



Order of Malta American Association Missouri Area NEWSLETTER November, 2022

Chaplain's Column

Evangelize

The “All Things New” initiative of the Archdiocese of St. Louis is on everyone’s mind, as people wonder what changes will take place in their parishes and schools. Which parishes and schools will merge, which ones will close, which will stay the same? One of the reasons for restructuring is to have parishes in a better position to “evangelize,” i.e., bring the Gospel, the Good News of Christ to people in a secular world.

As practicing Catholics, Knights and Dames of Malta have always been committed to evangelization. Our daily prayer reminds us that evangelizing involves defending the faith, and practicing charity to our neighbor, especially the poor and the sick. In his beautiful encyclical “God is Love,” Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI in a section on serving the poor writes:

“A Christian knows when it is time to speak of God and when it is better to say nothing and to let love alone speak. He knows that God is love and that God’s presence is felt at the very time when the only thing we do is to love...the best defense of God and man consists precisely in love.” (#32)

Sometimes we have the opportunity and the challenge to engage people regarding the faith in an intellectual discussion. In the first Epistle of St. Peter we are told to “Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, but do it with gentleness and reverence.” (1 Peter 3:15) It is more likely, though, that we have occasion to evangelize by works of charity. The many charitable works of the Order of Malta are a tangible witness to the faith we profess. We bring Christ to people in need by serving them; their hearts are then more open to receive His presence.



Msgr. Vernon Gardin, Ch.M.

Let us also remember, as we engage in various forms of evangelizing, that we first evangelize ourselves. As recent Popes have reminded us, the work of evangelizing begins with the ongoing process of conversion—the lifelong journey of turning from sin to grace. Regular reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation gives us the merciful love of Christ, which we in turn can bring to others.

Let Your Light So Shine . .

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Mt 5:16) This verse speaks to our charism and how we are called to live our faith through our service to the sick and the poor. This edition of our area newsletter summarizes how we have come together to nourish our faith and help those in need this year. We continue to be filled with gratitude for each of you and the light of the Lord in you!

A special thank you to Archbishop Rozanski for hosting our recent 2023 prospective member reception at his residence in June. To date, we have 2 individuals that have completed the requirements for entrance in to the 2023 formation class—Ray Kreienkamp and Dr. Pat Amado. Please pray for them as they begin their journey to discern their entrance into the Order of Malta.

We welcome Joaquin Alarcon, Phyllis Heck, Jonathan Klimpel and Larry Koesterer into the Order of Malta and look forward to their investiture on November 18, 2022. Tim Gamma will also attend the 2022 investiture since he was unable to attend with his 2021 investiture class. Please pray for each of them as they experience a very special investiture weekend.

The Order of Malta made an impact around the globe through our works delivered during COVID-19. The Order of Malta by decree of The Grand Chancellor commissioned a COVID-19 medal and certificate to recognize Malta members that exemplified our charism during COVID-19. American Association Area Chairs were asked to nominate area members to receive a special-

ly commissioned COVID -19 medal and certificate from the Grand Chancellor in Rome. We gratefully acknowledge the following area members that were instrumental in standing up our mobile ministry work and for making it a successful operation from inception through today and for connecting our quarterly Malta service projects with our Mobile Ministry.



Kathy & Greg Gantz

- Jim Bick
- Pat Hofmeister
- Ron Hofmeister
- Brian Abel Ragen
- Mike Roth
- Randy Weber
- Genie Wilhelm
- John Wilhelm

On January 1, 2023, we enter our sixth and final year as your Area Co-Chairs. Our second term will end on December 31, 2023. Two years ago, the Board of Councilors implemented a process for the transition for successor Area Chairs. This process requires a one-year shadowing period during the last year of the term of current Area Chairs. This allows for a smoother transition in Area Leadership, and adequate preparation time for successor Area Chairs.

On September 13, 2022, Dr. Peter Kelly, President of the American Association, nominated Mike and Helen McCadden to succeed as the Co-Chairs of the Missouri Area. The Board of Councilors approved the nomination at their September board meeting. Please join us in congratulating and thanking Mike and Helen for their willingness to serve us as Area Co-Chairs commencing on January 1, 2024. We look forward to working closely with them during the next 15 months as they prepare to take over.



The COVID-19 Campaign Medal

Finally, the Called to Serve Capital Campaign moves into the open phase for all Order members this fall. As we heard during our American Association town hall meeting on October 12, 2022, the Called to Service Capital Campaign seeks to secure the legacy of our primary and signature works by increasing the endowments of the Malta Human Services Foundation and the Order of Malta Pilgrimage Foundation. If we achieve this desired outcome we grow the ability of the American Association to serve the sick and poor for generations to come. The original campaign goal was \$20 million. We have 80% of our goal (\$16 million) committed. Our members have been generous.

The Called to Serve Capital Campaign asks each of us to take stock of where we are in our journey and to consider how we can do more with our resources of time, talent and treasure. Members will receive a let-

ter from the American Association in the very near future. We prayerfully ask you to consider a gift to the endowment that can be fulfilled over the next five years. No contribution is too great or too small. All gifts accepted with gratitude.

