



HOSPITALERS IS PUBLISHED BY THE  
**SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALER ORDER OF ST. JOHN OF  
 JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA™**  
 AMERICAN ASSOCIATION, U.S.A.

# HOSPITALERS

VOLUME 11 SUMMER 2014



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## American Association's 2014 Pilgrimage — A Grace-Filled Moment in Time

*“Walk as a Child of the Light”*

**A**s three hundred and forty-eight pilgrims departed from Newark Liberty International Airport for Lourdes in the final hour of April 30, we could not even imagine what Our Lady had in store for us. Our late departure threatened our ability to begin our pilgrimage at the Rosary Basilica, where Mary embraces all who come to worship with a large smile and outstretched arms. Missing Her greeting was unimaginable, but we took solace in the fact that our Malades, caregivers and our other first time pilgrims would not know what they were missing. As we boarded the buses to the hotel after our very long night on the plane, we were elated to discover that our friends in the Western Association were waiting for us to arrive before starting the Opening Mass, no small feat given the regimen of the Domain schedule. In fact, the Western Association had been waiting for an hour and so the first of many blessings that were to be bestowed upon us in Lourdes began.

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www.  
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### Association Web Site:

Be sure to go our Web site at [www.orderofmaltaamerican.org](http://www.orderofmaltaamerican.org) to find the latest information about the Association, forms needed for new members and new auxiliary members, Area Web sites and much more information about the Association and the Order of Malta. Links are also available to other Association Web sites and the Sovereign Magistry's Web site.



Dear Confreres,

It is always pleasant to communicate with you at this time of year because I have just returned from Lourdes.

The Lourdes Pilgrimage is always such a remarkable experience that fulfills everything that we as Dames and Knights are all about. This year was no exception. Kristy Snyder and Jack Sise our Co-Chairs of the 2014 Pilgrimage did a remarkable job in planning and delivering a very special week with the Blessed Mother and our Malades. Thank you to our very important advance team, Ray La Rose, Carla Gunerard, Matt La Rose and their remarkable leader Jeff Trexler.

When we are in Lourdes where the world wide Order is present with members from every part of the globe, my observation is that everyone is so happy and joyful. I believe when people are happy and joyful, it is a sure sign that God is present.

While in Lourdes, several of our members received recognition for their extensive contributions to the Order and the Association. The Grand Cross of Magistral Grace was awarded to Dr. Richard Milone, our American Association Chancellor, for his many years of service to the Association, on the Board, as Chancellor and as Medical Director for eighteen years for our Lourdes Pilgrimage. Mr. James O'Connor received the Grand Cross of Magistral Grace in Obedience for his role in establishing and serving as President of the office of Malteser International- Americas. Mr. Michael Castine was recognized for his service to the Association through his many years of leadership on the Association's Lourdes Pilgrimage.

The American Association Areas are all very active in celebrating our Patron Saint, John the Baptist's Feast Day. This celebration is so important because it reminds us that our primary purpose as members of the oldest Lay Religious Order in the church is to enhance and increase our spirituality. This in turn increases the works we perform for the poor and the sick while growing in grace and faith. Please remember the American Association in your prayers during that celebratory mass.

I'd like to update you on the lawsuits in which we have been included as defendants. These cases are progressing; the plaintiffs have grown to 36. The parties are engaged in the discovery phase of the cases, and have recently started taking sworn testimony from witnesses. The discovery process will take months. Because these are lawsuits, it would be imprudent for me to discuss them in great detail. But I will say two things. First, nothing has changed: the American Association committed no wrong. In my view, the lawsuits are progressing as expected, and will ultimately confirm that the American Association has no liability. Second, as reported to you in the past, the cost of the lawsuit is being covered by two anonymous gifts for this purpose. Please join me in a prayer of thanksgiving for these gifts.

On a more pleasant note, our Hospitaller and Vice Hospitaller, Tom Reedy and Dr. Peter Kelly provided our membership with several opportunities to attend retreats, one on Long Island, NY and another in Lutz, Florida. Both were well attended and the retreat masters were outstanding and well worth the two days that were spent at each retreat. The next retreat is at the Seminary in Mundelein, Illinois from October 10th to October 12th. I highly recommend that you take the time to attend.

