



November 2020

SAINT LAZARUS[®]

The Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem

The International Newsletter

From the Editor - thoughts on postponement and uncertainty

Life has still not returned to any normality – or maybe this is the new normality for the foreseeable future. Nothing is the same and the result is uncertainty.

Circumstances compel us continue to deal with ongoing uncertainty with little sign of light at the end of the tunnel, just when many of us thought that we had weathered the worst. So often, what we have known and relied on is now beyond our reach and we do not know when it will return. We cannot plan with any certainty and the investitures, services and other local activities which constitute so much of the value of the Order to its members remain in abeyance. This is difficult because it is certainty which gives us strength and purpose.

(The immediate outcome of these ongoing restrictions for us is the postponement of our next International Pilgrimage in Velehrad. No new date has been set but it is hoped to be able to hold it in 2022.)

It is said that to every dark cloud there is a silver lining. This is true for each of us. With less time spent in commuting and 'being busy' we have more time to contemplate. As the poet WH Davies wrote –

“What is this life if, full of care, we have no time to stand and stare?”

Most of us have had that opportunity over the past months; time to see nature as it unfolds over the seasons; time to think about what we are doing, and why; time to take stock of the present and to start to plan for the future; time to care. For, ours is an ongoing challenge to minister to the needs of others, showing the compassion and love which we, in turn, have received, through small acts of kindness.

So, where does this leave us as the pandemic continues to dominate our lives? Back where we started, but not sitting back until all is resolved. The antidote to this uncertainty is having full confidence in the things we hope for and certainty regarding things we cannot see. We call it faith!

As we contemplate the approach of the season of Advent, which heralds new beginnings, we hope and believe that next year will be better than this one and look forward to renewing informal fellowship in our families, our communities and our Order.

Norman Hunter Rose



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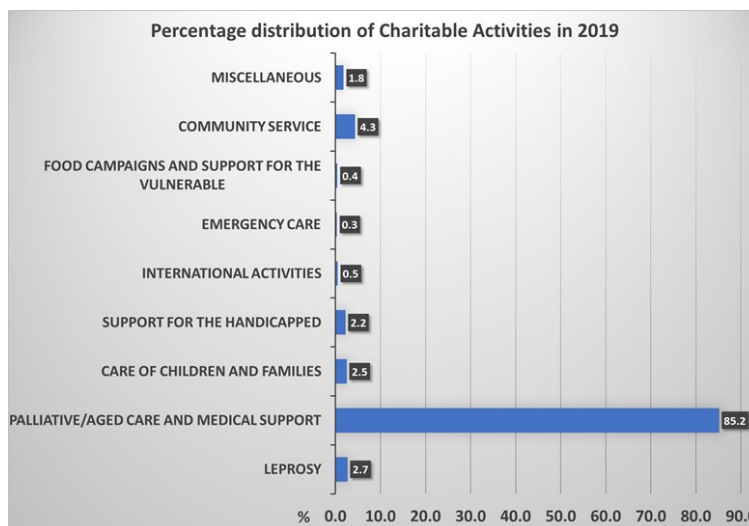
Hospitaller activity 2019

H.E. The Chevalier Prof. Charles Savona Ventura, Interim Grand Hospitaller, gives an overview of the philanthropic activities of the Order in 2019

“In response to the changing demands of the modern world, the various national jurisdictions have supported different philanthropic objectives “

The wide vista presented by the ‘modern’ stated aims of the Order is reflected in the broad range of philanthropic activities supported by the various jurisdictions. The traditional link with the victims of leprosy has been maintained. However, in response to the changing demands of the modern world, the various national jurisdictions have supported different philanthropic objectives other than purely leprosy.

The philanthropic contribution of the International Order in 2019 amounted to an estimated total of just under €14,500,000. The larger part of the 2019 philanthropic contribution, amounting 85.2% of the total, has been targeted towards supporting palliative support and medical care of the needy members of society [aged and terminally ill]. The traditional support given to the victims of Hansen’s Disease only amounts to 2.7% of the total annual contribution [c.f. Figure 1].



