



Address By The Most Eminent and Supreme Grand Master

Well Brother Knights, first of all, I offer you a very warm welcome to this Chapter of Great Priory and I must say that from this vantage point you look absolutely splendid. I am sure you will all agree with me that, today we have enjoyed a most memorable Chapter of Great Priory. Thank you so much, Right Eminent Past Great Prior, and indeed your Officers, for an uplifting and inspiring Ceremony. I know we all wish you well and congratulate you on your new dignity within our Orders. The honour and dignity of Knight Grand Cross is the highest accolade it is in my power to bestow and, as we are now the 'United Orders', and thanks to a resolution passed by Great Priory in 1900, your new rank is applied equally to the Temple and Malta Orders, I shudder to think what happened before that, it must have a Great Marshal's nightmare. More importantly, I am so grateful that you will continue to work with us as President of my Council, but today it is most appropriate that we all show our admiration and appreciation for the 10 years you have served as Great Prior of Malta.

By the same token, I know we all want to congratulate and welcome on board our new Great Prior, V.E.Knight Dr. Nigel Scott-Moncrieff. Having known and worked with Nigel for more years than we both wish to remember, I know he will do a great job and enjoy every moment of his new role.

It has been a great pleasure to invest Brother Knights with their new Malta ranks today and I do congratulate each one of you and thank you so much for everything you do within your own Provinces and Pories. As always, with your new ranks comes additional responsibilities and, as in all Orders of Freemasonry, we are bound to rely on our Great Officers more and more to give the much-needed encouragement to ensure our meetings and ceremonies are conducted in a proper and dignified manner, and most importantly, nurture and encourage the younger and junior members of your Preceptories and Pories.

Since we last met as Great Priory in May, it has been a busy and exciting time for the Order. We have installed four new Provincial Pories, three of whom are with us today and I know you would wish to welcome them in their new roles for the first time.

In July, I installed R.E.Kt. Stephen Churchill into charge of Northampton, Huntingdon and Bedford.

Later, the same month, R.E.Kt. Keith Marshall was installed for North and East Yorkshire.

I went a little further afield for the next one and, in August, installed R.E.Kt.Kenneth Darby as the Provincial Prior for the Province of Natal. Ken can't be with us today, sadly, but just a week later, as I was visiting The Preceptory of St John the Almoner in Malta, the Great Seneschal very graciously installed R.E.Kt.Julian Mitchell for Hampshire and Isle of Wight. We wish all four of these Brother Knights every possible success and much happiness in their new important positions.

I feel I must now bring you up to date with the news from the Jerusalem Eye Hospital group.

Since I last spoke to you in May there have been a number of issues for the Hospital to deal with. The reopening of a clinic in the Hospital itself was very short lived due to the evacuation of the North by order of the occupying forces. The staff had to relocate at short notice and had to camp in crowded tents in the south of the strip.

The delivery of medicines to Gaza continues to be in very short supply, which severely limits the effectiveness of their work. The Gaza staff are all well and hold clinics as often as they can.

With the recent ceasefire, they have once again been allowed to return to the hospital building and it has a few extra 'windows' caused by collateral damage, but the building itself is still structurally sound. Once again they have reopened the clinic in the lower part of the building and have seen over 1000 patients already.

Elsewhere the Hospital is fully functional and the new Nablus hospital is turning out to be a real asset to the local population. As you will recall the KT was a major funder to that project so our continued support is very much appreciated.

Speaking of support, and I hope I don't cause any embarrassment to either of these Provinces, but I feel I must tell you that in July, I attended a splendid celebratory service at Durham Cathedral followed by a lavish banquet, and in September, a magnificent service at Hexham Abbey in Northumberland with another wonderful banquet. Both these Provinces, Durham and Northumberland had reached their 50th Anniversaries and wanted to mark the event with a donation to the Eye Hospital Group. Between them both the Hospital benefited with an amount of almost a quarter of a million pounds. I think that demonstrates the passion and enthusiasm the Brother Knights have to ensure the success of the Hospital Group. Continue to wear your Swift Pins with pride, and it's not too late to purchase one.