**NEW MEMBERS**

The Admissions Committee recommended and the Board of Councillors approved the submission of seventy candidates to the Sovereign Council for their review and approval of our candidates. So many members are involved in identifying and shepherding through these candidates; your efforts are appreciated. The quality of our candidates bodes well for the future of the Association and the Order. We look forward to seeing each of them at the Investiture in November at Saint Patrick's Cathedral.

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Photo by Photo Lacaze

## A Retrospective on the Lourdes Pilgrimage

Good morning. It is my great honor to appear before you today to talk about my family's experience in Lourdes this past year. Our story begins with a brave little boy named Oliver who had been feeling pretty crummy for a long time, and it just never seemed to get better.

Christmas Eve, 2012. My wife, Sybil and I are with our son, Oliver, at Saint Mary's Hospital in West Palm Beach. His doctor had decided that it was time to know definitively what was going on with him, and that it couldn't wait. I remember thinking to myself many times during the 6 hours that we were there that day, between prayers and consoling our son, that no parent should ever have to see their child suffer, and that seeing your frightened, sick child in a hospital bed is one of the most heart-wrenching things that a parent can witness.

That day would end in relief at finally knowing the truth, anger at the outcome, and hope for a treatment plan. A course of action was prescribed, medicine procured, and a new regimen begins.

Fast forward a couple of months to when we were first contacted by the Order of Malta. Unbeknownst to us, Oliver's name had been submitted to the Order as a candidate to journey with the group on their yearly pilgrimage to Lourdes, to experience the healing waters of the grotto where St. Bernadette saw the Blessed Mother. Also unbeknownst to us, he had been chosen, and one parent was also invited to join him, all expenses paid. I remember the call from my wife like it was yesterday: "Uh, honey?" she began. "I was just contact-

ed by a woman who said she was from an Order of...Malta, I believe it was. She said we won a trip to Lourdes, France."

"Order of WHAT?", I said. "Oh no, you didn't give them your credit card number, did you?"

Once we got over our initial disbelief and had a chance to do our research, we realized how legitimate this incredible call really was. And once we met Roger, Cindi, and Christina Long, Oliver's Order of Malta representatives, we just knew something magical was about to

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Photo by Bob Reers

*Scott and Sybil Bartel were caregivers for their son, Oliver on the 2013 Lourdes Pilgrimage. He gave this talk at the Healing Mass in the Vero Beach Area which was held prior to the 2014 Pilgrimage. It is printed with his permission.*



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Photo by Bob Rivers

happen. We decided that Sybil and Oliver would be the sponsored guests, and that I would pay my own way if space permitted, as we wanted to do this as a family. Space did permit, and so began our healing adventure.

I have a confession to make: I am not Catholic. Not yet, anyway. But we'll get back to that. If "Occasional-Catholic By Proxy" were a recognized

religion, that would describe me at the time that we went to Lourdes. My wife and son, who had just celebrated his First Communion, are Catholic. I went to Lourdes with an open mind, and I really wasn't sure what to expect. I was not looking for a miracle, but rather an experience of love and support for Oliver, in a place that he had never been, and a cool story to tell his friends. In my wildest dreams, I was not prepared for what really happened.

I like to think that I am a man of more than a few words when pressed, but the reality is that it is hard for me to express what happened in Lourdes. I could tell you about how the Order of Malta waited on Oliver and the rest of the Malades hand and foot, carting them to and fro around the fabled streets of Lourdes in a Voiture (which is a special rickshaw used for ferrying the sick and infirm). I could explain to you how the Order bent over backwards to accommodate Oliver's strict dietary needs, having special foods shipped over so that he could eat without danger. I could show you pictures of the ear-to-ear grin that Oliver had almost the whole time that he was there. I could try to describe to you the other Malades and caregivers that we met, from all walks of life...the other beautiful children that had made the trip as Malades, the friendships that were made, the bonds that were established that week that still persist. I could describe to you the most moving masses by Cardinals, Archbishops, and priests in surroundings so magnificent that you'd long to be there. Yes, I could talk for a very long time about many things about that trip. But there is something else...something much more profound. Something...life-changing. And it spoke to me, for the first time in my life. It

We are happy to report that Oliver has been better than he ever has since his diagnosis and the trip to Lourdes.

moved through me. It lifted my heart, and inside, it lit a fire.

