Order of St-John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller
Under the Constitution granted by his Late Majesty King Peter II of Yugoslavia

The International Herald

PRO FIDE, PRO UTILITATE HOMINUM

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Knights and Dames in St. John,

It is as always a pleasure and a privilege to have the opportunity to write some lines as an opening column to the International Herald. This time it is close to Christmas, so of course it is also an opportunity to wish all members a very Merry Christmas and a Bright and Happy New Year. The greeting goes to all Knights and Dames and to their Families and Friends.

Being made a Knight or Dame of the Order is an important event in life, and similar to what is the case for a Priest so also being a Knight or Dame of the Order leaves you with a never vanishing character mark. Once a Priest, always a Priest, and once a Knight or Dame is also for your lifetime, even if you choose to leave the Order or cross over to some other Branch of it.

To be knighted, it is necessary to receive the accolade by an authorized Officer of the Order, and all have to receive the accolade by the sword, Knights as well as Dames.

There is only one exception, and that is for the Clergy. They are only receiving their Knighthood by being touched on the shoulder, and also in other respects the Clergy has a special status in the Order. They are not members of the Sovereign Council, but have their own Council called the Ecclesiastical Council. It is my pleasant privilege to appoint the members of this Council, which I do of course with the consent of the Petit Conseil.

The Ecclesiastical Council in its present shape is 8 years old and is presided by the Rev. Hans Vanackere from Belgium, who was one of the Founding Fathers of the Council and has headed it since then. He has presented a marvelous effort and those of you who have taken part in the Sovereign Council and at the Ecumenical Service on the Sunday after will know him very well. He has however now well deserved decided to retreat with effect from the 1st of January 2018, and as his Successor he has suggested the Rev Niels Refskou from Denmark, who is also one of the Founding Fathers of the Council, and whom I personally welcome, has decided to accept the task. He appointed as his Secretary the Rev Fr. Dominic Verhoeven, who is Deacon of the Diocese of Antwerp and also works for Caritas Belgium and Europe. He was also Hans Vanackere’s Secretary, and in this way there is established a continuity. (…)

Peter GABRIELSEN, OSJ
Lieutenant-Grand Master.
The Rev. Fr. Niels Refskou is Lutheran and has worked for many years as a highly respected Parish Priest in Denmark and in addition to this he is a learned Historian who has among other studied in the Vatican. He is now retired but still active. The Rev Hans Vanackere is a Catholic, and this reflects another important feature of the Order, which is that it is an Ecumenical Order. Both regarding the members of the Order as such as well as the members of the Ecclesiastical Council we contain and welcome members from all serious and important Christian Denominations, i.e. Catholic, Orthodox, Presbyterian, Anglican (Evangelical) and Lutheran, all united in their common Baptism and Creed.

With this, once again, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Sincerely in Christ and St.-John,

Peter Gabrielsen
Lt. Grand Master
FAREWELL. of Fr. Hans VANACKERE, KJSJ, Prelate of the Low Countries as Chairman of the Ecclesiastical council,

Ten years ago, I was asked by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Grand Master Michel Bohé to start with the Ecclesiastical council, composed by the prelates/chaplains of the different grand priories and priories in order to discuss together the first pillar of our device Pro Fide, Pro Utilitate Hominum and to give shape to the ecumenical character of our Order.

According the Constitution of our Order it is the competence of the Lieutenant Grand Master to found such a council. During our first meeting in June 2010, five prelates were present (Denmark, Malta, Finland, United States of America and the Low Countries) and we discussed together the Pro Fide of our device and what we understand in the different priories by Pro Fide and also what we could do for the deepening and promotion of this important aspect of our device.

During this first encounter our common concern was growing and the Pro Fide reached a high point in the celebration on Sunday together with the members of the Petit Conseil, in sharing the Word of God and the breaking of bread during the Eucharist. The Sunday service became a sign of deep ecumenical respect and communion. A brotherhood which expressed the real ecumenical basis of our loved Order. I, personally, was deeply impressed and emotionally touched by the peace giving sign between Lutheran, Episcopalian, Orthodox and Catholic prelates of our Order, and the members of the Petit Conseil. It was a historical moment for our Order.

Seven years ago we were with five prelates and, in preparation of the Sovereign Council of 2017, we were in contact with more than twenty-five prelates of ten different Christian denominations.

With my farewell as chairman of the Ecclesiastical Council of the Order, I want to thank especially the previous Lieutenant-Grand Master for his confidence, his sympathy and his open communication, his secretary-general Francis Van Remoortere, and also the actual Lieutenant-Grand Master Peter Gabrielsen, Grand Commander Paul Borg and the other members of the Petit Conseil and, last but not least: Niels and Alexej, the collaborators and friends from the very beginning. Together we created the Ecclesiastical Council.

I wish my successor prelate Niels Refskou, a Lutheran minister, all the best and the blessing of our Lord.

Rev. Prel. Hans Vanackere, KJSJ, Chairman of the E.C.
For a child has been born for us, a son given to us

Dear Brothers and Sisters in St. John,

We talk a lot about peace, and especially up to Christmas. The peace of Christmas has come with the child born a little more than 2,000 years ago, and just 500 years before this child was born, Isaiah, one of the great prophets of the Old Testament, wrote in chapter 9, 6-7: “For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.”

Isaiah lived at a time when the Assyrian empire, the present Iraq and parts of Iran was an imminent threat to the freedom of the Israeli people, and the only possibility Isaiah could see in this situation was the help of God. Therefore, he prophesied about a son of God who would deliver Israel. But whatever Isaiah might have meant with the expressions and phrases that he uses, the Christian Church from the very beginning has considered these words as a prophecy about Jesus, and in the introduction to Luke’s Gospel just before the Christmas gospel we can see that Isaiah’s prophecies about the expected messiah are just fulfilled in the birth of Jesus. The Christmas Gospel means that the child is born! God has given us his Son to Savior.

As a prophet Isaiah saw that God’s intervention was the only opportunity for him and his people, and God’s intervention is the only option for us today. Of course, this should not be understood thus that we should in any way expect God to make the world a paradise in the same way that we try to find our inner peace in complying with the ancient Christmas (...
(...) traditions. The inner peace is only given us by God; and he has given it in His Son Jesus Christ, in the child given us.

