Church: this main source is the Liturgy. The Liturgy makes present the primary activity and reason for being of the Church, that is the response by means of thankful praise to God in Christ. Liturgy itself teaches the Religious how to praise God, and nourishes this praise. By being anchored in the Church's Liturgy of the Hours (the Divine Office), and above all in participation in the Holy Mass, the Aspirants and Novices will learn to avoid the excesses and individualism in private prayer. The latter have their rightful place in the life of a Religious, but they cannot be a substitute for the official prayer of the Church. The very best introduction to the Liturgy is a full participation to Liturgy itself, but a systematic historical and theological introduction is also required. The essential text is the Decree of Vatican Council II on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, complemented by an appropriate commentary.

2. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, SOURCE OF TEACHING AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH

An essential element of the Church's Liturgy is the reading and meditation of the Word of God in the Holy Scriptures. Together with Liturgy, the Holy Scriptures are one of the main pillars of the life of a Professed Religious. Formation will have to include learning to reading the Holy Scriptures in such a way that they can become one of the main sources of his spiritual life.

An introduction to Holy Scripture must give a basic knowledge of the structure and content of the Old and New Testaments, with some elementary information on the literary genres of the various books and some of the main themes arising from an historical-critical reading of the Scriptures. A special introduction will be reserved to the Christian reading of the Psalms. The main purpose of such an introduction is to provide understanding of the different layers of meaning, in order to discover the treasure of the Scriptures as the main source of nourishment of spiritual life and of *Lectio Divina*, another of the main foundations of religious life.

The fundamental references are the Constitution *Dei Verbum* of Vatican Council II on the Word of God, complemented by a good commentary, and the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Verbum Domini* of Pope Benedict XVI.

3. THE *MAGISTERIUM* OF THE CHURCH

It is a primary responsibility of those entrusted with the task of forming Aspirants and Novices to ascertain their level of instruction and, where necessary, complete their formation. A fundamental tool is the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, even in its abbreviated form (*The Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*). All four sections should be studied. In addition to the fundamental teaching of the Church, the Aspirants and Novices should also be introduced to the Church's texts on religious life²⁷⁸, and particularly the Decree *Perfectae Caritatis* of Vatican Council II on Consecrated Life (1965) and some other post-Conciliar documents on religious life such as *Evangelica Testificatio* of Pope Paul VI (1961), *Redemptionis Donum* of Pope John Paul II (1984), *Fraternal Life in Community* of the Congregation of Religious (1994), the Apostolic Exhortation *Vita Consecrata* of Pope John Paul II (1996), along with the Instructions of the Congregation of Religious *The Contemplative Dimension of Religious Life* (1980), *Essential Elements in the Church's Teaching on Religious Life* (1983), *Directives on Formation* (1990), *Starting Afresh From Christ: A Renewed Commitment to Consecrated Life in the Third Millennium* (2002), *The Service of Authority and Obedience* (2008).

Knowledge of the *Magisterium* of the Church is an essential element of the formation of a Professed Knight.

4. INTRODUCTION TO THE RULE

Aspirants and Novices must learn to know the Rule of the Order of Saint John, promulgated between 1125 and 1153 by Blessed Raymond du Puy. It is a Rule which contains peculiar elements that make it unique among Western Rules²⁷⁹ and the Rules of the Hospitaller Orders.

²⁷⁸ **CIC** 592 § 2. The documents on consecrated life, from February 10, 385 to February 2, 2000 are collected in *Enchiridion della Vita Consacrata* (edition of the Latin texts with Italian translation).

²⁷⁹ Especially in the *intitulatio*: "*Ego Raymundus, servus pauperum Christi et custos Hospitalis Jerosolimitani*", and in the Formula of the Profession, the reference to the poor: "*ex parte pauperum*". The whole text, in Latin and English, of the Rule of Blessed Raymond can be found at the end of these *Regulations and Commentary*.

The Rule of Blessed Raymond du Puy recalls literally some parts of the Rule of Saint Augustine which therefore the Aspirants and Novices must know and study.

In addition to these two Rules the Aspirants and Novices can refer to those parts of the Rules of St Benedict and St Basil which are compatible with the type of life and the aims of the Order of Malta²⁸⁰.

The Order's *Constitutional Charter* and *Code* must also be studied, as well as those parts of the *Code de Rohan* compatible with the present life of the Order.

5. INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY AND SPIRITUALITY OF THE ORDER

Aspirants and Novices must familiarise with the history of the Order, by reading the most credited scholarly historical studies available. They must also be introduced to the growing body of publications on the spirituality of the Order, particularly the *Journals of Spirituality*²⁸¹.

6. INTRODUCTION TO RELEVANT CANON LAW AND PSYCHOLOGY

Aspirants and Novices must acquire an adequate knowledge of the basic provisions of the *Code of Canon Law* concerning consecrated life²⁸².

Aspirants and Novices should also be adequately aware of psychology as relevant to the Vows and to personal maturation.

7. TRAINING IN PERSONAL PRAYER AND PIOUS PRACTICES

The Church's Liturgy is not a mere performance of an official duty or a rehearsal of inherited formulae of historical and cultural value. Nor is its proclamation and meditation of God's word in the Holy Scriptures a purely intellectual exercise. The Liturgy and the Holy Scriptures are both intended to expand the heart of the religious, making him capable of prayer, making him capable of listening humbly, which in turn makes him capable of right loving and right living. A proper celebration and understanding of the Liturgy will nourish and be nourished by a

²⁸⁰ At the beginning, there was a connection between the Hospital of St John, the Benedictines of St Mary Latin, and the Augustinian Canons of the Holy Sepulchre.

²⁸¹ See below the JoS (*Journals of Spirituality*) in the *Abbreviations*.

²⁸² **CIC** 573-746.

balanced devotional life which shall include pious practices and especially Eucharistic Adoration, the Rosary and the Stations of the Cross. Aspirants and Novices must foresee a daily set period for private prayer and *Lectio Divina* of at least thirty minutes. They must also set aside one day a month as a Day of Recollection, preferably under the direction of their Master.

8. EXPERIENCE OF COMMUNITY LIFE

The *Code*²⁸³ requires that an Aspirant make an eight-day retreat before becoming a Novice, and a Novice must make an eight-day retreat in preparation for Profession of Temporary Vows²⁸⁴. It is strongly recommended that these spiritual exercises be spent with a religious community of the Order if possible, or within a religious community where choral celebration of the Liturgy takes place. This experience will confront the Aspirant and the Novice, who usually live on their own, with the community life and the real dimension of religious life. During the period of community life, the full Divine Office must be celebrated, and *Lectio Divina* should be practised. As well as continuing the programme of instruction and reading, these repeated experiences of community life are for the Aspirants and Novices special times which help them in their daily life according to the specific way of life of the Order of Malta.

9. PRACTICE OF *OBSEQUIUM PAUPERUM*

In the course of their formation Aspirants and Novices must exercise in the works of mercy of the Order²⁸⁵. These form an essential element of the charism of the Order of Malta. This participation will vary from one country to another but could take the form of involvement with the hospitaller and charitable works of the local organism of the Order. Regional, national and international pilgrimages of the Order provide additional opportunities for exercising the works of mercy. An important background to such involvement is familiarity with the social teaching of the Church, collected and presented in the *Compendium of the Social Teaching of the Church*.

²⁸³ C art. 22.

²⁸⁴ C art. 32.

²⁸⁵ C art. 28.

10. PRACTICE OF *TUITIO FIDEI*

Having been formed according the Magisterium of the Church, Aspirants and Novices must be prepared to nurture, witness and defend the faith, particularly against secularism. A personal understanding of the Church’s teaching is not enough: they must be able to help others towards such an understanding. Aspirants and Novices should therefore acquire the knowledge and skills to be able to make the Teaching of the Church better known, by means of a Catechesis well formed and faithful to the *Magisterium*, which is always the best way to “defend the Faith”.

11. CHANGE OF RESIDENCE OF THE NOVICE: ARTICLE 25 § 1 OF THE *CODE*

Code art. 25 § 1

Change of Residence of the Novice

Any change of residence of the Novice during the Noviciate must be authorised by the Superior, having consulted the Novice Master.

This article makes it clear that the Novice is not required to reside in the same place for the duration of the Noviciate.

12. PROMULGATION OF THE REGULATIONS OF THE NOVICIATE: ARTICLE 27 OF THE *CODE*

Code art. 27

Promulgation of the Regulations of the Noviciate

The regulations for the formation of Novices are promulgated by the Grand Master, with the deliberative vote of the Professed Members of the Sovereign Council.

These *Regulations and Commentary* are the regulations referred to in this article. According to can. 646 of the Code of Canon Law²⁸⁶, the chief purpose of the period of the Noviciate is the formation²⁸⁷ of the Novices under the guidance of the Novice Master through the study of the Statutes of the Order, and the experience of a

²⁸⁶ **CIC 646:** “*The novitiate, through which life in an institute is begun, is arranged so that the novices better understand their divine vocation, and indeed one which is proper to the institute, experience the manner of living of the institute, and form their mind and heart in its spirit, and so that their intention and suitability are tested*”.

²⁸⁷ *Potissimum Institutioni*, 45-50.

spiritual and apostolic life specific to the Order of Malta. The Novices should also complete a solid instruction in the Catholic Faith. Only the Novice Master²⁸⁸ has the right and duty to concern himself with the formation²⁸⁹ of the Novices; no-one else, therefore, may intervene in this task, with the exception of the Grand Master and the competent Superiors²⁹⁰.

The Novice Master has the serious obligation of gradually forming the Novices to a life of perfection according to the norms specific for the Order of Malta²⁹¹. He may adapt the Regulations for Novices to particular cases.

13. DUTIES OF NOVICES: ARTICLE 28 OF THE *CODE*

Code art. 28

Duties of Novices

[...] The Novice should also be active in works of mercy and, where possible, in the Order's works to which he is called by virtue of the religious vows he seeks to profess.

The works of mercy are the charitable actions by which we help our neighbour in his / her bodily and spiritual needs. To teach, to counsel, to console, to comfort are Spiritual Works of Mercy, as well as to patiently bear and to forgive. The Corporal Works of Mercy consist indeed into feeding the hungry, hosting those who do not have a home, clothing those who do not have clothes, visiting the sick and the prisoners, bury the dead. Among these, to give alms to the poor is one of the foremost testimonies of brotherly love, and it is also a just practice which pleases God²⁹².

With regard to the works of mercy, reference to all which has already been exposed with regard to the specific charism of the Order of Malta should be taken in consideration²⁹³. Also, title IV of the *Code de Rohan*²⁹⁴, dedicated to *hospitality*, and which contains useful indications according the tradition of the Order, should be taken into account. The works of mercy must be carried out personally. In that respect consideration should be given to the capacities of and possibilities available to the individual Novice.