We wish you and those you love a joyful and peaceful Christmas season and a new year filled with our Lord's blessings. May we let our light shine among those we encounter in our daily lives as we deliver the works intended by our Lord.

With gratitude and prayers,

Greg and Kathy Gantz
Missouri Malta Area Co-Chairs

Serving the Sick and the Poor

Members of the Order of Malta serve “Our Lords, the Sick and the Poor” in many ways, both through the order and through other avenues of service, many of those unknown to any but those who benefit from them. The work we do in common takes many forms. Some work through the prison ministry. Some support Malteser International as it provides relief to the impoverished and displaced throughout the world, notably, recently, in the Ukraine and the countries that have received refugees fleeing the



Hospitaller Ron Hofmeister with supplies for St. Martha's Hall

Russian invasion. Some support the Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem as it strives to bring first world medical care to a third world country and the love that cares for all to a region riven by religious and political divisions. And members of the order join to serve their neighbors locally in ways ranging from bi-monthly pizza dinners at a home for those in need, which are arranged by a different member on each occasion, to quarterly service projects to which all members of the order are called to contribute.

Service Projects

Recent service projects, led by area hospitallers, Pat and Ron Hofmeister, have helped those served by several local organizations. As its second-quarter service project, members of the Missouri Area collected sup-

plies for the residents of St. Martha's Hall, a shelter for abused women and their children. The supplies, which included food, toiletries, cash, checks, and gifts cards, were collected by Area Hospitallers, Pat and Ron Hof-

meister, and delivered by the Malta Mobile Ministries Van. (As the location of the shelter is secret, this delivery was made in a neutral location.)

For its 3rd quarter project, members and volunteers collected and volunteers gathered to assembled necessity bags for two organizations that serve the poor and homeless. These necessity bags, filled with items con-

tributed by local members, filled the Missouri Area's Malta Mobile Ministry Van along with substantial cash donations for each organization. The assembly of the necessity kits was an opportunity not just to help others but also enjoy the company of fellow Malta members and their families.



The Team for the Third Quarter Service Project



**Kathie Gantz & Genie Wilhelm
with Completed Necessity Bags**



Some of Our Younger Volunteers

Malta Mobile Ministry

Members serving through the Malta Mobile Ministry have continued their efforts and aided people in need in many ways. Besides making regular deliveries to a food bank, they have helped relocate those in danger of becoming homeless in collaboration with the St. Patrick Center, worked with the St. Louis Criminal Justice Ministries to furnish apartments for newly-released convicts, helped CSJ move into its new headquarters, and delivered the supplies gathered in through the area's service projects.

The Missouri Area's Order of Malta Mobile Ministry Van responds to needs as they develop. It played an important role in assisting the St. Louis's homeless population in July. The Area Chairs saw a St. Patrick Center LinkedIn post asking for emergency donations of water

and Gatorade for the homeless that needed quick hydration due to excessive heat and humidity in the St. Louis area.

Local members sprung into immediate action. Within 24 hours, the Area secured over 2,000 bottles of water and 1,000 bottles of Gatorade (1.65 tons of hydration bottles) from Sam's Club, loaded them in the Mobile Ministry Van, and delivered to St. Patrick Center. St Patrick's Executive Director called the following day to say how much they appreciated the response to the emergency call for help and our continued partnership.

The Lord guided our members and those actively engaged in our Mobile Ministry to work together to serve this critical need for the homeless during a time the temperatures were in the high 90's for over a week.



"I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink"



A Cool Malta Driver on a Hot Day

Prayer and Fellowship

Members in the St. Louis area have gathered to pray, to enjoy each other's company, and to learn about the order's activities across the world in many place this year.



A recitation of the **rosary** to which all are invited is said on the first Wednesday of each month at Immacolata Catholic Church in the presence of an icon of Our Lady of Philermo. On Ash Wednesday, the rosary was preceded by Mass celebrated by Rev. Msgr. Vernon Gardin, ChM. 25 members chose to begin their Lenten pilgrimage before the image of our order's patroness.

Members returned to the Immacolata for a Lenten Mass and **Morning of Reflection**, followed by a light lunch on April 2. Mass was con-celebrated by Rev. Msgr. Vernon Gardin, ChM, Missouri Area chaplain, and Fr. Andrew Auer, who also offered reflections in the program that followed it.

Fr. Auer invited all to consider their place in salvation history and to recognize that we are not victims of circumstance, as we are often tempted to believe, but instead free agents who are invited by Christ to participate in our own redemption and in the salvation of the world. All were moved by his dynamic presentation and his clear and challenging message.



Msgr. Gardin & Fr. Auer

On Saturday, March 19, members of the Missouri Area gathered for their **Annual Meeting** at the Missouri Athletic Club. Rev. Msgr. Vernon Gardin, ChM, led those gathered in prayer and reminded them of their calling as members of the Order of Malta, which he called “a great branch of Christ’s healing ministry.”