About this Son, God has given to us, Isaiah uses the phrase: Wonderful Counselor. He is more and far bigger than we can understand with our intellects and feelings. He is the innermost source of wisdom and counsel. He is Mighty God, i.e. His power is without limits. He is Everlasting Father, i.e. He is not an indefinite event in the history of humanity, but he is God from eternity to eternity, God of God, light of light, life of life. He is the creative Word of God by which everything has been created. And finally, he is Prince of Peace, i.e. He who creates and maintains peace - an unbreakable peace.

But if we look at the world that surrounds us, we must ask, if the Prince of Peace is as powerful as Isaiah expresses, because everywhere we look, we see war, repression, and human disaster. But how is it then possible for us to understand these words under these conditions?

The titles or names that Isaiah uses about the child to be born are well known. In Egypt they were used about the Pharaohs. There were common titles for a king. But what was the king like who was going to be born? In any case, not a king as we usually imagine an oriental king in all his lavish splendor and glory, but a child of poor parents born under the worst conditions. And when he grew up and became an adult, he was neither a king in the proper sense of this word. He was surrounded by the poorest and the outcasts of society, and finally, when he was arrested and surrendered to the Romans, he was made to a fool king, crowned with a crown of thorns and with a stick as a scepter.

And yet, today, we dare to claim that these royal titles can be attributed to Jesus with full right, that he in the real sense is the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecies. For the people who met him on the dusty roads of Galilee and Judea, discovered that something new occurred in their lives. Not thus that their life in the exterior had been changed so that they were moving a few steps up the social ranks, but thus that they got peace in their lives - or perhaps rather: they got peace despite (...)
(...) the exterior conditions of their lives. They discovered that despite the hard and inhumane conditions of their existence, despite the contempt of other people, they were the children of God and subject to his love. This gave them the peace and the security, that no human being, no social order could ever give them.

But this was not just something that happened to those people who met Jesus 2000 years ago. The Prince of Peace also carries the name Everlasting Father. When he, as a human, as a fool king, died on the cross, God raised him from the dead. He is God’s creative and life-giving word from eternity to eternity, God’s word that talks to you at this moment, and gives you the peace of God in the remission of your sins. Thus understood the Christmas gospel is not just a beautiful and solemn tradition. Traditions can be both good and beautiful, and as such they shall be honored, because without traditions man becomes ruthless and unrelated to his past, and then he does not understand his present life. The Christmas gospel is the peace itself, the joy itself, the life itself, because it gives us the peace of God, and it has nothing to do with the peace that we with all our power, yet in vain seek to maintain. As an introduction to the prophecy of the child, Isaiah writes: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness-- on them light has shined." We still walk in darkness, we still live in the land of deep darkness, we human beings who let us guide by our selfishness to live at the expense of each other instead of living for each other. We cannot help ourselves. We need help from the outside. The Christmas gospel tells us that God has broken through our darkness with his light, with the light from the crib in the stable at Bethlehem. "For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders."

Rev. Niels REFSKOU, KJSJ
Chairman of the Ecclesiastical Council
Muslim radicalism stands today in the hearth of the current actuality. In February of 2017, the Ghent imam Khalid Benhaddou was invited by the Commandery of Flanders, in the training centre Guislain of Ghent, to speak about the radicalization of the European Muslim youth. His conference treated the situation in Europe and more specifically in Belgium. In the series of Summer readings in Knokke, professor emeritus Catholic University of Leuven Belgium, Emilio Platti talked about "Islamism" or Islamic radicalism. He highlighted the situation in the Middle East and Asia. It is certainly interesting to compare both statements, for which we refer to the end of this report.

In his introduction Emilio Platti emphasized on the demographic developments in the Middle East, which is an important additional problem with which the region is faced. In Egypt - the land he knows the best because he is living there half-time - the population growth is spectacular. In a century's time the population multiplied by ten (95 million inhabitants in 2017). This brings of course severe problems on the labor market with an increase in unemployment (34 % unemployed people), causing more poverty and a growing gap between the rich and the poor, resulting in an appeal on extremist groups.
This led to an identity ideology with an extreme exclusivism as result. Not only non-Muslims, but also supporters of different opinions in own ranks were qualified as heretics (kafir). This gives rise to mutual exclusion and even extreme violence. Muslim leaders do not condemn this tendency with sufficient force. The Islam has no highest authority that the whole, highly divided Muslim community can lead. Appeal to the Koran - the book that all Muslims have in common and that is qualified as the revelation of God - does not help due to the different interpretations leading to even more division. The final result is a break between two worlds: one pluralistic and open Islam, moderate and tolerant; the other Islam strongly exclusive and intolerant, and largely focused on the past.

In a comprehensive presentation, speaker gave an overview of the different ideologies, who regularly make themselves heard, and also a few less known groups. The most important are: 

Shiites and Sunnites, who originated shortly after the death of the Prophet, because of the schism between the two parties claiming the right of follow-up. In the struggle, the leader of the Shiites Hussein, belonging to the family of the Prophet, was killed together with many members of his clan. This so-called martyrdom is a symbol of the humiliation shiites had to undergo for centuries and is still annually commemorated in the regions in which they live, particularly in southern Iraq and Pakistan. The opposing party gathered and called themselves Sunnites, meaning people who adhere to the lifestyle or the Sunnah of the Prophet. Sunnites were strong missionary and settled over the borders of the Middle East to Africa and Asia. 90 % of all Muslims are Sunnites.

The Wahabism is a radical Islamic ideology that goes back to Abdul-Wahhaab (1703 – 1792). The regime of Saudi Arabia legitimated this ideology as the only authentic form of Islam and is financially supporting the mosques spreading Wahabism. It originated in the 18th century and was intended to purify the Islam movement from all kinds of practices that were labeled as deviations.
(...) It is still propagated as the only beneficial model, characterized by extreme fundamentalism, with an usually brutal rejection of each pluralism, including corporal punishment and executions, floggings and beheadings. Salafism is a branch of this ideology and even so fanatic. The Mawadoedism is a political movement, intended to restore the Islam in all its glory of the past. The resistance against British imperialism and the demise of the Ottoman Empire in early 20th century led to the desire for a revival of the Islamic world. According to reformer Mawdoedi (1903 – 1979) only the divine law provide a universal and equitable legal justice. This law can be found in the Koran and the Soenna. The fundations of the western society are rejected and the separation between “church and nation” is inacceptable. The divine law prevails all other laws. The Moslimbrothers, founded by an Egyptian Muslim ideologue Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966), also want to restore an authentic Islamic society and a purified United Islam. The "brothers" are convinced that Islam is the solution for a society free from corruption, materialism, dictatorship ... There is also a strong social dimension. Their slogan is: "God is our goal, the Prophet is our leader, the Koran is our Constitution."