²⁸⁸ **CIC** 651 § 2: "If necessary, the director can be given assistants who are subject to the director in regard to the supervision of the novices and the program of formation".

²⁸⁹ *Potissimum Institutioni*, 51-53.

²⁹⁰ The Priors, the Regents and the Grand Commander for the Knights Professed *in gremio religionis*.

²⁹¹ **CIC** 652.

²⁹² **CCC** 2447.

²⁹³ See above, chapter II.

²⁹⁴ *Code de Rohan*, pp. 109-128.

XXI. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ASPIRANTS AND NOVICES

These points bring together all the above, with the aim of guiding the life of Aspirants and Novices.

- The Aspirant and Novice shall have as their supreme rule of life to follow Christ, as proposed in the Gospels and as expressed in the *Constitutional Charter*, in the *Code* and in the *Regulations and Commentary* of the Order of Malta²⁹⁵.
- Foremost and particular duty of each Aspirant and Novice is to contemplate divine truths and a constant union with God in prayer²⁹⁶.
- The most effective means of advancing along the road of spiritual life are the Word of God and the Sacraments.
- Whenever possible, Aspirants and Novices should attend the Eucharistic Sacrifice daily, receive the Holy Eucharist regularly and adore the Lord present in the Blessed Sacrament²⁹⁷. If the Aspirant and the Novice, for justifiable reasons, are unable to attend daily to Holy Mass, they should try at least to make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament.
- It is advisable to have a regular Confessor, who possibly should be the Aspirant's or Novice's Spiritual Father.
- Prayer is indispensable to the spiritual life. As food is necessary to the life of the body so is prayer to the life of the soul. The Aspirant and the Novice will recite Lauds and Vespers²⁹⁸ and end their day with Compline, preceded by a brief examination of conscience.
- Mental prayer²⁹⁹ shall be as diligently undertaken as possible, choosing the most convenient time. Together with *Lectio Divina* this should amount to not less than 30 minutes per day.

²⁹⁵ CIC 662.

²⁹⁶ CIC 663 § 1.

²⁹⁷ CIC 663 § 2.

²⁹⁸ In case of travel or other circumstances, the Little Office of Our Lady may be used.

²⁹⁹ CIC 663 § 3: "They are to devote themselves to the reading of sacred scripture and mental prayer, to celebrate worthily the liturgy of the hours according to the prescripts of proper law, without prejudice to the obligation for clerics mentioned in can. 276, §2, n. 3, and to perform other exercises of piety".

- Pious practices must find a rightful place in the spiritual life of the Aspirants and of the Novices, especially the Rosary³⁰⁰ – which should be prayed daily – and the Stations of the Cross, particularly on Fridays.
- The Aspirant and the Novice will dedicate a day a month to a more intense Recollection³⁰¹. This time shall be dedicated to Holy Mass, to the recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours, to *Lectio Divina*, to meditation and to the formative readings recommended by the Master of the Novices, including:
 - the Holy Scripture;
 - the Documents promulgated by the *Magisterium* of the Church;
 - the Patristic texts³⁰²;
 - the Rule of Raymond du Puy and of St Augustine³⁰³;
 - the *Constitutional Charter* and the *Code* of the Order of Malta;
 - the *Regulations and Commentary*.
- The Aspirant will make an eight-day retreat in preparation for becoming a Novice and an eight-day retreat at the end of Noviciate. Formally, to be valid, the Noviciate must comprehend twelve months and cannot be prolonged beyond two years³⁰⁴. In case of a prolongation, the Novice shall make a five-day retreat at the end of the first year.
- A Novice in the Order of Malta engages himself in religious life in order to fulfil the principal aims of the Order, namely: caring of the sick, assistance to the poor, and the apostolate towards those who are far from Christ³⁰⁵. If the Novice is a young man, he must prepare himself for an occupation. If called by his Superior, he shall work for the Order. If he already has an occupation, he shall exercise it in an exemplary way. If he owns property, he will administer it according to the provisions of law and the statutes of the Order of Malta.
- In accordance with the tradition and spirit of our Order, the contacts of the Aspirants and Novices (and likewise of the Professed Knights) with the outside

³⁰⁰ CIC 663 § 4: “With special veneration, they are to honour the Virgin Mother of God, the example and protector of all consecrated life, also through the marian rosary”.

³⁰¹ As foreseen in art. 38 of the *Code* of 1961, but not incorporated in the Code of 1997.

³⁰² The daily Patristic readings suggested by the Church in the Liturgy of the Hours should be used, with the aim of “*sentire cum Ecclesia*” (*Vita Consecrata*, 46; *Potissimum Institutioni*, 21-25; IGLH, 159-168).

³⁰³ By using also good introductions and commentaries.

³⁰⁴ CIC 648.

³⁰⁵ ReC 1969, pp. 33-34.

world must be maintained by practising the virtue of Prudence³⁰⁶. Society should recognize in this person, in spite of civilian clothes, a religious.

- On entering the Noviciate, Novices who already belong to the Order of Malta become in a special way members of a spiritual family, which in time will steadily become more and more their own. The attachment to this religious family must be gradually fostered by a constantly increasing interest in the Order. Contacts with society, friends and one's own family have always to be coordinated with the aims of the Order, so that these contacts may make the Novice's apostolic work and his integration in today's worlds more effective. This spirit must also characterize the activities of Novices during their holidays.
- It is the duty of his Superior, together with the Novice Master and those in charge of charitable activities, to introduce more deeply the Novice to the works of the Order.
- Since the beginning of his Noviciate, the Novice partakes of all the privileges and spiritual favours conceded to the Order of Malta. The Novice, aware of his Membership, should also become aware that he himself "*is responsible of his own formation*"³⁰⁷.

XXII. DUTIES OF THE NOVICE MASTER: ARTICLE 29 OF THE CODE

Code art. 29

Duties of the Novice Master

The Novice Master is to take care that the Novice is faithful to the religious observances as prescribed for Professed Knights.

The Novice is subject to the authority of the Novice Master and the Superiors of the Order³⁰⁸, and has the duty to obey them. As the Vow of Obedience has not yet been pronounced, this obedience derives from Canon Law and specific law. This disposition has its basic foundation in the fact that the Novice, by entering voluntarily into the Order with the intention of becoming a Professed Knight, must experience the specific form of religious life of the Order of Malta.

³⁰⁶ See JoS 8.

³⁰⁷ *Potissimum Institutioni*, 29.

³⁰⁸ CIC 650 § 2.

XXIII. PROCEDURE FOR ADMISSION TO THE VOWS:

COMMENTARY ON THE RELEVANT ARTICLES FROM THE CODE

The *Code* prescribes that only those who are already Members of the Order can seek admission to the First Class, and specifies that they must be a Member for at least one year, and over 22 years of age³⁰⁹.

Members of the Third Class must complete a period of Aspirancy prior to being admitted to the Noviciate. Members of the Second Class can ask for direct admission to the Noviciate without passing through the status of Aspirant³¹⁰.

1. ADMISSION TO PROFESSION: ARTICLE 33 OF THE CODE

Code art. 33

Admission to Profession

After presentation by the competent Superior, who must have the consent of his Chapter, it pertains to the Grand Master, with the deliberative vote of the Professed Members of the Sovereign Council and having heard the opinion of the Prelate of the Order, to admit Knights to first profession of temporary vows.

The Prior, the Regent or the Grand Commander³¹¹ present the request for Profession to the Grand Master, together with the prescribed documentation.

In case of danger of death, the Aspirant or the Novice can be admitted to Profession *in articulo mortis*³¹².

³⁰⁹ C art. 9 § 1.

³¹⁰ C art. 21 § 2.

³¹¹ For the Members *in gremio religionis*.

³¹² An Aspirant or a Novice who, as a consequence of a disease is – in the opinion of his doctor – in danger of death, may be admitted to Profession. The faculty to admit to Profession *in articulo mortis* competes respectively to the Major Superiors (CIC 620), to the Aspirant's or Novice's Master and to the "delegates" by the Major Superiors. The Formula of Profession shall be the usual one. Profession *in articulo mortis* does not give to the Order any right on the goods of he who has made his Profession under these circumstances. In case of remission, the Aspirant and the Novice will revert to his previous juridical status (Decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Religious of December 30, 1922, in AAS, XV, 1923, pp.156-158).

2. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE VALIDITY OF PROFESSION IN TEMPORARY VOWS:

ARTICLE 34 OF THE CODE

Code art. 34

Requirements for the Validity of Profession

For the validity of profession it is required that:

- a) it be preceded by the Noviciate as prescribed by Art. 23 and following;**
- b) it be received by the Grand Master, or by the competent Superior, or by one delegated by them;**
- c) it be expressed and freely made.**

The *Code of Canon Law* prescribes:

"For the validity of temporary profession it is required that:

- 1) the person who is to make it has completed at least eighteen years of age;*
- 2) the Noviciate has been validly completed;*
- 3) admission has been given freely by the competent superior with the vote of the council according to the norm of law;*
- 4) the profession is expressed and made without force, grave fear, or malice;*
- 5) the profession is received by a legitimate superior personally or through another"³¹³.*

3. RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF PROFESSED IN TEMPORARY VOWS:

ARTICLE 43 OF THE CODE

Code art. 43

Rights and Privileges of Professed in Temporary Vows

Par. 1 — Professed Knights in Temporary Vows enjoy the same privileges and spiritual favours to which the Professed in Perpetual Vows have a right. On their death, they have the right to the same prayers.

Par. 2 — Professed Knights in Temporary Vows have an active and passive voice unless otherwise provided in the Constitution and in the Code.

Under § 1, seniority of Profession runs from the date of First Temporary Vows.

Under § 2, Professed Knights in Temporary Vows enjoy a deliberative vote in the Chapters of the Grand Priors, Priors and Subpriors³¹⁴ as well as in the

³¹³ CIC 656.

³¹⁴ CC art. 29 § 4b; CC 33 § 3.

Sovereign Council, the Chapter General and the Council Complete of State³¹⁵ if invited to take part in them. They have a passive vote for all the offices³¹⁶, including the Sovereign Council, with the exception of the following offices: Grand Master³¹⁷, Lieutenant *ad interim*³¹⁸, Lieutenant of the Grand Master³¹⁹, and Grand Commander³²⁰.

4. THE PROFESSION: ARTICLE 48 OF THE *CODE*

Code art. 48

Perpetual Profession

Par. 1 — Perpetual profession must be made in accordance with the Ceremonial of the Order.

