



# Order of Malta American Association Missouri Area NEWSLETTER December, 2023

## Chaplain's Column

### *Mary and Malta*

As knights and dames of Malta we are devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary who was given to us by Jesus on the cross to be our mother also. As we celebrate the birth of our Savior this Christmas season, we also celebrate Mary's special role in the Incarnation. The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (January 1) recognizes that Jesus is both God and man. Through Mary's humble submission to God's will at the Annunciation, she brought forth the Messiah, Savior of the world.

The Sacred Scriptures are crystal clear regarding the Blessed Virgin Mary's intimate connection to her Son:

- Her submission to God's will at the Annunciation reflects Jesus' submission to the Father at his Agony in the Garden, his teaching in the Lord's prayer, and his love for his Father: *"My food is to do the will of the one who sent me."* (John 4:34)
- At the Visitation, her cousin Elizabeth recognizes John (the Baptist) leaping for joy even in the womb at the presence of Jesus in the womb of Mary—similar to King David who joyfully danced before the Ark of the Covenant where the Divine Presence resided. (Luke 1:39 – 45)
- Mary is presented to us in John's Gospel as the new woman, the new mother of the living. Unlike Eve who told Adam not to obey God, Mary told the wait-

ers (and us) at the wedding feast in Cana: *"Do whatever he tells you."* (John 2:5)

- Also in St. John's Gospel, Mary "frames" her Son's public ministry, by her appearance at his first miracle, and standing at the foot of the cross. Jesus told the Beloved Disciple (i.e., John, who represents all of us), *"Behold your mother. And from that hour the disciple took her into his home."* (John 19:27)
- St. Luke points out that Mary was present with all the disciples after the Resurrection, praying for the bestowal of the Holy Spirit as he promised. (Acts 1:14)



**Msgr. Vernon Gardin, Ch.M.**

The Catholic Church has always rejoiced in Mary's maternal protection over the centuries. There is a motherly, consoling comfort that Christ imparts to us through his mother. One particularly dramatic example that has always impressed me

is that of the famous, talented composer, Antonin Dvorak, a devoted Catholic. He and his wife lost their three children in just a couple years; in 1875 their two-day old son; in August, 1877 their 11-month old daughter accidentally drank a poisonous liquid; the next month, September, their three-year old son died of small pox. With overwhelming grief, he turned to Mary, and soon composed a beautiful "Stabat Mater"—a setting of a

medieval poem about Mary at the foot of the cross with her Son. His faith was unshaken because of her maternal protection, supporting him in suffering.

Hopefully, we never have any tragedy as great as that of the Dvorak family. Whatever our situation, in

good times or in bad, we ask Mary for faith like hers, for obedience to God's will, and love like that of her Son. May Advent hope be with us during the entire Christmas season and throughout our lives.

—Msgr. Vernon Gardin, Ch.M.

---

## Area Chairs' Column

# *“Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven”*

Happy Advent! Our prayer for you and your loved ones this Advent season is that each of you experience the true joy and hope brought to the world at the moment the son of God was born of the pure Virgin Mary in Bethlehem. May we never forget the miracle of the baby Jesus and trust in God's promise to be with us always, even in times of struggle, poor health, worry and confusion. We pray you find peace in the moments of anticipation of this beautiful season of our Church.

This is our last newsletter message as Area Chairs of the Missouri Malta Area. We end our six years as your Area Chairs with feelings of great gratitude and awe of the many blessings bestowed upon us through the opportunity to serve the members of the Order of Malta and the sick and poor in our Area. We sincerely thank the Area Members that volunteered for a leadership role during our tenure and for those that provided prayers,

words of encouragement, thanks, wisdom and laughter along the way. Our faith has grown and we have gained a deeper understanding of our Order's charism to defend our faith and serve the sick and the poor. We thank the Holy Spirit and each of you for helping us along our journey!