Sufism is a spiritual and peaceful ideology, adhering a mystical form of Islam, with a more rational interpretation of the Koran and with own rituals. They are tolerant and stand for a peaceful coexistence with other religions or believers. There are many other groups, too many to list here. Furthermore, violent and criminal terrorist movements, such as Al Qaeda, IS, Djabhat al Nusra, Boko Haram are operating in name of Allah in different Western countries, committing murders of innocent people and creating a sentiment of fear and insecurity. They want to eliminate each diversity with eradicating violence, especially the so-called "Western decadent way of life". And yet there are today's modern Muslim leaders who violently oppose the definition of Islam as an ideology with unchanging rules of law laid down forever. (...)
They qualify the Islamists not as ‘guardians of the faith’ but rather ‘guards of belief systems’, as developed in the past centuries and aiming the maintenance of the actual political power. The recently deceased Muslim thinker Arkoun, in an interview with islamologue Rachid Benzine, made following statement:

*Each novelty is (for them) by definition an unacceptable falsification of the truth, fixed in the past once and for all. The direct revelation of the faith by God (as written in the Koran) is the main argument. These fundamentalists reject any freedom of research. They do not accept that interpretation can evolve according to recent research or recent events. The Islamists are primarily political activists, driven by ideology, sticking to a rigid doctrinaire framework. They use violence and their dogmatism even goes so far that they are prepared to kill if anyone refuses to follow them.*

This tolerant opinion from Islam leaders sounds hopeful. The analysis of Arkoun is shared by several Muslim thinkers and is a clear sign of the deep division in the todays Muslim community. The appeal for change, analogue to several statements around 1960 in the Catholic Church, before the Second Vatican Council, signifies that there is an urgent need for an innovative aggiornamento, including a critical and rational view on the religious discourse. The positive achievements of modernity, especially of science, should also be recognized by Islam.

**Coming back to the speech of imam Khalid Benhaddou:** this was an enthusiastic call for a rational islam in Europe. The young people, which he collects apparently successfully every week at the Friday prayers in Ghent, are encouraged to read and study modern commentaries on the Koran, and to interpret the texts, adapted to the modern Western society, to which they are finally belonging. As mentioned above, Islam in the Middle East is not yet ready for any critical and historical exegesis of the texts.

*Etienne LEIRMAN, KJSJ Commander Flanders Cdry, Low Countries Priory Benelux Grand Priory*
A fund to assist refugees settle into the Tasmanian community was launched at a Civic Reception hosted by the Hobart City Council at the historic Hobart Town Hall on Thursday 9 November 2017.

The Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller, Tasmanian Commandery, has taken up the challenge to assist Christian refugees through the establishment of a fund named in honour of the Late Dame Doone Kennedy AO DGSJ, an honoured member of the Order and former Lord Mayor of the City of Hobart.

Chevalier Edward Gauden, Deputy Commander of the Order in Tasmania said: “Doone Kennedy was devoted to Hobart. It was home for her and she wanted all people to feel at home”

“Throughout her civic life, Doone was involved in many charitable organisations and also through the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem.

“Members of the Order, especially in Tasmania, hold the late Doone Kennedy in very high esteem. Her commitment to, and support of, the Order of Saint John was an inspiration to us all. The establishment of this Fund is fitting tribute to an honoured member,” said Mr Gauden.

The Doone Kennedy Memorial Fund aims to assist refugees at a crucial time in their life during their settlement and integration into the community. A time when so much has been lost and so much change is occurring.

Through the fund, the Order is seeking to enhance people’s well-being by offering a system of grants in areas where other assistance is not available.

The Fund was launched by the current Lord Mayor, Alderman Sue Hickey DSJ. Dame Sue is also a member of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem Knights Hospitaller (Tasmanian Commandery). It was attended by the Prior of Victoria Dame Barbara Ablay AM DJSJ, the Victorian Vice Prior Dame Jan Synot CGSJ, the Commander of the Tasmanian Commandery, Commander John Kennedy KGSJ and many Mayors, Aldermen and Municipal Councillors from Shires and Regional Areas across Tasmania. The Tasmanian State Government was exceptionally well represented by former Premiers, Ministers of the Crown and current Parliamentarians who joined many members, partners, families and friends of the Order on this wonderful launch.

To this day, the late Doone Kennedy AO DGSJ DLJ (at left) remains a highly respected and valued member of the (…).
(..) Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller, Australasia. She was also a member of the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem. Her passion was people, their welfare and their well-being. During her life, Doone was involved with many organisations including The Mary Ogilvy Homes Society, Hobart District Nursing Service, the Sudden Infant Death Society, the Southern Region Ambulance Service Advisory Council and the Asthma Foundation. During her ten years as Lord Mayor, Doone fostered relationships with other major cities, promoted Hobart as a centre for tourism and commerce, undertook heritage preservation projects and beautification programmes in the city. For Doone, Hobart was the place to live, the place to be. This fund in her honour is to help refugees come to feel the same way. She daily lived out the motto of the Order: Pro Fide, Pro Utilitate Hominum.

TASMANIA CELEBRATES

Members of the Tasmanian Commandery which is part of the Victorian Priory, will join in the celebrations of an important milestone this month – it is the 10th Anniversary of the foundation of the Tasmanian Commandery, and in Hobart on Wednesday evening 29th November 2017, it will be marked with a very special Service of Worship prepared for and planned largely by our Grand Priory Prelate Father David O’Neill KGJSJ. It will also be an opportunity for His Excellency, Grand Prior Bailiff Peter Wiltshire OSJ and the Victorian Prior Dame Barbara Abley AM DJJSJ to invest a new Knight – Aspirant Peter Tullgren. Peter was to have been invested with his 6 colleagues at the August 12th 2017 Investiture in Hobart, Tasmania, but he became critically ill and was not expected to survive his illness. So it is with great joy, that after wonderful medical care, combined with his strong faith and a fighting spirit that we have been able to witness his return to health, and at exceptionally short notice we have managed to arrange and include his Investiture in the Anniversary Service. So it will be a double celebration for our Tasmanian members and for Peter’s family.