I must however reiterate that, while we appreciate a Province or a Preceptory might desire to make direct donations, we are feeling the effect at Great Priory and this has led to us having to pull our oars in a little. It would be helpful to the Order if all donations could be made to Great Priory Fund of Benevolence in the first instance.

I now come to one of the most pleasurable moments of today, and that is to welcome on your behalf our distinguished guests and Brother Knights from our own Provinces and Priories Overseas. As usual, perhaps we can resist the temptation to applaud until the end of the list.

From the Great Priory of Scotland, we are delight to have the Grand Master, M.E.& Rev.Kt. Raymond King.

From the Great Priory of Greece, we are delighted to have Great Registrar, R.E.Kt. Ioannis Benetatos G.C.T. and Great Prior of Malta, Panagiotis Vlachos K.C.T.

From the Great Priory of Germany, we welcome M.E. Kt.Roddy MacKenzie, Grand Master, R.E.Kt.John MacKinnon, Great Prior of Malta, and R.E.Kt.Ian Harper, the Grand Chancellor, who is in a dual capacity today as a member of the Grand Master's Body Guard.

I am most grateful for the support we receive from our overseas Provinces, and particularly from South East Asia, where we have
The Provincial Prior, R.E.Kt Dr. Brian Shegar
E.Kt.Capt. Julian Brown
Kt. Dr.Alvin Lun

From our Priories in Malta
E.Kt.Robert Chilvers, our new Great 2nd Lieut of the Waller Rodwell Wright Priory
And from the La Valette Priory E.Kt.John Bond.

The support of the Companion Orders has ever been a feature of all our Great Priory musters, and today is no exception.

From the Ancient and Accepted Rite, the Grand Prior, E.Kt.Rev. Dr.Simon Thorne and the Grand Secretary General, E.Kt.Dr.Giles Shilson.

From the Red Cross of Constantine R.E.Kt. Graham Flight, G.C.M. the Grand Sovereign

From the Order of Royal and Select Masters, the Grand Master. R.E.Kt. Kessick Jones, K.C.M.

From the Order of the Secret Monitor R.E.Kt. Andrew Sweeney, K.C.M., Grand Supreme Ruler.

R.E.Kt. Christopher Maiden K.C.M., Grand High Priest of the Grand College of Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests and Order of Holy Wisdom.

From the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia, the Supreme Magus, E.Kt. Tony Llewellyn, P.Gt.2nd Lt.

From the Worshipful Society of Operative Freemasons,
E.Kt. Paul Mycock 1st Grand Master Mason.

And from the Grand Priory of Knights Beneficent of the Holy City, the Grand Master, R.E.Kt.Dr. Vivian Thomas K.C.M.

Please join me in a warm, rousing welcome to all these Brother Knights.

Before closing, I want to thank those who have made today another memorable Great Priory meeting for us all, the Great Vice Chancellor and those at the Chancery, the Great Mareschal and his Deputies and, of course, the members of the Grand Master's Body Guard which, as always, sets the standard of Great Priory meetings which we should all try to emulate. Ours are most wonderful ceremonies with the Scripture readings at its core. Discerning the meanings behind those readings helps us to fully appreciate the beauty of our ritual. The workshops run by the King Edward VII Preceptory of Improvement throughout the Provinces help bring together both the form and the meaning of our ceremonies; with the aim of ensuring not just that we perform the ritual well, but that we also understand the reasons why. Take a look at the new web site for the King Edward VII Preceptory of Improvement, details of which can be found in the latest Liber, with the meeting dates, reports from recent Provincial Workshops and a joining form, making it easy for all knights to become members.

At this time of remembrance, when we honour particularly those who have fallen, let us think also of our Brethren and Brother Knights in Jamaica and the members of both Jamaica and Francis Bavin Preceptories. The report of the destruction caused by the hurricane has been playing across the media, and we can only watch in astonishment, sorrow and great sadness at the devastation caused.

Our thoughts and Prayers are with them and their families and loved ones, and we have committed to United Grand Lodge in offering any financial assistance we can as a Great Priory as an action plan is being formed.

Remember, as in previous years, our Christmas Day Observance at 5.00 pm, which brings together Knights Templars throughout the world in Christian Unity and hope. Where there is hope, there is faith. Where there is faith, miracles happen.

I wish you all well.