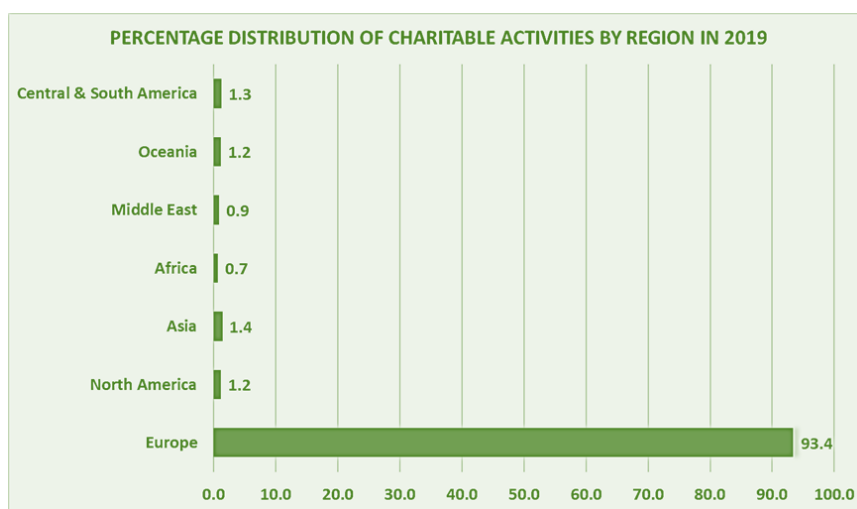
“Hansen’s Disease still remains a scourge in the developing world”

Hansen’s Disease still remains a scourge in the developing world, despite the free-of-cost availability of the curative Multidrug Therapy regimen. Developing countries still see significant numbers of new cases being diagnosed annually. In addition, many prior victims of Hansen’s Disease remain marginalised and handicapped as a result of the chronic complications of the infection.

A particular area of concern in the developing world is childhood mortality generally brought about by malnutrition and gastrointestinal infections mainly caused by compromised water supplies. Only 2.5% of the total funds donated by the Order were directed towards promoting the care of children and their families; and most of these projects were directed towards the developed world rather than the developing countries. International activities, which include missionary support in developing countries, accounted for only 0.5% of the total philanthropic contributions of the Order.



The targets for philanthropic support provided by the Order appear to have rather placed the developing world on the backburner with a greater proportion of the donations being targeted to needy persons or communities in the developed world. 95.8% of donations targeted projects in Europe [93.4%], North America [1.2%] and Oceania [1.2%] [c.f. Figure 2]. The developing world accounted for about 4.3% of the total support provided during 2019. While the proportion of support appears low, this approximates to about €623,500. The philanthropic targets for this support vary but the larger part [2.7%] of the donation addressed victims of Hansen's Disease.



The philanthropic activities of the Order are left to the discretion of the National Jurisdictions who are better placed to identify worthy causes. As an international organization, the Order has introduced a donation of €5 per member per year to supplement the Philanthropic War Chest to support international worthy charitable causes. Unfortunately, not all national jurisdictions have embraced this initiative. This accumulated war chest should be used to assist a specific targeted project acceptable to all the jurisdictions. In the light of the general distribution of donations by the various jurisdictions and the global health and social needs, a suitable project to consider would be supporting an initiative to provide clean safe water to unprivileged communities in the developing world.

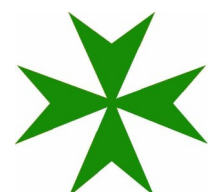
Many jurisdictions have developed resources to promote the education of health carers and social care providers aimed at providing better services to the needy. One such resource is that produced by the Grand Priory of Canada – *A Caregiver's Guide* – which is made freely available in electronic format to all. These resources should be advertised and shared.

The American politician Patrick Henry in 1799, stated: *"Let us trust God, and our better judgment to set us right hereafter. United we stand, divided we fall."*

In the words of Mother Theresa: *"I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things"*.

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News around the world

Keeping in touch

Regular Facebook users will have spotted that the Order's official Facebook page has been revitalised (www.facebook.com/groups/st.lazarus). 375 members have now joined but that still leaves many who are missing out on news and updates. The group is private, so you will need to apply to join and then wait to be accepted, but we hope that many more of you will sign up and take part by reading and responding to items posted by other members from around the world.



You may also be interested to know that we have been working to revise and update some of our on-line / printable resources over the last few months. The following items are now available for download from the international website:

- An introductory leaflet about the Order
- A short history, with a timeline of key dates
- A booklet collating the responses of jurisdictions round the world to the COVID pandemic

We hope you will find them interesting and useful - feel free to share them with others.



Archbishop Wilton Daniel Gregory EGCLJ

It has been announced from the Vatican that Pope Francis has named the Archbishop of Washington DC, Wilton Daniel Gregory EGCLJ, as one of 13 new cardinals, to be installed in a ceremony at the Vatican on 28 November.