INVESTITURE AND INAUGURATION

All Saints Anglican church, Hobart, 24 November 2007

The following is an excerpt from the original Service of Investiture and Inauguration conducted on the 24th November 2007, by the then Right Reverend Bishop John Bayton AM, GCSJ Prelate of the Grand Priory of Southern Australia. (now known as the Grand Priory of Australasia) pictured at left. He said, ““Today, Saturday November 24 2007 is an extraordinary and important day in the life of our nation, and more particularly in the history of the Sovereign Order. For today the status of a number of good Christian People is changed. ‘Mr’ becomes ‘Chevalier’. Mrs/Miss/Ms becomes ‘Dame’. This change in status we must grasp with both hands, for we have not come here to this Church, to this Island to this State of Tasmania to ‘play-act’ or to ‘dress up’. What (…)}
(... we have come to do is to inaugurate a new Commandery of our Order and to Invest certain souls with the dignity of Christian knighthood.

By whose authority do we do this? The foundation and origin of our Order belong to a Royal House the Head of which paid visit to us only a month or so ago. Prince Karl Vladimir of Yugoslavia whose antecedent King Peter gave Royal Assent to our Charter.

We must not hold this privilege lightly for in a post-modern world that Royal Charter has the same integrity and dignity as the Royal Charter of other Orders of Chivalry established by Kings and Princes and Popes in history.

Our Order gains its validity from the day when King Peter gave it a Royal Charter. Just as the Venerable Order gained its integrity when Queen Victoria gave her Assent, or the Order of Australia Honours System when Queen Elizabeth established it by Royal charter in our own lifetime.

This day, the Grand Priory of Southern Australia of the Sovereign Order expands its jurisdiction to the Apple Isle and the requisite number of Invested Christians make up its Constitution.

On top of the Mountain of the Beatitudes there stands a small Church, a Shrine to Christ’s teaching. It is eight sided and each of the eight sides is dedicated to one of St Matthew’s Beatitudes and one of the Christian Virtues – Faith, Hope, Charity, prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance. The symbols of these Virtues are graven into the floor in eight segments in beautiful mosaic tiles. This church marks the spot where Christ preached.

(...) And it is our privilege, those of us who are called into the Chivalry and Charity of St. John to respond to the needs of the poor. It is as we match the inner ideals of the Order with our outward responses to care for the poor that we will be blessed. The call of Christ’s Beatitudes is the Hallmark of our Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem. You will wear it on the cloak over your heart. You will wear the Maltese Cross of St. John around your neck and you will wear it day by day on the lapel of your coat."

But above all you will wear it IN your heart in the service of Christ and of Christ and the Church. This is your vocation as your status in changed “Mr” to ‘Chevalier’, Mrs Miss Ms to ‘Dame’. “

Respectfully,

Dame Barbara Abley, AM DJSJ, Prior
Priory of Victoria, Australasia
According to the well-known Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor, one of the central characteristics of postmodernity is excarnation, being of course the opposite of incarnation. Excarnation is not the gnostic attempt to do away with the body or with incarnation altogether. It is realized that the support of the body is somehow inescapable. Nevertheless, characteristic for our postmodern mentality is that the body, the ‘material’ support, is understood as in principle endlessly replaceable (as in the novel of Michel Houellebecq, La possibilité d’une île, where some kind of immortality is realized via repeated cloning of the human body). The extreme attention to the body and its cultivation today is not a sign of respect for the body, but a symptom of excarnation. The body has to conform to the whims of the detached mind. If it does not or no longer ‘behave’ as we want, it is seen as a burden, as something to be replaced by a new one (as in Hanif Kureishi’s novel, with the appropriate title The Body). This same attitude of excarnation is to be found vis-à-vis all that is of significance and importance in human life. Things of ultimate value and significance, irreplaceable things, like certain persons, or objects, or places, or (poetic) expressions in the mother tongue, are irreplaceable because their value and significance cannot be divorced from a certain ‘incarnation’ in bodies, materiality, locality, rhythm and sound. ‘Excarnation’ consists in the idea (and related attitudes and actions) that whatever is of value and significance can be divorced from its bearer and transferred or translated into another medium. This idea implies that we would be able to know the value or significance on its own, independently from its particular bearer. But if this could or would be done, the value or significance would no longer be unique: it would be comparable in degree to other degrees of pure value and significance, it would be possible to trade it for something ‘better’. What is of real value and importance to us in ordinary life is characterized by a kind of transcendence. This means that the significance of these things cannot be ‘interiorized’, cannot be separated from their real bearers. The meanings involved are truly symbolic: related in an inextricable (...
(... way to their always *particular* incarnation (cp. with the work of art). Another way to characterize symbolic meanings and values, is to say that they always form a *coincidentia oppositorum*: something which is of ultimate value and extremely vulnerable; utterly interesting and insignificant, almost nothing. This is why the symbolic has the character of mystery: whatever theoretical-scientific knowledge we may have of it, it always seems to have a depth that can never be fathomed, as is the case with the rose (“Die Rose ... ohne Warum”) or with the new-born baby. As Wittgenstein would say – I paraphrase – even when all scientific problems around it would have been solved, we would not even have begun to understand the mystery. Just as symbolic meaning or value escapes interiorization, it escapes mastery. We cannot produce mystery, it is revealed and given to us. We can manipulate it, but thereby we make it uninteresting, sometimes even spoil or destroy it.

Recognition of the always incarnated mystery involves acceptance of a number of truths. Truths such as: that mystery is not something which can be understood in a purely intellectual way; it always somehow eludes adequate conceptualization and explanation.

That human value and even human life itself is a gift, not something we possess. That there really is evil, i.e. the evil done to incarnated mysteries by reducing them to pure instruments or means, thereby denying them their dignity. Truths like these, which can already be reached by our ‘natural’ understanding, seem to obtain a specific interpretation and endorsement in (many forms of) religion. ‘Incarnation’ and ‘excarnation’ are terms which of course stem from a religious context. The notion of incarnation (...
(...), is one of the most important notions in Christian religion, perhaps the most central one. The divine is understood to be in Christ most intimately related to what is human, to the flesh, to time and space where humans are dwelling. Salvation has to do not with denying the body, or time or space. On the contrary, the Saviour is born as a helpless infant at a particular time and in a particular place. Time and place play a role in sacred history. Although no place is sacred in se and exclusively, yet particular places (Jerusalem, Rome, T. S. Eliot’s *Little Gidding*) are sacred places worthy of pilgrimage. The human body and the whole of material creation are not considered as elements to be freed from, to be left behind or treated simply as means in function of what is really essential. They play a central role in the divine economy. Not pure interiority is important, but the works of the body as well, e.g. the bodily works of mercy. The body can pray, even when the mind is vacant or absent. Grace works via the sacramental use of material elements like bread and wine, water and oil.