Par. 2 — The document containing the formula of religious profession, testifying to the profession of perpetual vows, must be signed by the Knight who has made the vows, by the person who received the profession, and by two witnesses. A certified copy is to be kept in the archives of the Grand Magistracy and also in the archives of the respective Priory or Subpriory or Association.

Par. 3 — The Superior must inform the parish priest of the place of baptism of the Professed Knight in Perpetual Vows in order that an entry of the fact may be made in the baptismal register.

The formulation of the Ceremonial³²¹ for the Three Classes is in work. The document attesting the Knight's Solemn Profession shall be forwarded to the competent Parish Priest.

³¹⁵ **CC** art. 20 § 5; **CC** 22 § 2f-g; **CC** 23 § 2f-g.

³¹⁶ **CC** art. 11 § 2 (Priors); **CC** 20 § 5 (Sovereign Council); **CC** 31 § 4 (Lieutenant of the Grand Prior); **CC** 32 § 4 (Vicar or Procurator of the Priory); **CC** 33 § 2 (Regent).

³¹⁷ **CC** art. 11 § 1; **CC** 13 § 1.

³¹⁸ **CC** art. 17 § 4.

³¹⁹ **CC** art. 17 § 5.

³²⁰ **CC** art. 11 § 1.

³²¹ For the Perpetual Profession, see OPR, II, 6 and IV.

XXIV. REGULATIONS FOR THE PROFESSED KNIGHTS

1. PROFESSED KNIGHTS IN TEMPORARY VOWS: ARTICLE 41 OF THE CODE

Code art. 41

Duties of Knights in Temporary Vows

Par. 1 — Knights in Temporary Vows are bound to the pious exercises and courses in spiritual development prescribed by the respective regulations.

Par. 2 — Under the guidance of the Spiritual Director, and in accordance with the existing regulations of the various institutions and works of the Order, the Knight in Temporary Vows must dedicate himself to works of mercy “as a servant of our Lords the poor and the sick” and to the defence of the Catholic faith.

With regard to formation³²² of the Professed Knights in Temporary Vows, the Church prescribes that “*In individual institutes the formation of all the members is to be continued after first profession so that they lead the proper life of the institute more fully and carry out its mission more suitably*”³²³. Said formation “*is to be systematic, adapted to the capacity of the members, spiritual and apostolic, doctrinal and at the same time practical*”³²⁴.

“*First Profession inaugurates a new phase of formation, which benefits from the dynamism and stability derived from profession. For the religious, it is a matter of reaping the fruits of the preceding stages, and of pursuing their own human and spiritual growth through the courageous execution of their responsibilities. Retaining the spiritual enthusiasm given by the preceding stage is all the more necessary, since, in institutes dedicated to the apostolate, the move to a more open life style and to very demanding activities often runs the risk of disorientation and aridity [...] Jesus taught his disciples through the crises to which they were subjected. Through his repeated prophecies of his Passion, he prepared them to become more authentic disciples. The pedagogy of this stage will therefore aim at permitting young religious to make real progress by means of their experiences according to a unity of perspective and of life — that of their own vocation, at this time in their existence, with a view toward perpetual profession*”³²⁵.

³²² *Potissimum Institutioni, Formation of the Temporarily Professed*, 58-65.

³²³ **CIC** 659 § 1.

³²⁴ **CIC** 660 § 1-2.

³²⁵ *Potissimum Institutioni*, 59.

The Professed Knight in Temporary Vows shall take the imitation of Christ – according to the Gospel – as the supreme guide of his life. He shall therefore continue diligently the practices already prescribed for the Noviciate. The Decree of Vatican Council II *Perfectae Caritatis* reminds us that “*that those [religious] employed by rule in the active apostolate ... must be given suitable instruction, depending on their intellectual capacity and personal talent, in the currents and attitudes of sentiment and thought prevalent in social life today. This education must blend its elements together harmoniously so that an integrated life on the part of the religious concerned results*”³²⁶. Professed Knights in Temporary Vows must always strive “*to perfect the culture they have received in matters spiritual and in arts and sciences*”³²⁷. The Professed Knight in Temporary Vows is bound to attend yearly a five-day course of Spiritual Exercises³²⁸. The renewal of the Vows must be preceded by a three-day retreat³²⁹. The Knight of Justice is not obliged to wear the habit of the Order, but he should wear the insignia of the Order, to remind himself of the Passion and Death of the Lord on the Cross and of the Eight Beatitudes. The wearing of the habit and of the uniform is always subject to the authorization of the competent Superior³³⁰.

2. REGULATIONS FOR THE PROFESSED KNIGHTS IN PERPETUAL VOWS: ARTICLES 85 AND 86 OF THE CODE

Code art. 85

Duties of the Professed

The Professed, mindful of their high vocation and of the obligations they have freely assumed before the Church and the Order, must conform their lives to the spirit of the Gospel, according to the Constitution and the Code, and strive toward religious perfection.

Code art. 86

Religious Practices of the Professed

The Professed must fulfil diligently the common duties of the Christian life and, unless legitimately impeded:

a) dedicate at least one hour a day to pious practices;

³²⁶ *Perfectae Caritatis*, 18.

³²⁷ *Perfectae Caritatis*, 18.

³²⁸ C art. 86 c.

³²⁹ C art. 36.

³³⁰ ReC 1969, p. 12.

- b) frequent assiduously Holy Communion and the sacrament of penance according to the advice of their Spiritual Directors;**
- c) take part each year in a course of spiritual exercises of at least five full days in a religious house.**

The Professed Knights in Solemn (Perpetual) Vows will observe what is prescribed for the Professed in Temporary Vows.

“Through their entire life, religious are to continue diligently their spiritual, doctrinal, and practical formation. Superiors, moreover, are to provide them with the resources and time for this”³³¹.

*Continuous formation*³³² is motivated first of all by God’s call, which is for every moment and all circumstances. The charism of religious life in a specific institute is a grace of the living God which demands to be accepted and lived in circumstances which are sometimes untold.

The Knights of Justice must not forget that the road to perfection is long and covered with thorns. They will therefore train themselves with perseverance and loving dedication in liturgical and contemplative prayer³³³ and particularly in the prayer of the Holy Rosary³³⁴. Superiors, either Professed in Temporary or Solemn Vows, shall take greater care than other Knights to engage in the study of the Word of God and of the dispositions of the Church. They shall seek in every way to understand their true interpretation and real meaning, so as to be united in the same spirit with the people of God and with the Vicar of Christ on earth³³⁵.

XXV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PROFESSED KNIGHTS

The following recommendations³³⁶ bring together the previous points to guide the Professed Knight in deepening his spiritual and apostolic life:

- Daily attendance at Holy Mass. Whenever this is not possible, the Professed Knight should make a Spiritual Communion and, if possible, a visit to the Blessed Sacrament.

³³¹ CIC 661.

³³² *Potissimum Institutioni, The On-Going Formation of the Perpetually Professed*, 67-71.

³³³ *Contemplative Dimension*, 1-7.

³³⁴ See the Apostolic Letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*.

³³⁵ ReC 1969, p. 10.

³³⁶ ReC 1969, p. 30-31.

- The Professed Knight must daily pray at least a part, if not all, of the Liturgy of the Hours giving preference to the offices of Lauds, Vespers and Compline.
- The Professed Knight shall make frequent use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation (or Penance or Confession) following the guidance of his Confessor or Spiritual Director. By frequent is meant not less than monthly.
- The Professed Knight must dedicate a suitable amount of time each day for meditation and mental prayer.
- Time should also be devoted to *Lectio Divina* each day. The passages from Sacred Scripture given in the Office of Reading of the Liturgy of the Hours are particularly recommended for *Lectio*. The time taken up by this spiritual reading, according to the spiritual tradition, should not be less than half an hour.
- The Professed Knight shall undertake a monthly Day of Recollection, leaving aside his habitual daily occupations in order to devote the whole day to God.
- He will pray every day a part of the Rosary, at least five decades.
- The Professed Knight shall make the Stations of the Cross regularly, especially on Fridays.
- Special attention shall be taken with regard to devotion to the Holy Mother of God and the Saints and Blessed of the Order of Malta, by celebrating their Feasts wherever possible or, at least, by reciting the Collect of their Mass at some time in the day.

**XXVI. THE PROFESSED CONVENTUAL CHAPLAINS:
ARTICLES 50 TO 60 OF THE CODE**

Articles 50 to 60 of the *Code* deal with the provisions regarding Conventual Chaplains. Their duties are defined in art. 50:

Code art. 50

Duties of Conventual Chaplains

Professed Conventual Chaplains with religious vows consecrate themselves to God and, under the authority of the Superiors, dedicate themselves to the pastoral care of the members of the Order, to religious assistance towards its charitable and missionary works, and to the service of its churches.

For the regulations and commentary to these articles, refer to “*Regulations for Professed Conventual Chaplains*”³³⁷.

³³⁷ *Regulations for Professed Chaplains.*

Unity of the Order

XXVII. WORKING TOGETHER IN UNITY

The Grand Master addresses to all Members of the Order the invitation *to work together in unity*:

*“Much has been achieved in the last few years, during the periods of office of my two beloved predecessors Fra’ Angelo De Mojana and Fra’ Andrew Bertie. We now need to build on their achievements and, above all, foster vocations to the First Class of the Order”*³³⁸.

“The Order of Malta is made up of many parts – Grand Pories, Sub Pories, Associations, delegations, aid organisations, hospitals, foundations, trusts and other institutions. All must work together in unity. No one part must be jealous of the position of another. All must cooperate with each other. [...]

*The Order has much to achieve and we will only serve Almighty God and the Church if we all work together in unity and peacefulness”*³³⁹.

³³⁸ H.M.E.H. Fra’ Matthew Festing, *The Grand Master’s Reflection*, in JoS 9, p. 11.

³³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 9-10.

The Rule of Raymond du Puy

The “*Rule of Raymond du Puy*”¹, written around 1140 A.D. by Raymond and the Chapter of the brothers, codifies the primitive usages of the Hospital of Jerusalem, which most probably date back to Blessed Gerard himself. It is the most ancient codification of the Hospitallers of St John. Some of its articles are taken from the Rule of St Augustine and are written in form of precepts and statutes (*praecepta et statuta*) similar to the *consuetudines* of other religious Orders.

This text has been considered as the proper rule of the Hospitallers and as such has been confirmed by various Popes, among whom Boniface VIII (1300).

The *Rule* was probably written in two stages. Firstly articles 1 through 15 were drawn up, and then articles 16 through 19 were added later. The original text, confirmed by means of Apostolic Letters, was lost at the time of the fall of St John of Acre in 1291². A copy of the *Rule* was again presented to the Holy See for approval, and was confirmed by Pope Boniface VIII on April 7, 1300³ with the Letter *Culminis Apostolici Solio*. Although it is a later document, comparison with more ancient manuscripts, both in other languages, has shown only minimal variants⁴.