Kathy & Greg Gantz

Area Co-Chairs Kathy and Greg Gantz reviewed the recent activities of the Order, both in and beyond the Missouri Area, and discussed our ongoing work in several activities.



Joe & Gail Berardino

Missouri Area members then welcomed Gail and Joe Berardino, Capital Campaign Co-Chairs, who asked them to make the “Called to Serve” Capital Campaign, which they had described during their previous visit, a real and practical way of continuing the order’s healing ministry into the future. Members responded enthusiastically.





On Sunday, May 29th, Missouri Area members joined the Most Rev. Mitchell T. Rozanski, ChC, Archbishop of St. Louis, for the **Ordination** of two new priests. Pictured above are members in the vesting room at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis. One wears the uniform of a Knight of St. Gregory the Great.

On Thursday, June 2nd, the Most Rev. Mitchell Rozanski, ChC, opened the **Archbishop's Residence** to current and prospective members of the Missouri Area for an informational session on the work of the Order.

Archbishop Rozanski was invested as Conventual Chaplain in the Order of Malta at the 2021 Investiture and has been a great supporter of the Order and its work since his arrival in St. Louis.



Archbishop Rozanski with Greg & Kathy Gantz



Membership Chair Chris Winkelmann



The Missouri Area celebrated the **Feast of Saint John the Baptist** at Annunziata Catholic Church. Although the celebratory dinner was canceled due to a water main break at the venue, the evening was a joyous occasion. Archbishop Rozanski celebrated a beautiful mass and brought hope to all with his words of being confident to trust in our savior for all things great and small in our lives.

Archbishop Rozanski again celebrated Mass for the Order on the **Feast of St. Andrew**, September 20, at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church. Mass was followed by a dinner at the Saint Louis Club, which included the presentation of the Order of Malta's COVID-19 Service medals.



On Thursday, October 13th, members of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta in several American cities welcomed members of the Most Venerable Order of St. John of Jerusalem to a service of Vespers for the **Feast of Blessed Gerard**. In St. Louis, the service was celebrated by Msgr. Vernon Gardin, ChM, at the Immacolata Catholic Church, with music under the direction of Benton Blassingame, Associate Director of Music at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis. It was followed by a reception at the Saint Louis Club.

Members of both orders were moved by the service and enjoyed the fellowship that followed it. Members of the SMOM and the OStJ are discussing joint service projects in St. Louis, and many hoped that a joint vespers or even-song would become a regular event. This year's event was coordinated by Prof. Brian Abel Ragen, who is a Knight of both orders.

Our Lady of Good Help Pilgrimage

The Order of Malta's ninth annual Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help in Champion, Wisconsin was held from September 4 to September 9.

Pilgrims from the American Association were glad to officially rejoin those from the Western and Federal Associations for the first time since 2019 (due to the pandemic.) 14 pilgrims from the St. Louis Area made the trip, including, for the first time, two participants in the youth program. This was a very robust representation, even compared to some larger areas.

"Home Base" was the Hyatt Regency Green Bay, from there pilgrims took buses to the Shrine on Friday and Saturday, where they could visit the oratory (sight of Our Lady's appearance to Adele Brise), the visitor's center and museum, and the

well-stocked Catholic bookstore and gift shop. They were also able to see the Order of Malta reception center and first aid post. Pilgrims assisted in Holy Mass every

day, and other sacramental devotional activities included the Sacrament of the Sick, multiple opportunities for Confession, Eucharistic Adoration, and a Rosary procession. The (abundant and tasty) meals and social hours also allowed pilgrims the chance to re-

new acquaintance with confreres they hadn't seen in a while, and meet new Knights and Dames from across the country.

—Christopher Winkelmann, K.M.



Members from Missouri Attending the Wisconsin Pilgrimage

Missouri Area Leadership

Area Co-Chairs: Kathy and Greg Gantz

Area Chaplin: Msgr. Vernon Gardin

Hospitallers: Pat and Ron Hofmeister

Membership: Chris Winkelmann

Treasurer: Bill Guyol

Affiliate Coordinators (Associates and Auxiliary): Genie and John Wilhelm

Communications: Brian Abel Ragen

Malta Masses: Donna and Mike Roth

Prison Ministry: Pat Hofmeister (Women's) and Mike Mooney (Men's)

Grant Committee: Tyler Bender, Don Gunn, Carole Less, and Jack Pohrer

Malta Rosary (first Wednesday): Donna and Mike Albers

Daily Missal Mailings: Carole Less

MALTA MOBILE MINISTRY—ST. LOUIS

Director: Randy Weber

Finance and Operations Coordinator: Jim Bick

Program and Services Coordinator: Chris Winkelmann

Volunteer Driver Coordinator: Mike Roth

Vehicle Maintenance Coordinators: John and Genie Wilhelm

Communications: Brian Abel Ragen