Christian tradition, particularly (but not only) the Roman-Catholic one, has always been the custodian of paradox. The paradox of the God-man, of the resurrection of the body, of the real presence in the Eucharist, of faith not as pure interiority, but as working in and through the body. By assiduously sticking to upholding the paradoxical character of the religious realm of meaning, Catholicism automatically also affirms the paradoxical character of the human realm of meaning. It strongly affirms the mystery and transcendence of the human, particularly when the human appears in its most insignificant and vulnerable form. It is therefore no accident that the Catholic tradition is so strongly focused on human dignity and on the works of mercy. As the philosopher Leszek Kolakowski rightly observed, the conflict is not between science and religion, the conflict is between the (post)modern *libido dominandi* reducing everything to the status of a means having no intrinsic value, and the search for meaning as always related to some form of transcendence.

Herman DE DIJN, CGSJ
Prof. Em.,
Philosophy dept.,
Catholic University of Leuven (B).
FULL DENTISTRY LEGACY TO THE THIRD WORLD

In September 2017 a Knight of the St Alexander Nevsky Priory was contacted by Maître Alex LEMMENS, whose partner, Mrs. Manou VAN GRASDORFF passed away at home on last May 29th. He offered on her behalf and request a fully equipped dental cabinet and instruments as a gift for charity. The St Alexander Nevsky Priory was most honoured with this gift. In constant consultation with Maître LEMMENS a thorough prospection and risk assessment lead to a co-operation with “LUMOS MEMISA”. This co-operation started thanks to Prof. Em. FRANS VINCKIER of the Dentistry Department at the Catholic University of Leuven. De ‘Lumos Memisa” foundation takes care of the technical decommissioning of the medical equipment and the transport to the Democratic Republic of Congo. The assembly and installation over there will be supervised and implemented in co-operation of the Lovanium University in Kinshasa. The donated medical installations and equipment – with an estimated value of 150,000 € - will be installed and used in a broader project of dental training and care.

All installations and equipment being necessary and of use to a dentist’s practice as mentioned in the impressive list of installations, stocks, goods and equipment were handed over to Prof. Em. Fr. VINCKIER by the St Alexander Nevsky Priory. ‘LUMOS’ will deploy all necessary initiatives and actions to have the premises installed in a practice room named to the beloved Manou VAN GRASDORFF.

From the yearly report 2015 of the ‘LUMOS 2015’ foundation, we retain the following: LUMOS is an organisational unit within the University Hospital group in Leuven. The name stands for ‘Leuvense Universitaire Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en Solidariteit’ or ‘Leuven University Development Cooperation and Solidarity’ within the University Hospital in Leuven (B). Constituted in 2007, it is a cooperation with the University Hospitals, the Biomedical sciences group and the Health Technology department from (...
(...) the University Centre Leuven-Limburg. In 2015 too LUMOS had the opportunity to execute her full program thanks to the uninterrupted financial aid by the Impulse Fund of the Leuven University Hospitals. The diverse missions are carefully prepared and have a thorough follow-up, focusing on the goals, mission and vision of LUMOS. The successful closure of the year 2015 was only achievable by the commitment of more than 150 collaborators within the University Hospitals in Leuven, the Catholic University and the Gasthuisberg Hospital Campus. (...)

LUMOS
Protecting Children, Providing Solutions.
concentrating on the necessary infrastructure, medical equipment, financial solidarity, patients, etc., to realize the medical care by LUMOS. It facilitates the local anchoring of Memisa in Kinshasa (Rep. Congo), using Memisa’s expertise in the organisation of inland health care centra, in a way that LUMOS could expand her medical activities since 2014 to local hospitals in Budjala, Drodro and Mosango.

About Mrs Van Grassdorff the professor medically treating her stated: “I will always remember her as a beautiful, empowered, but still exceptionally calm lady, bearing her fate with strong dignity. I seldom experienced an oncological process and misfortune occurring that much and repeatedly with one patient. In this misfortune she kept up spirits high with exceptional courage.” May this gift, like Manuella herself had in mind, help to achieve a world with less pain and more dignity. We owe many thanks Carlo BROUWERS en Steven CEYSENS for their advice and expertise in the fulfilling of this legacy.

Hendrik NIJS, KSJ
We want YOU for The International Herald!

Make yourself heard, from all OSJ’s units. We DO want to know how you are doing over there on the Pro Fide, the pro Utilitate Hominum!

Send your contributions in Word format and in pictures soon, for the next 01/2018 edition, to lambrechtnot@skynet.be, by the end of February to come.
Hate, Hatred, Hating and Violence

Some time at the start of this Millennium a new President of the United States was elected and began moving into the White House. By way of a joke he declared to the world press, agog with interest at what the new President would say, that as President he would no longer have to eat Broccoli simply because he hated it. Farmers from across the nation were furious and arrived at the White House having driven their broccoli laden harvest to Washington, DC, they then dumped their crops over a fence of the White House declaring their hatred of the one who would jeopardise their annual crop and hence their livelihood for the oncoming year.

The President was, of course, using ‘hatred’ in a common misuse of the word meaning ‘I don’t like it’ while the farmers were furious at the thought of the loss of their crops. Thus those familiar with the verbal habits of the President might well chuckle, while members of farming communities might angrily note his insensitivity to the loss of their crop. The President used the word to mean ‘I don’t like’, while for the farmer the word means something like ‘I am very angry and demand and recompense’.

Problems arise with such ambiguity. However, changes of meaning are now very common and might explain, at least in part, why we often do not understand each other. When we say ‘I love Action Movies’ we assume, perhaps without recognition, that ‘I like them’ is what is meant. However, confusion must follow when such exchanges occur and the mooning lover can perhaps be forgiven when ‘I love you’ is not responded to in kind. Ancient Greek had many words for ‘Love’ but unless the context is included the meaning must be guessed. In the sample used above it should come as no surprise to find the meaning attributed to the President was the wrong one.