¹ The Latin text of the *Rule*, published in the following pages, is that of ms 7 of the Commenda of Leuggern, from the Cantonal Archive of Aarau (Switzerland), edited by Delaville Le Roulx in *Cartulaire*, I, p. 62-68.

² “*Exhibita siquidem nobis vestra petitio continebat quod olim, in captione civitatis Acconensis, apostolicas litteras regule vestre seriem continentes, cum aliis rebus non modicis amisistis [...]. Quare suppliciter petebatis a nobis ut, cum vos nonnullas litteras, quondam fratris Raymundi, tunc ejusdem Hospitalis custodis, qui predictam regulam condidit, ejus plumbeo sigillo signatas, in quibus regula ipsa continetur expresse prout asseritis, habentis, vobis prefatam regula, ad majoris cautele presidium, sub bulla nostra concedere dignaremur. Nos igitur [...] vestris devotis supplicationibus inclinati, predictam regulam, prout in ejusdem fratris Raymundi litteris contineri conspicitur [...] ex certa scientia confirmamus et innovamus*”: “...And whereas your prayer, when laid before us, was to the effect that some time since, at the capture of the city of Acre, ye lost the apostolic letter containing the provisions of your “Rule”, with other things of no small value, for which reason ye have humbly petitioned of us, that, whereas ye no longer possess the letter of the brother Raymond, at the same time the Master of your Hospital, who established the aforesaid “Rule”, signed and sealed with his leaden seal, in which letter he said “Rule” was distinctly laid down, as ye assert; we might be graciously pleased to grant to you, under a bull from us, a renewal of this “Rule” as a guarantee of a greater precaution: We [...] being favourably disposed towards the granting of your pious requests, have caused the aforesaid “Rule”, as it is understood to have been contained in the letter of said brother Raymond [...] do confirm and renew the same “Rule” ... being well acquainted with it” (BONIFACE VIII, Apostolic Letter *Culminis Apostolici Solio*, April 7, 1300, in *Cartulaire*, III (1261-1300), 1899, p. 801; for the English translation, see W. PORTER, *A History of the Knights of Malta, or, The Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem*, London 1883, p. 701).

³ Secret Vatican Archive, Reg. Vat. 49, f. 372r – 373r.

⁴ Among the various editions of the *Rule*: L. HOLSTENIUS, *Codex regularum monasticarum et canonicarum*, VI, Augusta Vindellicorum 1759, reprint Graz 1957, II, p. 445-448; S. PAULI, *Codice diplomatico del sacro militare Ordine gerosolimitano oggi di Malta*, 2 voll., Marescandoli, Lucca 1733-1737, vol. I, CLXXXII, p. 224-226; *Cartulaire*, I, pp. 62-68; G. T. LAGLEDER, *Die Ordensregel der Johanniter / Malteser*, St. Ottilien 1983, p. 89-115; J. EIDINOW, *The Rule of Raymond du Puy*, Latin with a new English translation and a commentary by J. Bertram, Cong. Orat., Oxford, 2011. A critical edition of the Rule of Raymond du Puy is being prepared for publication.

Having become inadequate with regard to new exigencies, many elements of the *Rule* were progressively substituted by the *statuta* and *stabilimenta* of the subsequent Chapters General of the Order. Notwithstanding, the *Rule* continued to be read at the beginning of provincial Chapters and Chapters General of the Order, and in the Assemblies of the four *tempora*⁵: the *prologus* and article 1 of the *Rule* have been printed in the *First Title* of every edition of the statutes of the Order⁶ from XV century until the *Code de Rohan* of 1782⁷.

In fact, article 1 of the *Rule* contains two constitutive and permanent elements⁸ of the Order: the *religious Vows* (the “*Rule of Raymond du Puy*” is one of the most ancient attestations of the triad “Poverty – Chastity – Obedience” as the nucleus of religious life); and the expression “*the brothers who consecrate themselves to the service of the poor*” (*fratres ad servitium pauperum venientes*). These two elements constitute the Order’s specific charism: religious Order and hospitaller Order. During the XV century the words *et ad tuitionem fidei* were added, thus creating the identity-making binomial *obsequium pauperum – tuitio fidei*.

⁵ “We command that in the Assemblies which are made in the fasts of the four tempora, be publicly read the *Rule* at the presence of all the Brothers” (*Code de Rohan*, p. 35).

⁶ A. PAOLI, *Dell'origine et istituto del S. M. O. di san Giovanni Gerosolimitano detto poi di Rodi oggi di Malta*, Roma 1781; J. DELAVILLE LE ROULX, *Les statuts de l'Ordre del'Hopital de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem*, “Mélanges sur l'Ordre de S. Jean de Jérusalem” IX, “Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes” 48, Paris 1887, p. 341-356; E. NASALLI ROCCA DI CORNELIANO, *Origine ed evoluzione della regola e degli statuti dell'ordine gerosolimitano degli ospedalieri di S. Giovanni, ora detto di Malta*, Cappelli, Rocca San Casciano 1960, pp. 901-925; J. HASECKER – J. SARNOWSKY, *Stabilimenta Rhodiorum militum. Die Statuten des Johanniterordens von 1489-93*, Göttingen 2007.

⁷ *Code de Rohan*, p. 19.

⁸ B. MARTIN, *Some Current Aspects in the Rule de Raymond du Puy*, JoS 11, p. 7-18.

**FRATER RAYMONDUS DE PODIO MAGISTER.
REGULA HOSPITALIS HIEROSOLIMITANI**

In Dei nomine, ego Raymundus, servus pauperum Christi et custos Hospitalis Jerosolimitani, cum consilio totius capituli, clericorum et laycorum fratrum, statui hec precepta et statuta in domo Hospitalis Jerosolimitana.

Vel:

In nomine domini amen. Ego Raymondus servus pauperum Christi et hospitalis Hierusalem custos de consilio capituli fratrum instituo haec in domo hospitalis sancti Ioannis Baptistae Hierusalem.

[1.] In primis jubeo ut omnes fratres ad servitium pauperum venientes tria, que promittunt Deo per manum sacerdotis et per librum, teneant cum Dei auxilio, scilicet castitatem, et obedientiam, hoc est quodcumque precipitur eis a magistris suis, et sine proprio vivere; quia hec tria requiret Deus ab eis in ultimo certamine.

Vel:

Praecipio enim, quod omnes fratres accedentes ad obsequium pauperum et tuitionem fidei catholicae teneant et cum divino praesidio servent tria, quae promissa sunt Deo, videlicet castitatem et obedientiam – hoc est, quod

In the name of God, I Raymond, serf of the poor of Christ and Warden of the Hospital of Jerusalem, with the counsel of the whole Chapter, clerical and lay brethren, have decreed these ordinances and statutes in the house of the Hospital at Jerusalem.

Or:

In the name of the Lord amen. I Raymond serf of the poor of Christ and Warden of the Hospital at Jerusalem establish the following with the counsel of the Chapter of the brethren in the House of St John Baptist at Jerusalem.

[1.] First I command that all brethren coming to the service of the poor should keep these three things which by a priest's hand and by the Book they promise to God, that is to say: chastity, and obedience, which is whatever is commanded them by their masters, and to live without property; because these three things God will require of them in the final trial.

Or:

I order that all brethren attaching themselves to the service of the poor and the defence of the Catholic faith should hold and divine aid maintain three things which have been promised to God, that is to say: chastity and

adimplebunt quicquid eis erit iniunctum a suo magistro – atque vivere sine proprio, quoniam Deus requiret haec tria ab eis in ultimo iudicio.

[2.] *Et non querant amplius ex debito, nisi panem et aquam atque vestimentum; que eis promittuntur. Et vestitus sit humilis, quia Domini nostri pauperes, quorum servos nos esse fatemur, nudi et sordidi incedunt. Et turpe est servo ut sit superbus, et Dominus ejus humilis.*

[3.] *Constitutum est etiam ut in ecclesia sit honestus eorum incessus, et conversatio ydonea; scilicet ut clerici ad altare cum albis vestibus deserviant presbytero; diaconus vel subdiaconus, et si necessitas fuerit, alius clericus hoc idem exerceat officium; et lumen die noctuque in ecclesia semper sit; et ad infirmorum visitationem presbyter cum albis vestibus incedat, religiose portans corpus Domini, et diaconus vel subdiaconus precedat vel saltim acolitus, ferens lanternam cum candela accensa et spongiam cum aqua benedicta.*

[4.] *Iterum, cum ierint fratres per civitates et castella, non eant soli set duo vel tres, nec cum quibus voluerint sed cum quibus magister jusserit ire debent; et cum venerint quo voluerint, simul stent in incessu; in habitu et omnibus*

obedience – which is that they shall fulfil whatever is enjoined on them by their master – and to live without property, since God will require these three things from them at the last judgment.

[2.] And let them not seek more as their due than bread and water and clothing which are promised to them. And let their dress be humble, because our Lords the poor, whose serfs we declare ourselves to be, go forth naked and foul with dirt. And it is a shameful thing for a serf that he should be proud and his Lord humble.

[3.] It is also decreed that in church the brethren's going about should be decorous and their conduct appropriate; that is to say, that the clerics at the altar should serve the priest dressed in white clothing; there should be a deacon and a sub-deacon, and if required another cleric should perform this same duty; and let a light burn always by day and by night in the church; and let the priest go forth in white clothing to visit the sick, solemnly carrying the Body of the Lord, and let a deacon or sub-deacon or at least an acolyte precede him carrying a lantern with a lit candle and a sponge with holy water.

[4.] Further, when the brethren go to the cities and the castles, let them not go alone but in twos or threes, and let them go not with those they would wish but with those whom the master has ordered; and when they have ar-

motibus eorum nichil fiat quod quisquam offendat aspectum, sed quod suam doceat sanctitatem. Quando etiam fuerint in domo aut in ecclesia vel ubicumque femine sint invicem, suam pudicitiam custodiant, nec femine capita eorum lavent nec pedes nec lectum faciant. Deus enim qui habitat in sanctis isto modo custodiat eos, amen.