Our new Area Chairs, Mike and Helen McCadden will begin their three-year term on January 1, 2024. We have spent considerable time with Mike and Helen over the past fifteen months to ensure a smooth transition. They are excited and ready to be your new Area Chairs! Mike and Helen will send a communication near the end of the year to announce leadership changes and share the 2024 calendar.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

—Greg and Kathy Gantz



**Kathy Gantz, D.M. & Greg Gantz, K.M.**



# A Year of Much Activity for the Order of Malta

It has been hard to keep up with all the news from the Order of Malta during the last few months. Last year saw the election of a new Grand Master, the Fra' John Dunlop, the first North American to hold that post. This year has seen the appointment of a new Cardinal Patronus, Cardinal Gianfranco Ghirlanda, the release of a detailed *Instrumentum* describing the continuing reform of the order, and the election of a new president of the American Association of the Order of Malta, Kenneth R. Craig, KM. The the work of the order across the world has continued, since the needs of world have not diminished. Maltesser International has continued its work across the globe, the Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem has continued serving mothers and children in a region beset by violence, and the various associations and priories of the order have found new ways to reach out to those in need or danger. The American Association has continued and expanded existing programs such as the Prison Ministry and Malta Camp for disabled young adults while also embarking on new initiatives, including the St. Bernadette Ministry, which serves the frail, sick, and terminally ill, and efforts to combat human trafficking.

Our own Missouri Area has also seen both new developments and continuing efforts moving forward. At the annual meeting in April, members were introduced both to the new co-chairs, Helen and Michael McCadden, who will take over leadership of the region next

year, and to Deputy Chaplain Msgr. James Ramacciotti, who will assist Magistral Chaplain Msgr. Gardin in addressing our spiritual needs.



**Incoming Area Co-Chairs Helen & Michael McCadden**

and the quarterly masses arranged by Donna and Mike Roth and celebrated by our chaplains, including Archbishop Rozanski. Our faith is shared with others in all we do, but in special ways by our Eucharistic ministers to take Holy Communion to our local hospitals



**Our Chaplains: Mrgr. Ramacciotti & Msgr. Gardin**

and by the members who work in the Malta Prison Ministry, which is co-ordinated by Pat Hofmeister and Mike Mooney.

Our service to the sick and poor takes many forms under the leadership of Area Hospitalers Pat and Ron Hofmeister. Our members arrange monthly dinners at Rosati House and take part in quarterly service projects, each involving both material contributions and hand-on work. And if an extra project is mentioned, volunteer are not hard to find.

Under the leadership of Randy Weber, Malta Mobile ministry has found new organizations needing its services and helped hundreds of the people served by them.

But whatever the changes, the area has continued its efforts to serve the Order of Malta's great missions, to defend the faith and to serve the sick and poor.

The prayers of our members of the basis of our defense of the faith, and in them we are assisted by the books of contemplation distributed each month by Carole Less, the monthly rosaries organized by Donna and Mike Albers,

and the quarterly masses arranged by Donna and Mike Roth and celebrated by our chaplains, including Archbishop Rozanski. Our faith is shared with others in all we do, but in special ways by our Eucharistic ministers to take Holy Communion to our local hospitals and by the members who work in the Malta Prison Ministry, which is co-ordinated by Pat Hofmeister and Mike Mooney.

Our service to the sick and poor takes many forms under the leadership of Area Hospitalers Pat and Ron Hofmeister. Our members arrange monthly dinners at Rosati House and take part in quarterly service projects, each involving both



# Serving the Sick and the Poor

## Service Projects

The 3rd Quarter service project aided two agencies of the archdiocese of St. Louis, the Rural Parish Clinic, and Let's Start, the Criminal Justice Ministry women's ministry. Members donated almost 2700 individual items from the lists provided by the agencies and made cash contributions, as well. The donated items were split between the two organizations. Area members gathered at The Immacolata Catholic Church on Saturday, September 9 to assemble 100 necessity bags with a value of \$25 - \$30/bag for Let's Start. The Rural Parish Clinic preferred their items in bulk so they could distribute based on the specific needs of each patient. In addition to the donated items, each organization received \$300 in donation checks. Sister Mary Rachel was very pleased that the Rural Parish Clinic was selected for our Q3 area service project, as was Toni Jordan at Let's Start.

The 4th quarter service project aided three organizations, This year, we are again helping Our Lady's In, Marygrove, and Mary Queen of Peace Center. Deliveries were made by Malta Mobile Ministries, and included both necessities many families lack and gifts that will brighten Christmas for many children.