The first paragraph of these notes tells of a truthful encounter in a somewhat flippant, but truthful manner. Perhaps this is common with unpleasant information. It must be acknowledged that the public demonstrations of hatred and violence are increasing in many countries. No day passes without lists of some disaster being reported in our papers, or on our radios or TVs. Murders, rapes, suicides, robberies become focal points for our news gathering sources. The positive, creative news is presented less often, but this an indication of our demand for thrills and excitement. Thrills sell!

(...)
Several researchers have concluded that the origins of hatred are found in early childhood. The child, it has been said, has reached a peak level of hatred and violence at the ages between 2-4 years. If the child is in a nurturing environment it will develop a toleration of upset which allows for the subsequent creation of vulnerability. With the ability to tolerate frustration and upset both hatred and violence tend to reduce.

Spontaneous outbursts of hatred may occur whenever differences of any kind are observed, or are believed to be present. The differences may be observed unconsciously or consciously and the expressions of rage may occur when the colour of the skin is different, when the other is of different race, has different political or religious beliefs, wears unusual clothes, is of a different social status, or even has some sort of physical disability. Those who present with differing expressions of sexuality as with the LBTQI easily become the target for physical abuse.

Much has been said about the differences between women and men but the persistence of Men as superior by any measure shows that while Women may appear to be gaining equal status huge differences remain. The brutality provoked by the violence against women is published daily in our papers. Notes, such as these, note the continuing rape and murder of many women even in those countries which continue to deny that such problems exist. Until children are shown that such expressions of violence are never warranted the problems will exist.

Another manifestation of the ease with which hatred can be created occurs when the Internet becomes the vehicle through which vicious messages can be sent. It may be that a lover decides that a relationship is over and punishes the other with film or disclosure of other details of past intimate behaviour. The partner can then be easily punished, humiliated or embarrassed in some way. Even more vicious is the phenomenon of Trolling, whereby someone is humiliated publicly for no obvious reason except that it ‘amuses’ the Troller to punish a stranger. Trolling appears to refer to folklore from Scandinavia with monsters lurking beneath bridges, lurking to destroy passers-by. In the therapeutic situation such ‘amusement’ often is an expression of self-loathing.

08/11/2017: Facebook asks users for nude photos in project to combat revenge porn
In Australia pilot effort, company will ‘hash’ images, converting them into digital fingerprints that prevent any other attempts to upload the same pictures.
with and one in which the possibility of choice was not present. The item she chose was eye colour. She had blue eyes and her subjects were to be brown eyed. The study was referred to as the ‘blue-eyed-brown-eyed’ study.

On the basis of results obtained from a series of false tests she pronounced the blue-eyed group inferior and was then horrified at the dramatic appearance of destructive behaviour among former friends. The results were devastating and led to unforeseen outcomes. After a short time Mrs Elliot announced that she had made a serious error as the ‘inferior’ students were those with brown eyes.

The changes in the students were dramatic. The earlier defective students had reversed and become the capable students. Not surprisingly the families of the pupils protested and Mrs Elliot lost her employment and became the subject of many vicious programs. At a later time Mrs Elliot took her program to prisons, factories and other places where teams of people worked together. The results were similar in each case. Hatred could be created in a group with extraordinary ease. Beyond the experimental situation participants could be shown how to reverse the situations and friendships could be shown how to be established.

Clips from her original classes and interviews with former students confirm that her workshops made participants more empathetic and sensitive to the problem of violence. Counsellors, student program administrators, corporate trainers and psychologists agree. ‘Blue Eyes-Brown Eyes’ is a film every person can now experience. It is easily accessible on YouTube. The changes in the students were dramatic.

Perhaps the story of Jane Elliot highlights the ease with which hatred can be instilled. Mrs Elliot was an elementary school teacher and an activist who some 50 or 60 years ago created a situation in her classroom which had revolutionary consequences which were life changing for those involved. These changes were so profound that in demonstrating the power of her methods she was finally driven out of her classroom.

Her story began the day after Dr Martin Luther King was assassinated. Mrs Elliot was so affected that she would not live in a community where some would be considered inferior to others simply by being different in some way. As a result they could be treated as though they were of lesser significance than others. To demonstrate the ease with which hatred could be created and established, she chose a detail with which an individual presented. The detail she chose was one which the individual was born with and in which the possibility of choice was not present. The item she chose was eye colour. She had blue eyes and her subjects were to be brown eyed. The study was referred to as the ‘blue-eyed-brown-eyed’ study.

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Perhaps Mrs Elliot was aware that ethical standards have changed. The subject of many vicious programs. At a later time Mrs Elliot took her program to prisons, factories and other places where teams of people worked together. The results were similar in each case. Hatred could be created in a group with extraordinary ease. Beyond the experimental situation participants could be shown how to reverse the situations and friendships could be shown how to be established.

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(...) Clinical and Therapeutic Notes

It is obvious to most that to carry hatred is to pay a great price within our own bodies, as the defences of our bodies are not designed to handle stressful loads such as these. Many studies have shown that we pay a high price for maintaining hatred. In brief outlines such as here the most important point to make is that a high price will be exacted when we refuse to deal with our own hatred. Jesus reminds us that the fault we see in another is also a reflection of the same fault within ourselves. His teachings are explicit and clearly spelt out in the Gospel of St Matthew.

The teachings of Jesus are explicit about our requirement to forgive and to see the fault in another as being in some way the fault in ourselves. St. Matthew sums up the teachings as follows: So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that you brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye, when there is the log in your own eye?’ You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye. (Matt 5:24, 7:3-5)

A simple exercise provides a reminder of the power of buried hate. Ask a volunteer to hold an arm out from the body at right angles and inform the subject that you will ask them to resist you when you attempt to press the arm to the side. Most subjects can do this and demonstrate their strength as they do so. Now inform them that they are to resist you again and at the same time while holding out their arm they are to think of someone they hate and who is a source of great anger to them. The result usually comes as a surprise as often the arm when pressed no longer maintains its elevation.