[5.] *Et in sanctorum pauperum querendo helemosinas, religiose persone fratrum de clericis et de laycis incedant, et cum hospitium quesierint, ad ecclesiam vel ad aliquam honestam personam veniant, et ex caritate ab ea victum petant, et nil aliud emant. Si vero non invenerint qui tribuant eis, mensurate emant unum solum cibum unde vivere possint.*

[6.] *Et ex inquisitione helemosinarum nec terram nec pignus recipiant, sed suo magistro per scriptum reddant, ac etiam magister cum suo scripto pauperibus ad Hospitale transmitat, et de omnibus obedientiis tertiam partem de pane et vino et de omni nutrimento magister suscipiat; et si superaverit, hoc quod amplius fuerit ad helemosinam conjugat, et Jerosolimis cum suo scripto pauperibus mitat.*

rived where they wanted to go, let them all make a stop in their progress; and in their dress and in all their movements let there be nothing which might offend anyone's sight, but only what would demonstrate their holiness. Also when they are in a house or a church or wherever there are women, let them guard their modesty, and let women not wash their heads or their feet or make their beds. May God who dwells among his saints keep them in this way, amen.

[5.] And in seeking alms for the holy poor, let religious persons both clerical and lay go forth from the brethren, and when they seek lodging let them come to the church or to some honourable person, and let them ask that person of his charity to give them food, and let them buy nothing. But if they do not find anyone to provide for them, let them buy cheaply one single ration on which they can live.

[6.] And from the collection of alms let them take neither land nor pledge, but let them yield it up to their master with a certificate, and also let the master transfer it to the poor at the Hospital with his certificate, and from all the houses of the Order let the master receive a third part from the bread and wine and from all food and if there should be a surplus, he should join what is over to the alms and send it to the poor at Jerusalem with his certificate.

[7.] *Et non eant ad predicacionem aliqui fratrum de ullis obedientiis ad collectas colligendas, nec solummodo illi quos capitulum et magistri ecclesie miserint. Et ipsi sumpti fratres, qui exierint ad collectas colligendas, in quamcumque obedientiam venerint recipiantur, et accipiant talem victum qualem fratres inter se dispensaverint, et aliam vexationem ibi non faciant. Lumen secum portent, et in quacumque domo hospitati fuerint nocte, ante se lumen ardere faciant.*

[8.] *Deinde pannos ysambrunos et galambrunos, ac fustania, et pelles silvestres omnino prohibemus ne amodo induant fratres. Et non comedant nisi bis in die, et quarta feria et die sabbati, et a septuagesima usque in Pascha, carnes non comedant preter eos qui sunt infirmi et inbecilles; et nunquam nudi jaceant, sed vestiti camisiis lineis vel laneis, aut aliis quibuslibet vestimentis.*

[9.] *Ac si aliquis frater, quod utinam numquam eveniat, peccatis exigentibus ceciderit in fornicationem, si occulte peccaverit, occulte peniteat, et jungatur sibi penitencia congrua; si autem comprehensus et publicatus pro certo fuerit, in eadem villa in qua facinus perpetraverit, die dominica post missas, quando populus ab ecclesia egressus fuerit, videtur cunctis exuatur, et a magistro*

[7.] And let none of the brethren from any house of the Order go to preach and collect contributions except only those whom the Chapter and the masters of the church shall have sent. And let those chosen brethren who have gone forth to collect contributions be welcomed into every house of the Order to which they shall have come, and let them receive the same food as the brethren shall have apportioned among themselves, and let them cause no other trouble there. Let them carry a light with them, and let them cause the light to burn before them in whatever house they receive their night's lodging.

[8.] Next we utterly forbid the brethren hereafter to wear any kind of fine cloth or fustian or furs of wild animals. And let them eat not more than twice a day; and on Wednesday and Saturday and from Septuagesima until Easter, except for those who are sick and infirm, let them eat no meat; and let them never lie down naked, but clothed in shirts of linen or wool or other garments of some kind.

[9.] And if one of the brethren, driven by sins, shall have fallen into fornication – and may that never happen – if he has sinned in secret, let him repent in secret and let him perform the appropriate penance; but if he has been caught and denounced for what is indisputable, then on Sunday after Mass, in the same town where he committed his crime, when the people have come

suo clerico, si clericus fuerit qui peccaverit, verberetur, si vero laicus fuerit a clerico vel ab eo cui clericus injunxerit corrigiis vel virgis durissime flagelletur et verberetur ac de omni societate nostra expellatur; postea vero si Deus cor illius illustraverit, et ad domum pauperum reversus fuerit, atque se reum et peccatorem atque legis Dei transgressorem confessus fuerit, et emendationem promiserit, recipiatur et penitentia digna sibi inponatur, et per annum integrum in loco extranei teneatur, et in hoc spatio videant fratres satisfactionem suam, postea faciant quod melius sibi videbitur.

[10.] Aut si frater altercatus cum altero fuerit fratre, et clamorem procurator domus habuerit, talis sit penitentia: septem diebus jejundet quarta et sexta feria, in pane et aqua, comedens in terra sine mensa et manutergio. Et si percusserit, quadraginta. Et si recesserit a domo vel a magistro cui commissus fuerit propria voluntate, sine eius voluntate, et postea reversus fuerit, quadraginta diebus manducet in terra, jejunans quarta et sexta feria in pane et aqua, et per tantum tempus permaneat in loco vicarii extranei quantum foris extitit, nisi tam prolixum fuerit tempus ut capitulo conveniat temperari.

out of church, let him be stripped before the eyes of all, and if the sinner be a cleric, let him be beaten by his clerical superior, and if he be a layman let him be whipped and beaten very severely with thongs and staves by a cleric or by him whom the cleric has ordered to do it; and let the sinner be expelled from all our fellowship. But if afterwards God shall have enlightened his heart and he returns to the house of the poor and confesses that he is guilty and a sinner and has transgressed the law of God and promises amendment, let him be welcomed and let a suitable penance be imposed on him, and let him be treated as a stranger for a whole year, and during that time let the brethren observe his penitence, and afterwards let them do what seems best to them.

[10.] If a brother shall have disputed angrily with another brother and the procurator of the house shall have heard the din, let the punishment be as follows: let him fast for seven days, on Wednesday and on Friday on bread and water, eating on the ground without a table or napkin. And if he has struck the other, let him eat on the ground for forty days. And if, of his own accord and without his master's consent, he has departed from the house and from the master to whom he has been entrusted, and afterwards he has come back, let him eat on the ground for forty days, fasting on bread and water on Wednesdays and Fridays, and let

[11.] *Ad mensam etiam, sicut apostolus ait, unusquisque panem suum cum silentio manducet, et post completorium non bibat nisi puram aquam. Et in lectis fratres silentium teneant.*

[12.] *Ac si aliquis frater, non bene se habens, a magistro suo vel ab aliis fratribus bis atque ter correptus fuerit et ammonitus, diabolo instigante, se emendare noluerit, nobis mitatur pedestris cum carta continente suum delictum; tamen procuratio rara ei donetur ut ad nos venire possit, eumque corrigemus; et nullus servientes sibi commissos percutiat, sed magister domus et fratres coram omnibus vindictam accipiant; tamen iustitia domus omnino teneatur.*

[13.] *At si aliquis fratrum de proprio dimissus in morte sua proprietatem habuit, et vivens magistro suo non ostenderit, nullum divinum officium pro eo agatur, sed quasi excommunicatus sepeliatur; et si vivens incolumis proprietatem habuit et magistro suo celaverit, ac postea super eum inventa fuerit, ipsa pecunia ad collum eius li-*

him be constantly treated as a stranger for the same length of time as that for which he was absent, unless that time was so long that the Chapter agrees to moderate it.

[11.] Further, at table, as the apostle says, let each one eat his bread in silence, and after Compline let him not drink anything except pure water. And let the brethren keep silence in their beds.

[12.] And if a brother who is not conducting himself properly, and who has been upbraided and warned twice or three times by his master or other brethren, refuses, at the devil's urging, to reform himself, let him be sent to us on foot with a document containing his offence; but a special payment should be given to him so that he can come to us, and we shall correct him. And let no one strike the serving men entrusted to him, but let the Master of the House and the brethren exact retribution in the presence of all; in any case, let the judgment of the House be observed in its entirety.

[13.] If anyone of the brethren who has died has kept property of his own and has not during his lifetime shown it to his master, let no divine office be performed for him, but he should be buried as if he had been excommunicated; and if a brother who is alive and well has kept property and has hidden it from his master and it is af-

getur et per Hospitale Jerosolimitanum vel per alias domos ubi permanserit ducatur nudus, et verberetur, a clerico si clericus fuerit, si vero laycus ab aliquo fratre verberetur et quadraginta dies jejunans quarta et sexta feria in pane et aqua.

[14] Quin etiam, quod valde nobis necessarium est, omnibus vobis statutum fieri precipimus et precipiendo mandamus ut de omnibus, viam universe carnis ingredientibus, in omnibus obedientis quibuscumque obierint, triginta diebus misse pro eius anima cantentur; in prima missa unusquisque fratrum qui aderit candelam cum nummo offerat. Qui videlicet nummi, quotcumque sint, pauperibus erogentur, et presbiter qui missas cantaverit, si non est de domo, procuracionem hiis diebus habeat, et peracto officio magister sibi caritatem faciat, et omnia indumenta fratris defuncti pauperibus dentur; fratres vero sacerdotes, quando missas cantaverint pro eius anima, orationes fundant ad dominum Jesum Christum, et clericorum unusquisque unum cantet psalterium, laycorum autem CL paternoster.

Et de omnibus aliis peccatis et rebus et clamoribus in capitulo iudicent et discernant iudicium rectum.

terwards found on him, let that money be tied to his neck and let him be led naked through the Hospital of Jerusalem and through the other houses of the Order where he has lived, and let him be beaten, and let him fast for forty days, taking bread and water on Wednesdays and Fridays.

[14.] And also we decree a law for you all which is very necessary for us, and in decreeing it we command as follows, that in respect of all those who have entered upon the way of all flesh and have died in any house of the Order, masses be sung for thirty days for the soul of the one who has died; at the first mass let each one of the brethren who is present offer a candle and a coin. And let these coins, as many as there are of them, be paid to the poor; as is to be expected, and if the priest who has sung the masses is not of the house, let him receive an allowance for these days, and when the mass is over let the master perform an act of charity and let all the clothing of the deceased brother be given to the poor; and when our priest-brethren have sung their masses for the soul of our dead brother let them pour forth prayers to the Lord Jesus Christ, and let each one of the clerical brethren chant the psalter; and each one of the lay brethren say 150 paternosters.

And concerning all other sins and matters and disturbances, let the Chapter judge and determine the right judgment.