**The Packing Team shown with only part of the 100 necessity kits assembled for Let's Start**



## Food for Haiti

As a special service project, Twenty Missouri Malta members participated in a recent Haiti food packing project for the very needy citizens of Milot, Haiti. Bill Guyol, KM organized the packing project that had over 400 volunteers packing 103,000 meals that will be distributed by the Hôpital Sacré Coeur to ensure the food reaches those must in need.



**Some of the Malta Team packing for Haiti**

## Malta Mobile Ministry

Malta Mobile Ministry has continued aiding many charities in the Archdiocese of St. Louis. Some loads are miscellaneous: whatever a family in danger of homelessness has collected over the years or whatever a food bank has been able to procure for the coming week. Others are simple: a single hospital bed that will make life easier for a home-bound senior or a couple pallets of bottled water to help the homeless through the heat of summer. And there are loads that are both all the same and wildly different, such as the 9,000 pairs of new socks delivered recently from St. Richard's Parish to the St. Patrick Center to help the homeless through the winter.



**Socks—whatever the box may say.**



Randy Weber described the excitement of working with Malta Mobile Ministry's new partner, the Ascension/St. Nicholas Food Bank:

The inaugural drive for the Ascension/St. Nicholas Food Pantry went off like clockwork this morning. Jim Bick was the driver; I rode shotgun just to see what was involved. Loading and unloading were a breeze, with a forklift at Food Bank to load the four (4) pallets into the van, and many hands at St. Nicholas to tear apart the load and put things away. If anything, the workers at the St. Nicholas end worked harder than they needed to, transferring

items onto a pickup to drive them to the other side of the building, but we appreciated their being considerate of our time. We moved about 2900 lbs., which means (1) we are still well under the van's 3820 lb. payload capacity with (some) room to spare; and (2) we moved more food for Ascension/St. Nicholas in one day than we did for the food pantry at Our Lady of Guadalupe in an entire month. I had laid out a schedule on paper the night before and we were within 2 minutes of my predicted times all the way. The frozen foods stayed frozen. An auspicious start to what MMM hopes will be a great partnership.



**A Full Load and Driver Jim Bick**



# Prayer and Fellowship

## *Feast of Our Lady of Philermo*

Members of the Order of Malta in the Missouri Area assisted at a Mass for the Feast of Our Lady of Philermo at Our Lady of the Pillar Catholic Church on on September 7. Mass was celebrated by Archbishop Mitchell Rozanski and Msgr. Vernon Gardin.



Mass was followed by a dinner at Old Warson Country Club, at which members from the Missouri Area were joined by Fr. David Sellery from the American Association office, who has become a particular friend of our area.



**Greg & Kathy Gantz with Archbishop Rozanski.**



**Members with Fr. Sellery**



## **Mass for the Feast of St. John of the Cross and Advent Dinner**

On December 14, the Missouri Area gathered at the Church of the Annunziata for mass for the Feast of St. John of the Cross, celebrated by Archbishop Rozanski and Msgr. Ramacciotti. Mass was followed by a delightful dinner at St. Louis Country Club, which was at times bittersweet, both because we were reminded of our mission to help the suffering both here in Missouri and across the world and because it marked the end of the term of office of our Area Co-Chairs, Greg and Kathy Gantz. Lead by our new co-chairs, Mike and Helen McCadden, all were warm in their thanks to the Gantzes. We were reminded of the importance of our work by Mike Heck, who spoke on the Holy Family Hospital and introduced a video message from the Grand Master, and by Randy Webber, who reported on Malta Ministry. And we were inspired by the Archbishop's homily and remarks at dinner.



**Archbishop Rozanski**



**Mike Heck Introducing the Grand Master's Video Message**



**The McCaddens leading applause for the Gantzes**



**Randy Webber on Malta Mobile Ministry**



# Investiture in New York

In November a contingent from the Missouri Area took part in the American Association's annual investiture and annual meeting, which was, as usual, inspiring, moving, and great fun. Three new members from our area were invested in the order, Msgr. Ramacciotti as a deputy chaplain, Ron Kreienkamp as a knight and Pat Kreienkamp as a dame.



**Msgr. Ramacciotti at the head of the table at dinner at the University Club**



**Some Members from the Missouri Area after the Investiture**

# 2023 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**