Archbishop Gregory, a long-standing member of the Order of St Lazarus, will be the first African-American Cardinal.

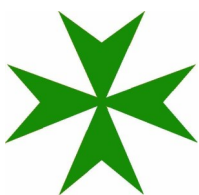


The prayers and good wishes of the Order worldwide go with him in his new appointment.



STOP PRESS!

The number of St Lazarus facemasks produced and sold by Will Carter's team in Western Cape Commandery South Africa has now topped 1,000 – a truly amazing achievement!



Let's do it together!

In a previous edition, we reported on a project being undertaken by the Grand Bailiwick of the Netherlands, to raise funds for the restoration of a covered horse-drawn carriage, to be used to take severely disabled children and adults on outings.

A new fund-raising project – 'Let's do it together!' - is now under way in support of this very worthwhile initiative. Wristbands bearing this message are available, costing € 2.50 each, (ex. shipping cost), with € 2.00 from each sale going direct to the project.



The Bailiff of the Netherlands, Dame Herma Wijers reflects:

'We all know how difficult it is to stay home, to keep distance. We are glad that we have a little space to come and go as we please. These people, those kids and adults, have nothing, they have a lock down every day. During this pandemic, it is even worse - no visits, no activity whatsoever. Let us give these children and adults a little a sense of freedom. Let's do it together, give a smile and buy a wristband.'

More information can be found on the Help Bewust website at <https://helpbewust.nl/>, or by emailing info@helpbewust.nl



Socks for homeless people

On the initiative of the Order of Saint Lazarus (Humanitarian Grand Priory of Europe), handknitted socks, hats, and scarves were donated to the association *Armut und Gesundheit in Deutschland e.V.* on October 9th, 2020 for distribution to homeless people. Dr. med. Joachim Kormannshaus (*Armut und Gesundheit in Deutschland e.V.*) and Dirk Augustin, OLJ (Order of Saint Lazarus) thanked the handicraft group of the Protestant Community of Alzey for their work on the knitting needles and the donors for their financial support.



In memoriam

We have been saddened to learn in recent weeks of the death of two well-known and much-loved members of our Order, both of whom had held senior international positions.

Monsignor Anthony Toms EGCLJ KMLJ passed away on 25 September 2020, aged 82. Tony, as he was universally known, was a well-known figure within the Order at home and abroad.



His clerical career took him from his home in Australia to Thailand and the USA, before returning home to become a military chaplain. From 1993 to 1996 Fr. Tony was Roman Catholic Principal Chaplain of the Australian Army and Vicar-General/Chancellor of the Military Diocese of Australia, achieving the field rank of Brigadier. In 1993 Pope St John Paul II made him a prelate of honour (Monsignor). Fr. Tony went back to civilian life in June 1996 when he became the Parish Priest at Seymour, Victoria – a post which he held until February 2016, when ill-health forced his retirement.

Tony joined the Order as a Chaplain (ChLJ) in 1995. He became a Deputy National Chaplain in 2003, going on to hold the post of Commandery Chaplain in Victoria for many years and was also Commandery President (2009-14). He

succeeded the late Archbishop Ian George AO CChLJ as National Chaplain of the Grand Priory of Australia in 2013 and retired in 2016. The Grand Master promoted Fr. Tony to Ecclesiastical Grand Cross (EGCLJ) in March 2014, citing his “extraordinary commitment” to the Order both in Australia and internationally.

Chevalier Peter Gerrard Salt KCLJ, SCrLJ passed to higher service on 16 October 2020 at the age of 71, after a long illness.

Peter joined the Order in 2008 as a founding member and first Chancellor of the Commandery of King Offa in the Grand Priory of England & Wales. In that position, he was an active, hard-working leader. Most notably, he chaired the working party charged with recommending a mission statement and formulating a strategic plan to take the Commandery forward, and forged close working relationships with the regional heads of Lepra, Debra and the Leprosy Mission.

In 2011 Peter became the Marshal of the Commandery and then Marshal of the Grand Priory of England and Wales. He was appointed Deputy Grand Marshal of the Order in 2016, and was also the International Quartermaster.

Peter was appointed KCLJ in February 2013. His recent reception into the Roman Catholic Church, with The Most Excellent The Duke of Seville as his godfather was, for him, a significant moment on his earthly pilgrimage.



Et cum Lazaro, quondam paupere, aeternam habeant requiem.

Full obituaries for Fr. Tony and Chev. Peter may be found on the international website