[15.] *Et hec omnia, uti supra scripsimus, ex parte Dei omnipotentis, et beate Marie, et beati Johannis, et pauperum precipimus ut cum summo studio ita per omnia teneantur.*

[16.] *Et in ea obedientia ubi magister Hospitalis concesserit, cum venerit ibi infirmus, ita recipiatur, primum peccata sua presbitero confessus religiose, communicetur, et postea ad lectum deportetur, et ibi quasi dominus secundum posse domus omni die, antequam fratres eant pransum, caritative reficiantur, et in cunctis dominicis diebus epistola et evangelium in ea domo cantetur, et cum processione aqua benedicta aspergatur.*

Item si quis fratrum qui obedientias per diversas terras tenent, ad quamlibet secularem personam pecunias pauperum dederit, ut cum per suam vim contra magistrum suum et fratres regnare faceret, ab universa societate fratrum prohiatur.

[17.] *Et si duo vel amplius fratres insimul fuerint, et unus illorum nequiter male vivendo se habuerit, alter frater non eum diffamare debet neque populo neque priori, sed primum per se ipsum castigare eum, et si se noluerit castigare,*

[15.] And all these things, as we have written them above, in the name of God almighty, and blessed Mary, and blessed John, and of the poor, we order to be observed with the greatest zeal and in every respect.

[16.] And in a house of the Order where the Master of the Hospital has allowed it, a sick person who arrives there is to be welcomed as follows: first, having confessed his sins piously to a priest, he is to take communion, and then he is to be carried to a bed, and there as if each one were a lord, every day before the brethren go to eat, the sick are to be charitably refreshed according to the capacity of the house, and every Lord's Day let the epistle and the gospel be chanted in that house, and let it be sprinkled with holy water during a procession.

Further, if anyone of the brethren who hold houses of the Order in various places shall have given the money of the poor to any secular person, in order to establish the control of that person by force in opposition to his master and brethren, let him be ejected from the entire fellowship of the brethren.

[17.] And if two or more brethren are together, and one of them has conducted himself wickedly by evil living, the other brother must not denounce him either to the community or to the prior, but first must reprove him and

adhibeat secum duos vel tres ad eum castigandum. Et si se emendaverit inde gaudere debet; si autem emendare noluerit, tunc culpam suam scribens secrete mitat magistro, et secundum hoc quod magister iusserit de eo fiat.

[18.] *Atque ullus fratrum alium fratrem suum non accuset nisi bene posset probare; si fecerit, ipse frater bonus non est, et eandem penam sustineat quam accusatus, si probari posset, sustineret.*

[19.] *Item omnes fratres omnium obedientiarum, qui nunc vel in antea offerunt se Deo et sancto Hospitali Jerosolimitano, cruces ad honorem Dei et sancte Crucis eiusdem in cappis et in mantellis secum defferant ante pectus, ut Deus per ipsum vexillum et fidem et operationem et obedientiam nos custodiat, et a diaboli potestate nos in hoc et in futuro seculo deffendat in anima et in corpore simul cum omnibus nostris benefactoribus Christianis. Amen.*

if he is unwilling himself to reprove him, let him take with him two or three brethren to reprove the other. And if the other shall have changed his ways, thereupon let him rejoice; but if the other shall not have been willing to change his ways, then let him send a written account of the other's wrong secretly to the master, and let there be done concerning him what the master shall have ordered.

[18.] And let no brother accuse another brother unless he would be able to prove the accusation properly; if he has made an accusation he cannot prove, he is not a good brother, and should suffer the same penalty the accused would suffer, if the accusation could be proved.

[19.] Further, let all the brethren of all the houses of the Order, who now or in the future offer themselves to God and to the sacred Hospital of Jerusalem, bear crosses upon their breasts, on their cloaks and on their mantles, in honour of God and of His holy Cross, so that through the power of this same standard and by faith and good work and obedience, God may guard us and defend us from the power of the devil in this world and in the world to come, in soul and in body, together with all our Christian benefactors. Amen.

Glossary

Apostolic Constitution

Apostolic Constitutions are the most solemn legislative acts, with regard to their form, and the most important, with regard to their content. They are promulgated by the Supreme Pontiff *motu proprio* and directly, and have efficacy of general laws. Usually they deal with definitions and decisions on faith or the general discipline of the Church.

Apostolic Exhortation

Thus are called certain Encyclical Letters, addressed to a broader audience than the Bishops alone.

Aspirant to Justice

The Aspirant to Justice is a Member of the Third Class, admitted to a period of preparation for the Noviciate, lasting “*a minimum of three months and a maximum of one year*” (C art. 18). “*The Aspirant is entrusted by the Superior to an expressly delegated Professed Knight, or to a Spiritual Father, for a period of orientation and formation about the Order*” (C art. 17 § 1). See above, chapters XIX – XXI.

Association

“*Associations are established by decree of the Grand Master, with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council. Their statutes are drafted in accordance with the legislation of the countries in which they are established and are approved by the Grand Master, with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council*” (CC art. 34 § 1). “*The purpose of the Associations of the Order is to implement the objectives of the Order as set out in Art. 2 of the Constitution*” (C art. 229). “*All members of the Order belong by right to the Association of the territory where they reside*” (C art. 230 § 1). “*A minimum of fifteen members is required to constitute an Association*” (C art. 231 § 1). See also CC art. 28 and 34; art. 220-221, 229-231, 239.

Bull (*Bulla*)

The name comes from the Latin *bullā* (“seal”), and it designates both the document and its seal. In the general use, *Littera Apostolica* (in Latin: “Apostolic Letters”) is the name always given to both Bulls and

veritable *Litterae*. Whenever they have to be distinguished from Papal Briefs (*Litterae Apostolicae sub cera*: “Apostolic Letters with a wax seal”), it is common to find the phrasing *Litterae Apostolicae sub plumbo* (“Apostolic Letters with a lead seal”). In the un-official use (since the XV century), *Bull* is the name given to every document with a lead seal. The seal is commonly called *bull*a (also *bull*a *plumbea*, “lead seal”); but since the name can also indicate the document, the seal is often referred to as *plumbum* (“lead”).

Canonical Status

It is referred to the condition of the Catholic faithful, with regard to Canon Law, “*by reason of Marriage [...] of the reception of Sacred Orders, of Perpetual Profession made in a religious institute, and of change of Rite*” (CIC 535 § 2).

Canon Law or Codex Iuris Canonici (CIC)

“*The Code, as the principal legislative document of the Church, founded on the juridical - legislative heritage of Revelation and Tradition, is to be regarded as an indispensable instrument to ensure order both in individual and social life, and also in the Church’s activity itself. Therefore, besides containing the fundamental elements of the hierarchical and organic structure of the Church as willed by her divine Founder, or as based upon apostolic, or in any case most ancient, tradition, and besides the fundamental principles which govern the exercise of the threefold office entrusted to the Church itself, the Code must also lay down certain rules and norms of behaviour*” (Apostolic Constitution *Sacrae Disciplinae Leges*, January 25, 1983).

Cape

Black mantle with hood, red lined, with the eight-pointed cross embroidered on the left side. Part of the Order’s female service uniform, it is worn by Dames of the Order and ladies Volunteers in service and on special occasions. Dames in Obedience wear a red trimmed cross. For its use, see **C** art. 106.

Cardinalis Patronus

“The Supreme Pontiff appoints as his representative to the Order a Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church on whom are conferred the title of Cardinalis Patronus and special faculties. The Cardinalis Patronus has the task of promoting the spiritual interests of the Order and its members and relations between the Holy See and the Order” (CC art. 4 § 4).

Ceremonial

Book that regulates the Order’s proper ceremonies, liturgical and extra-liturgical such as Admission in the Order and the usages proper of the Order.

Chapter

“The Prior is assisted by a limited Council... [and] by the Chapter... The following are members of the Chapter: the Prior; the Professed Knights and Chaplains of the Priory; the Chancellor, the Receiver and, where no Association exists in the same territory, the Hospitaller; two representatives of the Second Class; two representatives of the Third Class, where no Association exists” (CC 29 § 3-4). “The Prior is to convene the Chapter for a spiritual meeting and to deal with important matters at least four times a year, or at least once a year if an Association exists in the same territory” (C 226 § 1). “The Subpriory is governed by a Professed Knight or a Knight in Obedience, with the title of Regent, assisted by a Council and the Chapter, in accordance with its own Statutes and the Code.” (CC 33 § 2; cf. C art. 228).

Chapter General

“The Chapter General is the supreme assembly of the Order and is composed of representatives of the different classes. It is convened once every five years or whenever the Grand Master, having heard the Sovereign Council, may think fit, or on application to the Grand Master by the majority of the Priors, Subpriors and Associations” (CC art. 22 § 1). Cf. CC art. 22 and C art. 175-185.

Charism of the Order

See *Patrimonium* or *Charism of the Order*

Church Robe or Habit

Traditional long black garment, with the eight-pointed cross “*of white cloth at the left side*”, worn by Members in Obedience and of the Third Class during religious ceremonies. The Professed Knights wear it together with the Stole during liturgical celebrations. As with other religious orders, it is given in a Clothing Ceremony, with these words: “*This is our proper Habit, that is made in form of the garment worn for his dire penitence our Patron Saint John Baptist in the desert, that is of camel skin: therefore, striving to make penitence of your sins, with this warning you shall follow the virtues in all the time which you still have of your life*” (Code de Rohan, p. 481).

Class of Membership

See chapter II § 2.

Code

Statute of the Order, complementary to the *Constitutional Charter* and approved by the Chapter General.

Consecrated Life

“*By its very nature, the state of consecrated life is neither clerical nor lay*” (CIC 588 § 1). “*The life consecrated through the profession of the evangelical counsels is a stable form of living by which faithful, following Christ more closely under the action of the Holy Spirit, are totally dedicated to God who is loved most of all, so that, having dedicated themselves to His honour, the upbuilding of the Church and the salvation of the world by a new and special title, they strive for the perfection of charity in service to the Kingdom of God and, having become an outstanding sign in the Church, they may foretell the heavenly glory*” (CIC 573 § 1).

Constitutional Charter

Constitution or basic law of the Order approved by the Chapter General.

**Conventual Chaplain
*ad honorem***

One of the six categories forming the Third Class of Membership of the Order. See CC art. 8 § 1C b; C art.

110, 113 § 3, 117 and 162. See also above, chapter VI § 1 and 4, and *Regulations for Chaplains*.

Cordon

See *Stole*.

Council Complete of State

“The Council Complete of State elects the Grand Master or the Lieutenant of the Grand Master. The following are entitled to vote: the Lieutenant of the Grand Master or the Lieutenant ad interim; the members of the Sovereign Council; the Prelate; the Priors or, in the event of vacancy, their permanent substitutes (Procurators, Vicars, Lieutenants); the Professed Bailiffs; two Professed Knights delegated by each Priory; a Professed Knight and a Knight in Obedience delegated by the Knights in gremio religionis; five Regents of the Subpriories, in accordance with the Code; fifteen representatives of the Associations, in accordance with the Code. The Grand Master’s election requires a majority plus one of those present entitled to vote” (CC art. 23 §§ 1-3). See also CC art. 23 §§ 4-6; C artt. 186-195.

