



Commandery of Great Britain Newsletter



November 2008

GOVERNING COUNCIL IN LAMEGO, PORTUGAL: MARCH 2008 – a report by Rt. Rev. Bishop Garrard

The Governing Council exists to co-ordinate the work of the many Jurisdictions and Commanderies scattered throughout the world. The agenda of the meeting was equally far-ranging and the whole event took place in the amazing, beautiful Hotel Rural Casa dos Viscondes, da Varzea, an old family estate high in the hills above Porto which has taken on a new lease of life as a hotel and conference centre.

At least eleven European countries were represented at the Council. I say 'at least' because some of the names of Jurisdictions, such as Bohemia and Castile, show how our ancient Order goes back to times before some present national borders were established in Europe.

The Grand Master's welcome included an on-screen computer presentation (HRH is very computer literate) and he shared his vision for the Order, telling us clearly what he felt was to be done both internally and externally during 2008-2009. He highlighted long-term spiritual, charitable and traditional objectives. I noted the order of those words and was reminded of the words in the Book of Proverbs, "Where the vision fails, the people perish." To a 'rookie' like me, this was a particularly inspiring part of the meeting.

Key achievements in 2007-2008 had included a development in France to draw the Order closer to the *Legion d'Honneur*, the partnership with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the establishing of work in Ethiopia to combat acute water shortage, a fact-finding trip to Serbia, the creation of *Saint Lazare International*.

The Prince also outlined priorities for the next year and these included improving liaison with international bodies and, in the longer term, the establishing of deeper relationships with Christian Churches and to achieve recognition as an international player in the field of charitable works, especially in relation to water-shortage. The Grand Master stretched our vision and he has gone on doing so throughout the present year.

The reports on the finances of the Order were talked over and the situation was frankly agreed to be poor which made budgeting hard work. However, Hans Lauxmann, a recently retired Swiss banker was moved by this to offer his expertise to the Council and he is now Grand Treasurer. This, plus steady resolution of various difficulties has led – six months later – to the position being much improved. There is a way to go but we are on the way.

It was my first Governing Council meeting and I came away convinced that our Order has much to give in a world of great needs, tragedies and insecurity. Our Christian stress on unity, charity and tradition is a great gift to the churches and to the whole human race. This is God's work for us to do; we must not lose faith.

+Richard Garrard.

Wedding of the Order's Grand Master

Three members from the Commandery of Great Britain attended the wedding of Prince Charles- Philippe d'Orleans, our Grand Master to Diana Alvares Pereira de Melo, Duchess of Cadaval. The ceremony took place at the Cathedral of Evora on 21st June, 2008. There were 500 guests present to witness the joining of the two in Holy matrimony. Following the exchange of vows, a shower of white petals rained down upon the newlyweds as they made their exit from the Cathedral and made their way to Cadaval Palace for a reception. Guests sampled slices of a four-tier, fleur-de-lys and crown-decorated wedding cake, ceremonially sliced with a sword by the bride and groom.



2008 Investiture in Derbyshire

Members of The Commandery of Great Britain congregated in Bakewell, Derbyshire for an Autumn Investiture. A Vigil Service took place at All Saints' Church, Hassop on Friday 24th October. All Saints' was built between 1816 and 1818 in Classical revival style, with a front resembling an Etruscan temple. The venue for the Investiture the following day was the ancient parish Church of Bakewell. The Church was started in the 12th Century on the foundations of a Saxon church. However, main building work took place between 1220 and 1240. The Service was led by The Right Reverend Bishop Garrard, Grand Prior Spiritual in the presence of H.E. Chevalier Aaron Kiely. There were numerous civic guests present including Mayors from the Boroughs of Amber Valley and Chesterfield, as well as Chairs of various Authorities such as Derbyshire Dales, Bolsover and North East Derbyshire. Admitted to the Order were: Father Aldo Tapparo, Father Mark Lawler, Matthew Jackson and Thomas Shorland Ball. Promoted were: Father Simon Henry and Major Kevin Tuhey. There was special recognition for Senor Don Jose Manuel de la Cruz Rodriguez, who was awarded the Order's Medal of Merit for outstanding service to the Order. Following the ceremony, members and guests enjoyed luncheon at Hassop Hall. The recorded history of Hassop Hall reaches back 900 years to the Domesday Book and has been the scene of several skirmishes during the Civil War. The Hall's present owners were extremely hospitable and provided a wonderful reception for everyone. Overseas' visitors during the weekend, who were extended a very warm welcome were Dame Joan Hanly G.C.L.J., travelling from Ireland and Madame Kaminer D.L.J., Hospitaller of the Isle de France.



Vigil Service at All Saints' Church, Hassop



Arriving at Bakewell Church for the Investiture



Two Esquires being invested



A gathering with those invested, or promoted



Recession at the end of the Service



Luncheon at Hassop Hall

Notice of Chapter Meeting

A Chapter Meeting of the Commandery of Great Britain will take place at The East India Club, London on the afternoon of 20th February 2009. Further information will be sent to you in due course.

Every three years a Chapter General is convened, an international gathering of members of The Order. At the end of May 2009, a Chapter General of The Order will take place in Portugal to which everyone is encouraged to attend. There will be the opportunity to meet others from various Jurisdictions, as well as participation in discussion on a range of issues.