At a personal level the destructive effects of hatred are well known at a psychological and a physical health level. For Christians the teachings of Jesus are clearly stated. Neuroscientists have shown that abreaction many years after an extraordinary event leads to more release from the past than most other methods. It is also interesting to note that the treatment of conditions such as PTSD with MDMA and some of the hallucinogens is now being shown to be effective (…)
and the dreadful effects of such past experiences may be shown more often to be attenuated than was formerly believed. Anger management workshops and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy treatment may be effective, but only if the perpetrator is willing to participate. In some jurisdictions face to face confrontation is often powerful, and when the persecutor discovers that the victim is a human being attitudes are known to change. One young man hostile to the Indigenous people he encountered said he could never be angry again after discovering that these folk were human too. However, studies show that the most important and effective form of treatment is preschool nurture, learning to deal with the frustrations of being with another and of handling the anger and predisposition to act out violently which invariably arises in such a situation. In an ideal situation the child learns to deal with the rage and acting out which occurs without the ability to be vulnerable in stressful situations. Physical punishment is now know to intensify the rage response in the preschool situation. An important point of view has been expressed by the saints of many religious traditions and it amounts to this. If you are aware of this in another a good place to start with the healing is with yourself. Nelson Mandela after years in prison was able to say: “No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin or his background or his religion … People must learn to hate, and, if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love … For love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.”

Prof. Em. William McLeod
BA, MDBS, DPM, KSJ, Aarhus Cdry,

About the Jane Elliott experiment:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nqv9k3jbtYU
Dear Brothers and Sisters in St. John,

As this is my first contribution to the Herald, it is fitting that I tell your readers a little about the South Australian Priory. We have 87 Knights and Dames and our meetings, which are held monthly, take place in the Naval Military and Air Force Club, a very historic building in Adelaide, the capital of South Australia. Our Priory Administrative Council meets four times a year and I am indebted to each member of the Council for the commitment they show in carrying out their responsibilities.

Our Priory meetings are well attended and following the consideration of business, we have a Knight or Dame speak to us on a subject of their choice which we always find both interesting and informative.

Early in the life of our Priory, recognizing the responsibility we have to provide for the sick and needy, the decision was made to support the Mary Potter Hospice, a hospice in Adelaide, for people with life-limiting illnesses, through the skilled and dedicated services provided by doctors, nurses and pastoral care staff, all of whom are supported by a wonderful team of volunteers. Our Priory, as a result of the generosity and support of our members has raised some $350,000 to assist this cause. One of our members has raised approximately $42,000 as a result of book sales both at our meetings and in the community.

At the conclusion of our Priory meetings we have a luncheon which provides the opportunity for excellent fellowship between our members. Four times a year members partners meet informally and then join us to hear our speakers. We also ensure that the partners of deceased members receive notices of our special occasions and also receive a copy of our excellent newsletter ‘Le Chevalier’.

Our Investitures and Chapter meetings are held in our beautiful conventual church as is our Annual Service which is held at the beginning of the year. The Siege of Malta is celebrated at a cocktail party when, once again this year, we welcomed the Hon. Consul for Malta in South Australia Mr. Frank Scicluna OAM and Mrs Scicluna as our special guests. The last event for the year is our Christmas Dinner, a highlight of which is the performance by our Saint John’s Choir.

In closing, may I take this opportunity to wish your readers a very happy and blessed Christmas and best wishes from all of our Priory members.

Prior Hon. David Wotton, AM CJSJ, Priory of South Australia.
The Lord is my shepherd;
I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
he leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul.

Psalm 23
Tessenderlo, CC, November 3rd, 2017

It was a full house in the Cultural Centre of Tessenderlo, that Friday night, some 300 guests, to savour a unique co-operation between the Dutch choir Synoidos of Sittard (NL) and the Flemish West-Limburgs Mannekoor (B). The music direction was in the most capable hands of Mrs. Nadia Loenders, winner of a.o. the Best Conductor Award at the International Choir Festival in Berlin, 2011.

The music project "Stromen" ("Streams") is a unique and new musical work for a mixed choir ensemble, consisting of the two said choirs and sustained by a dozen of members of the women's choir F:em@il. The performers and the musicians together formed a group of some 90 people.

In Streams human life is compared to the flow of a river, starting with one drop of water and ending into the sea or ocean. A person is born, evolves through the different phases of life until the moment of departing. Underway he or she encounters joy, fundamental questions and setbacks. De stream of refugees by sea is a black page in this book of life.

The river arises, forms a little stream, encounters rapids and waterfalls, and finally reaches the sea through the delta. These facts of life inspired three writers: Rianne Spa, Bert Stuy and Theo Zwartkruis, to the creation of twelve song texts, the last being hopefully named ‘Living Water’.

Music conductor Nadia Loenders then composed the music for these twelve songs to be a fluid and consistent work, adding an ouverture and a musical intermezzo. The choirs were supported in the performance by (a.o.) a rhythm section, harp, clarinet and synthesizer. The different parts of the oeuvre are very different in character, tempo, music style, and form up a modern, attractive and varied unity.

Behind the choir ensemble different paintings matching the music and lyrics were projected to the background screen, one with each song, all especially created for this particular concert by Irene Stolte and different teachers of Wim Simon’s Trevianum art school group. (...
(...)
The net revenue of the concert, 6,000 €, was handed over to the founding mother of our Loon Commandery, being the founding mother of the whole care facilities group and charity foundation ‘Stijn’, Sister Mia Seresia-Oversteyns, DJSJ, 93 years young. The Stijn Foundation groups a number of home replacing care facilities for hundreds of persons most severely struck by mental and physical disabilities: it is a key player and role model to the whole care sector in Flanders and Belgium, and their motto is: we don’t reject anyone, however severe the care burden, leading the Stijn Foundation to take care of and give home to people who were rejected or refused by all other care facilities in the country. It reflects the warm spirit and lives of both our Commandery co-founders, Knight and Dame Gilbert (+) and Mia Seresia-Oversteyns, and most of all our common motto: Pro Fide, pro utilitate hominum.
Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.

Aristotle.
Oslo to Kristiansand, 21-24 September

Since 1988 The Railway Personnel Tour Committee of the Norwegian Railways have every third year arranged trips with trains for children and youth affected by cancer and their families to different parts of Norway, giving them an experience out of the normal and a chance to forget about their everyday struggle, for a few days. Aas Hospitaler group under St. Sunniva Commandery in Norway has for over 10 year helped with the arrangement, getting sponsors and giving a helping hand during the trip. This year the commander of St.Sunniva and Prior of the Nordic Countries Frank Jakobsen and his son Max traveled together with 80 families for a 4 day trip, 21-24 September, to the capital of south Norway, Kristiansand. Several other members of Aas Hospitaler group have worked on the trip behind

the scenes, and especially the ones with a double membership in both The Train Committee and St. Sunniva. The trip taking approximately 7 hours by train each way was given by the Norwegian Railways which made available a whole train for free, driven and served by staff from The Railway Personnel Tour Committee, doing it all on their own spare time. On the train food was served and gifts from sponsors given to make sure the trip was as easy as possible for the children. A lot of helping hands both on departure and arrival made the experience as smooth as possible and it looked like both children and grownups had a good time when arriving at Kristiansand train station. (...)
The Kristiansand area and the south of Norway has been inhabited for over 8,000 years, and was before the Kiel channel was made important by military and geopolitical means for the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway and as the only sea way to the Baltic countries and Sweden. Today the area is known for its good climate and boat life, small villages by the sea and a stripe of scattered islands between the landside and sea towards Denmark making it possible to live and travel by water all year around without the same harsh weather as Norway’s long coastline is known for. It’s quite a holiday paradise for Norwegians from other parts of the country, and Kristiansand is especially popular because the largest team park and zoo in Norway situated just outside the city.