Dame in Obedience

Knights and Dames in Obedience constitute the Second Class of the Order and make *“the Promise according to Art. 9 § 2 of the Constitutional Charter”* (CC art. 8 § 1B). See also CC art. 9 § 2; C art. 94-107, and above, chapters VIII-XIII.

**Dame of
Grace and Devotion**

One of the six categories forming the Third Class of Membership of the Order. See CC art. 8 § 1C c. See above, chapters IV-VII.

**Dame of
Honour and Devotion**

One of the six categories forming the Third Class of Membership of the Order. See CC art. 8 § 1C a. See above, chapters IV-VII.

**Dame of
Magistral Grace**

One of the six categories forming the Third Class of Membership of the Order. See CC art. 8 § 1C e. See above, chapters IV-VII.

Decree

In the law of the Church, this name was given not only to government acts, but also to provisions of judges, except of rulings and the various statements of the legislative power. In ancient times, the acts of the Pontiff were called *decreta*, while acts of the Councils were called *statuta*. Because of this, pontifical constitutions containing decisions and general and particular norms were called *decretales*. The disciplinary decisions of some Councils, such as the one of Trent, were also called *decrees*. In the Canon Law in force, *decrees* are proper acts, predominantly of the executive power. Such are the decisions and resolutions of the Sacred Congregations and the provisions of Bishops and High Prelates, given for the purpose of administration.

Delegate

“The Delegation is directed by a member of the Order who has the title of Delegate and who is appointed in the first instance by his own Superior with the advice of the respective Council, and subsequently elected by the members of the Delegation and confirmed by the Superior. The Delegation of a Priory or Subpriory, where possible, should be entrusted to a Professed Knight or a Knight in Obedience. The Delegate is assisted by a Council consisting of not more than five members and a Chaplain, who has under his care the spiritual life of the members of the Delegation” (C art. 35 § 3-4).

Delegation

“The Priors, the Subpriors and the Associations may form regional Delegations in accordance with the Code. The Delegations are composed of all members of the Priors, Subpriors and Associations who reside in the territory. Their rules are established in conformity with the statutes of the respective Priors, Subpriors and Associations and a regulation approved by the Grand Master, with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council” (CC art. 35 § 1-2). “The establishment of a Delegation requires approval of its working rules

by the Grand Master, with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council. In exceptional cases, delegations of one Association may exist in the territory of another with the consent of the Association already existing in that territory” (C art. 232).

Divine Office

See *Liturgy of the Hours*

Donat of Devotion

One of the six categories forming the Third Class of Membership of the Order. See **CC** art. 8 § 1C f and above, chapters IV-VII.

Eight-Pointed Cross

The Cross on the habit is shown to the one who is going to be clothed, with these words: *“This is the sign of the true Cross, which we command you to wear always in white cloth on the left side and over the heart, so that you can defend it with your right, always keeping in your heart its shape, which is octangular, by which we are reminded of the eight Beatitudes, so that we strive through our works to deserve them from the grace of God “ (Code de Rohan, p. 482). See chapter II § 6.*

**Encyclical or
Encyclical Letter**

(From ancient Greek, it means “Letter Circular”). It is a letter, usually treating some aspect of Catholic doctrine, sent by the Pope and addressed either to the Catholic Bishops of a particular area or, more normally, to the Bishops of the world. Papal Encyclical usually take the form of teachings. The title of the Encyclical is usually taken from its first two or three words in Latin.

Evangelical Counsels

The Evangelical Counsels are practised by the Members of three Classes according one’s individual state. *“The perfection of charity, to which all the faithful are called, entails for those who freely follow the call to consecrated life the obligation of practicing chastity in celibacy for the sake of the Kingdom, poverty and obedience. It is the profession of these counsels, within a*

*permanent state of life recognized by the Church, that characterizes the life consecrated to God” (CIC 915). See also **Profession**.*

Fra’

Shortened form of the Latin *frater*, meaning “brother”, is the title given to the professed members of the male Mendicant Orders. In the Order of Malta appertains to Professed Knights and Professed Chaplains in Solemn (Perpetual) Vows.

Grand Chancellor

It is one of the four High Offices of the Order (CC art. 18 § 1). “*The Grand Chancellor is head of the Chancery and its related offices*” (C art. 151 § 1). See also C art. 151-154.

Grand Commander

It is one of the four High Offices of the Order (CC art. 18 § 1), “*conferred upon Professed Knights in Perpetual Vows*” (CC art. 11 § 1). “*The Grand Commander assists the Grand Master in fulfilling the charism of the Order and in the diffusion and protection of the faith, in the supervision of the Priors and Subpriors, and in the supervision of the Members of the First and Second Class; compiles visitational reports and the reports to be sent to the Holy See on the state and life of the Order. Care of the chapel of the Magistral Palace and the organization of pilgrimages of the Order are included in the responsibilities of the Grand Commander. The Grand Commander exercises the function of Superior regarding Members of the First and Second Class in gremio religionis*” (C art. 150 § 1-3). See also C art. 149.

Grand Hospitaller

It is one of the four High Offices of the Order (CC art. 18 § 1). “*The Grand Hospitaller promotes, co-ordinates and supervises the works of the Priors, the Associations and other organizations of the Order in accordance with the dispositions of the Code, regulations*

and respective statutes. He inspects the proper functioning of all charitable works which are directly under the Grand Magistracy” (C art. 155 § 1). See C art. 155.

Grand Master

“The Grand Master is elected for life by the Council Complete of State from among the Professed Knights with at least ten years in perpetual vows if they are younger than fifty years of age; in the case of Professed Knights who are older, but who have been members of the Order for at least ten years, three years in perpetual vows are sufficient [...]. Before the assumption of the office, the election of the Grand Master is to be communicated by letter to the Holy Father by the person elected” (CC art. 13 § 1 and 3). “The Grand Master, assisted by the Sovereign Council, sees to the exercise of supreme authority, to the conferral of duties and offices, and to the general government of the Order” (CC art. 15 § 1). See also CC art. 12-16 and C art. 134-141.

High Offices

“The High Offices are: the Grand Commander; the Grand Chancellor; the Grand Hospitaller; the Receiver of the Common Treasure” (CC art. 18 § 1).

Hospitaller Order

See above, chapter II § 1.

In Gremio Religionis

In Latin, means “in the bosom of the religion”. The term *religio* has many meanings, among others also that of “religious order”. The expression *in gremio religionis* designates the membership of a religious, of Temporary or Solemn Vows, to his Order, should he be residing in an area where there would not exist local organisms of the Order itself. Should there not be a Priory or Sub-Priory in the region where, Members of the First and Second Class live, they are become aggregated *in gremio religionis*, i.e. they are dependant directly on the Grand Commander. See CC art. 10 § 5; C art. 150 § 3 and above, chapters VIII-IX and X § 1.

Knight in Obedience	Knights and Dames in Obedience constitute the Second Class of the Order and make <i>“the Promise according to Art. 9 § 2 of the Constitutional Charter”</i> (CC art. 8 § 1B). See also CC art. 9 § 2; C art. 94-107, and above, chapters VIII-XIII.
Knight of Grace and Devotion	One of the six categories forming the <i>Third Class</i> of Membership of the Order. See CC art. 8 § 1C c. See above, chapters IV-VII
Knight of Honour and Devotion	One of the six categories forming the <i>Third Class</i> of Membership of the Order. See CC art. 8 § 1C a. See above, chapters IV-VII
Knight of Justice	See <i>Professed Knight</i> .
Knight of Magistral Grace	One of the six categories forming the <i>Third Class</i> of Membership of the Order. See CC art. 8 § 1C e. See above, chapters IV-VII.
Lay Order	See above, chapter II § 2.
Liturgy of the Hours	<i>“Christ told us ‘about the need to pray continually and never lose heart’ (Luke 18:1) ... The Church not only satisfies this precept by celebrating the Eucharist, but also in other different ways, especially by the Liturgy of the Hours. Compared with other liturgical actions, the particular characteristic which ancient tradition has attached to the Liturgy of the Hours is that it should consecrate the course of day and night”</i> (IGLH, 10).
Magistral Chaplain	One of the six categories forming the Third Class of Membership of the Order. See CC art. 8 § 1C d; C art. 110, 113 § 3, 117 and 162. See also above, chapter VI § 1 and 4, and <i>Regulations for Chaplains</i> .
Magistral Decree	Act of government of the Order, promulgated by decree of the Grand Master (CC art. 15 § 2b and 3).

Motu Proprio

(In Latin it means “on his own initiative”). It is a document very similar to the Brief, although written on paper and without a seal. The autographic signature of the Pope is: *Placet motu proprio*, followed by the initial of the Christian name in Latin of the Pope. With this type of document, the Pontiff acts of his own initiative (*motu proprio*) and under clear knowledge (*ex certa scientia*) of what he wishes to concede or establish. The *Grand Master* of the Order can take provisions *motu proprio* as well (cf. **CC** art. 15 § 2 e; **C** art. 115).

Novice Knight of Justice

A Knight, member of the Order for at least one year and at least 22 years of age (**C** art. 9 § 1-2), admitted to the Novitiate for the First Class. He is placed under the direction of a *Novice Master* chosen from amongst the Chaplains of the Order, assisted by coadjutor who has to be a Professed Knight of at least 35 years of age (**C** art. 20 § 1).

Novice Master

“The Grand Master chooses the Novice Master and his assistant. The Novice Master must be chosen from among the priests of the Order and, if possible, from the Conventual Chaplains [...]. The Novice Master is responsible for the formation and spiritual instruction of the Novice” (**C** art. 29). *“The Novice Master is to take care that the Novice is faithful to the religious observances as prescribed for Professed Knights”* (**C** art. 20 § 1). *“Every six months the Novice Master is to provide a written report to the competent Superior, who, with his Council, shall arrange to inform the Grand Master”* (**C** art. 30).

Obsequium Pauperum

Is the first charism to which was added, in later times, the *tuitio fidei*. In serving the poor and the sick, we are serving Christ Himself is the fundament of the expression found in the Rule of Raymond du Puy and in the *Statuta: serf of the poor of Christ, our lords the sick, our lords the poor, serves and slaves of*

our lords the sick. See **C** art. 41 § 2 and above, footnotes 48-49. See also **Tuitio Fidei** and **Patrimonium** or **Charism of the Order**

Octagonal Cross

See **Eight-Pointed Cross**.

Ordinary

“By the title of ordinary are understood in the law diocesan bishops and others who, even if only temporarily, are placed over some particular church or a community equivalent to it according to the norm of can. 368 as well as those who possess general ordinary executive power in them, namely, vicars general and episcopal vicars; likewise, for their own members, major superiors of clerical religious institutes of pontifical right and of clerical societies of apostolic life who at least possess ordinary executive power” (CIC 134 § 1). The Grand Priors and the Priors, given that they are major superiors of a non-clerical religious institute of pontifical law, are not Ordinaries.

Patrimonium or
Charism of the Order

The special mission of the Order of Malta and the special divine graces to live and act according to this mission. It is in brief described by the “motto” of the Order *tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum*.

Prelate

“The Prelate is the ecclesiastical superior of the Clergy of the Order in sacerdotal functions”. (CC art. 19 § 2 and C art. 160). “The Prelate is appointed by the Supreme Pontiff, who chooses from among three candidates presented by the Grand Master with the deliberative vote of the Sovereign Council” (CC art. 19 § 1). The Prelate assists the Grand Master and the Grand Commander in the care of the spiritual life and of the religious observance of the Members of the Order, as well as in everything concerning the spiritual character of the Order’s works (CC art. 19 § 3). He takes part in the meetings of the Government Council, when issues pertaining to his competence are discussed (CC art. 21 § 3 c). The Prelate takes also part in General

Chapter (CC art. 22 § 2 c). He has the right of vote in the Council Complete of State (CC art. 23 § 2 c).

Preparatory Year

The *Code* foresees one year of preparation both for reception in the Third Class and for the Promise of Obedience. *“The reception of Knights, Dames and both male and female Donats must be preceded by a preparatory period of one year during which the candidate becomes acquainted with the history of the Order and participates in its works and programmes. The Sovereign Council has the power to dispense from this requirement in individual cases”* (C art. 109).

President

The competent Superior of an Association of the Order.

Prior

The competent Superior of a Priory. See CC art. 29-32; C art. 224-227.

Priory

Local organism of the Order analogous to the Provinces of Religious Orders. (CIC 621). *“At least five Professed Knights are necessary for the establishment of a Priory”* (CC art. 29 § 1). *“The title of Grand Priory belongs to some Priories by custom or by virtue of a resolution of the Chapter General”* (CC art. 28 § 2). See also CC art. 28-32; C art. 220-227, 239.

Probation Year

“A member of the Order who wishes to be admitted to the Promise must submit a written request to the Prior or the Regent and to the President of the Association to which the member belongs together with the documents specified in Art. 95. The authority indicated in Par. 1, having heard the opinion of the respective Chapter or Council, proposes to the Grand Master the admission of the candidate to the year of preparation” (C art. 96). See above, chapters VI § 2-3, and XIII § 2-3.

Professed Conventual Chaplain

“Professed Conventual Chaplains with religious vows consecrate themselves to God and, under the authority of the Superiors, dedicate themselves to the pastoral care of the members of the Order, to religious assis-

tance towards its charitable and missionary works, and to the service of its churches” (C art. 50). See CC art. 8 § 1A and art. 9 § 1 and 3; C art. 51-60, 117 and 161. See also *Regulations for Professed Chaplains*.

Professed Knight

*“The First Class [of the Order] consists of Knights of Justice, also called Professed, and of Professed Conventual Chaplains who have made religious vows” (CC art. 8 § 1A). “The Knights and Chaplains belonging to the First Class profess the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience in accordance with the Code [...]. They are religious for all purposes of Canon Law and are governed by the particular rules which concern them. They are not obliged to live in community” (CC art. 9 § 1). See C art. 6-49 and 61-93. See also above, chapters XVI-XXVI; and **Professed Conventual Chaplain**.*

Profession

“By religious profession, members [of the religious institute] assume the observance of the three evangelical counsels by public vow, are consecrated to God through the ministry of the Church, and are incorporated into the institute with the rights and duties defined by law” (CIC 654; see also CIC 655-658).

Pro Merito Melitensi

Honours for the Order of merit in the Order of Malta are awarded to those who have gained special merits (C art. 132-133). *“Those awarded with the decoration pro Merito Melitensi do not become thereby members of the Order” (C art. 111).*

Promise of Obedience

See CC art. 9 § 2 and C art. 94, 96, 100, 104-105. The text of the Promise of Obedience can be found at C art. 100 § 1. See above, chapters VIII-XIII.

Receiver of the Common Treasure

“The Receiver of the Common Treasure: directs the administration of the goods of the Order in co-ordination with the Grand Chancellor, under the authority of the Grand Master and the surveillance of the Board of Auditors” (C art. 156 § 1).

Regent	The competent Superior of a Subpriory. See CC art. 33 § 2.
Regulations	Laws of application requested by the <i>Constitutional Charter</i> and the <i>Code</i> (CC art. 6 § 3, 29 § 8, 33 § 2, 34 § 1, 35 § 2; C art. 27, 58 § 2, 88, 101 § d, 223, 232, 239 § 2-3). See also above, the Preamble, footnote 3.
Religious Order	See above, chapter II § 2.
Scapular	The scapular lined in red is given to the knights in Obedience during the ceremony of the Promise. The use of the scapular has been evident since the beginning of monachism. St Benedict considered it as a sort of apron to be worn while working. In the Benedictine Rule (chapter 55 § 6), for the first time, the scapular is considered as part of the monk's habit: " <i>scapulare propter opera</i> " In origin the use of the scapular was tied to the use of the habit of a religious Order; but later on it became the symbol of a special devotion, without special reference to the habit of an Order. See G. ROCCA, <i>Scapulare</i> , in DIP, 8, coll. 1015-1018; and L. SAGGI, <i>Scapulaire</i> , in DS, 15, coll. 390-396.
Second Ecumenical Vatican Council	The XXI Ecumenical Council opened on October 11, 1962 under the Pontificate of Pope John XXIII, and closed on December 8, 1965 under the pontificate of Pope Paul VI. It was attended by 2,908 Council Fathers; by 17 Observers from Orthodox Churches and Protestant Denominations, as well as about 100 Representatives of other Christian communities.
Social Teachings of the Church	<i>"The Church's social teaching is born of the encounter of the Gospel message and of its demands summarized in the supreme commandment of love of God and neighbour in justice (106) with the problems emanating from the life of society. This social teaching has established itself as a doctrine by using the resources of human wisdom and the sciences. It concerns the ethi-</i>

*cal aspect of this life. It takes into account the technical aspects of problems but always in order to judge them from the moral point of view” (Instruction of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith *Libertatis Conscientia*, March 22, 1986, 72).*

Solemn (Perpetual) Vows

“When the period for which profession was made has elapsed, a religious who freely petitions and is judged suitable is to be admitted to renewal of profession or to perpetual profession; otherwise, the religious is to depart” (CIC 657 § 1). The Code of Canon Law in force uses the phrasing “perpetual profession”, but the expressions “solemn profession” or “solemn vows” can be utilized by ancient Orders, which always used them.

Solemn Privilege

The letter of Pope Paschal II to Blessed Gerard, *institutor ac prepositus* of the Hospital of Jerusalem, of February 15, 1113, is a Solemn Privilege. The Solemn Privilege was a document produced by the Apostolic Chancery, whose usage is testified since the age of Pope Adrian I (772-795). It became uncommon during the course of XIII century, although unique examples are to be found even later than the XIV century. Solemn Privileges have the following distinctive identity: a protocol written in *litterae elongatae*, a formula of perpetuity (*in perpetuum*, or *ad perpetuam rei memoriam*) at the end of the protocol, a triple *Amen* at the end of the text, the *rota*, the subscription of the Pope and the Cardinals, the *benevalete*, the *comma*, the formula *datum per manum* with date in the long format, the *bull* of lead with silk thread.

Sovereign Council

“The Sovereign Council assists the Grand Master in the Government of the Order. The following are members of Sovereign Council: the Grand Master or the Lieutenant, who presides; the holders of the four High Offices and six Councillors” (CC art. 20 § 1-2. See also CC art. 11 and C art. 149-152, 155-159 and 163-169.

Sovereign Order

See above, chapter II § 3.

Stole or Cordon

The Stole or Cordon is presented to the Knights of Justice during the rite of Solemn Profession with these words: *“We show you this cordon, so that there will be a memorial of the bitter Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, who suffered for us on the Cross, remembering often, that this is the Cordon, with which He was bound; these are the Scourges, with which He was beaten; this is the Column, where He was bound and bitterly scourged; these were the Dice and this the Sponge; and finally this is the Cross over which our Lord Jesus Christ suffered for us, She which has to be your guide and your sign in all your enterprises and for all the time of your life”*. Then, it is given out with these words: *“This is your yoke, which, according to our Redeemer, is suave and light and which will conduct you to eternal life if you will be able to tolerate with that patience and charity which is expected from you as true Religious and honoured Knight: may God the Lord give you the grace to do it in this world, and as prize in the other the glory. In saecula saeculorum. Amen”* (Code de Rohan, p. 482).

Subpriory

At least nine Knights in Obedience are necessary for the establishment of a Subpriory (CC art. 33 § 1), in those areas where no Professed Knights are available (C art. 29 § 1). See CC art. 28 and 33; C art. 220-221 and 228. It takes the form of an extended maniple which is worn over the left arm.

Synod of Bishops

“The Synod of Bishops is a group of Bishops who have been chosen from different regions of the world and meet together at fixed times to foster closer unity between the Roman Pontiff and Bishops, to assist the Roman Pontiff with their counsel in the preservation and growth of faith and morals and in the observance and strengthening of ecclesiastical discipline, and to

consider questions pertaining to the activity of the Church in the world” (CIC 342. See also CIC 343-348).

Temporary Vows

“Temporary profession is to be made for a period defined in proper law; it is not to be less than three years nor longer than six” (CIC 655). See CC art. 35 § 2.

Tuitio Fidei

A literal translation is difficult. In the context of the life of the Order it is commonly interpreted as *“nurturing, protecting, witnessing and defending the Christian faith”*. See ***Obsequium Pauperum*** and ***Patrimonium*** or ***Charism of the Order***.

Abbreviations

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- BASIL, *Regula*: BASILEIOS O MEGAS, *Keimena-Asketika*, a c. di I. K. G. PAPACHRISTOPOULOS, Apostoliki Diakonia, Athinai, 1976, which takes on and in some points corrects J.-P. MIGNE, *Patrologia Graeca*, XXXI, 653-869.
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- CCC**: *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Vatican City, 1993.
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- CIC** (*Codex Iuris Canonici*): *Code of Canon Law*, Vatican City, 1983.
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