In Kristiansand 3 days packed with experiences were waiting. Among several things the city gave a feast meal with entertainment the second day for everybody, but the most popular and arousing the highest expectations for the children, I am sure, was the visit to Kristiansand Zoo and team park. Kristiansand Zoo is built around 3 large attractions, Norway’s first zoo with animals from all over the world, especially a large Nordic section, a team park around the characters in the author Torbjorn Egners play “When the robbers came to Cardamom Town”, and another team park build around the newer character Captain Sabretooth, a fiction children pirate story with lots of song and music that’s very popular in Norway. All Norwegian children have a relationship with these stories, and the kids (...
(...) just loved to visit and finally see the buildings, characters and pirate ships they knew so well from bedtime reading and television. On Sunday, 4 days of fun were over, and after a 7 hours of train trip back to Oslo. The journey was surely a success, leaving both children and grown ups with good memories and new friends. God bless all the helpers and sponsors which made it possible to arrange this fantastic journey – worth 250,000 € - with the children and their families, and we pray positive experiences like this will help them in the struggles they face ahead. My brothers and sister, the true blessing and meaning of life you will find in helping others, so keep working together for the faith, and for the best of mankind.

Frank Jakobsen, CJSJ,
Commander St. Sunniva Commandery, Norway,
Prior, Nordic Priory.
ROME, October 13nd & 14th

Besides the usual matters of administration and finances, a major part of the Petit Conseil in Rome was dedicated to the international recognition of our Order under the Peter II-constitution, and directly linked to this subject: the enquiry whether or not a reunification is possible with two other Order branches under a Peter-II of the House of Karageorgevich Constitution, these two branches being: the so-called “Formhals Group” and “Vancouver Group”. Principally only a full reunion is possible with the Vancouver Group, because they kept acting under the 1964 Peter II-Constitution, be it with amendments, while the Formhals Group got their own – amendable – constitution granted by Peter II in 1968.

The importance of (1) the reunification and (2) recognition by the International Commission of Chivalry might seem less important to some uncontested units of our dear Order; in mainly the Mediterranean area and the USA our units are periodically under lawsuit attacks by the Sovereign Military Order of Malta (SMOM), leading for instance our Italian Brothers and Sisters to end a succesfull free ambulance service for the poor and needy.

We from our side are absolutely open and willing to start talks with our Brothers and Sisters from the Vancouver group, and we hope the same willingness and openness exists on the other side.

We do keep in contact with the Vancouver Group through our Scandinavian members, not the least our Lieutenant-Grandmaster who attended at the Vancouver Group Investiture on last October 28th and who is planning to attend their coming Sovereign Council in Finland in June 2018, all to keep the lines of communication open for exchange of views.
(...). Things get somewhat more complicated even knowing that a certain number of members in different units kept connected to our former Headquarters in London. To be followed up, but of course these are mid- and long-term issues for the greater benefit of all parties concerned. A recognition as an international order of chivalry would vastly enhance our possibilities pro Fide pro utilitate hominum to be considered as a sound partner in talks and actions to a lot of organisations, within and outside of the Church.

Noteworthy is the creation directly under the Grand-Russian Priory in Malta of a new Commandery of Roman-Catholic denomination in Norfolk (UK). Good to know with the upcoming Brexit: if all talks would unfortunately end with our fellow citizens on the other side of the Channel, we’ll keep talking, by the Norfolk Commandery ☺.

The Petit Conseil owes a lot of gratitude to the Society of the Divine Savior, better known as the Salvatorian Order, for their warm hospitality at their world Headquarters in Rome! 

**Jan Lambrecht, GCSJ, Lt. o/t Grand Counselor.**
IN LOVING MEMORY…


Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as:

– Knowing when to come in out of the rain;
– Why the early bird gets the worm;
– Life isn’t always fair;
– And maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don’t spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children.

It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an aspirin to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

(…)}
Common Sense lost the will to live as the churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense took a beating when you couldn’t defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death,
- by his parents, Truth and Trust,
- by his wife, Discretion,
- by his daughter, Responsibility,
- and by his son, Reason.

He is survived by his 5 stepbrothers;
– I Know My Rights
– I Want It Now
– Someone Else Is To Blame
– I’m A Victim
– Pay me for Doing Nothing

Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone.
If you still remember him, pass this on.
If not, join the majority and do nothing.
Personalia

International obituary:
Dame Annamaria VILLA, Grand Cross of Justice, Chancellor of the Priory of Italy and Lieutenant of the Grand Marshal since 2008 in the Petit Conseil, has been called to join our Lord. Several members in different Priories unfortunately passed away from this life: our deepest gratitude remains for their achievements and fraternity within and beyond the Order. May they all rest in the peace of our Lord!

Elections and Nominations:
Rev. Niels REFSKOU from Denmark is appointed to be the new Chairman of the Ecclesiastical Council from January 1st, 2018: we sincerely wish him all the inspiration and all the very best in his new office to guide us all in the Pro Fide.

Little word from the Editor
Dear Brothers & Sisters in Arms, I hope you’ll enjoy this 4/2017 edition. From different corners of the OSJ-world, nice things swarmed in, mostly ‘around’ the deadline 😊. I insist to join my sincere Season’s Greetings to you all, Keep up the good work, and do NOT forget to send me content in Word and pictures by the end of February to come, at the latest 😊!
Awaiting all that is storming in for the next 01/2018 issue on my e-mail adress lambrechtnot@skynet.be, I do absolutely remain,

Yours most sincerely in X° and St-John.

Jan Lambrecht, GCSJ,
Editor