### IT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT.

From the moment we got on that plane to Lourdes, I felt the Holy Spirit all around us. I wasn't sure what it was at that moment, but, as the week progressed, it grew stronger and stronger inside me. It was in the people of the Order of Malta, and the sacrifice and giving that they made. It was in my wife's and son's eyes. It was in that crisp, clear, magical water. And, oh, my goodness, was ever it at the grotto at midnight that one night I went to pray with some of my new Malta friends, asking for the Lord to pay special attention to our little boy. It was there that the Blessed Mother looked down on me, and, as I stared back up at her, awestruck, I just knew. I felt it. Oliver was going to be okay. And God had a plan for me.

We are happy to report that Oliver has been better than he ever has since his diagnosis and the trip to Lourdes. His doctor has done his part, and our Lord has done the rest. We just celebrated 1 year since Oliver was in that hospital, and the prognosis is very good.

Then there is me, the 'Occasional-Catholic by Proxy'. The Holy Spirit moves as powerfully in me right now as it did that week in Lourdes. And God's plan for me? He wants me to become Catholic, which I am happy to report will happen at Easter vigil this year, where I will also be baptized and confirmed with my fellow catechumen. But that's just the beginning. The Holy Spirit has inspired

both Sybil and me to give of ourselves to the poor, sick, and infirm, just as was done for our son. And we have answered that call by joining the Order of Malta to share our blessings and help to do the work of the Lord. My lovely wife Sybil became an Auxiliary member shortly after

Lourdes last year, and I will take my place beside her once I become Catholic.

Thank you, Roger, Cindi, and Christina Long, for being such an inspiration to us, for your love and support of our family, your wisdom, and your friendship. You are true role models for us to emulate ourselves after on what it means to be good Catholics and stewards. And thank you to the entire Order of Malta organization, for the incredibly noble and important work that you do in caring for those in need. I can't tell you how proud my family is to stand with you in your mission.

In closing, I'd like to leave you all with a word that has become the cornerstone of my faith since that trip to Lourdes: Believe. Believe that you can be healed. Believe that God's love is in you, that the Holy Spirit surrounds you and nourishes you. It is real, and it can be miraculous.



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## Malteser International — The Order of Malta at Work around the Globe

### *Philippines: Starting over after Typhoon Haiyan*

**17**-year-old Mayeth lives on Samar Island, the largest in the Eastern Visayas. Until last November, Mayeth was a happy teenager, without a care in the world; her family led a good life and even owned a small business.

Then came the fateful morning that changed everything: on November 8, 2013, Typhoon Haiyan swept through the Philippines, leaving death and destruction behind. More than 6,000 people lost their lives; four million lost their homes and are still living in makeshift tents or temporary shelters. One million homes were destroyed, and millions lost their source of income. Mayeth is one of 14 million people whose lives were forever changed that day. “The typhoon hit our family hard,” she tells.

Immediately after the disaster, Malteser International and Order of Malta Philippines sent relief packages containing food, household and hygiene articles to the disaster regions on Samar and Bantayan Islands. “We were so happy about the rice and the canned foods – they lasted for several weeks,” Mayeth says. “But the pots and pans, towels and blankets were also a great help.” The emergency goods helped some 20,000 people survive in the weeks following Haiyan.

After the basic needs of the residents Mayeth’s village were met, it was time to help them recover their livelihoods. Most of the harvest had been destroyed by the typhoon, so Malteser International helped 320 families plant their fields anew with new farming tools and seeds. “Thanks to our new sprinkler, we don’t have to carry heavy water buckets anymore. That way, we have more time and energy to work in the fields,” Mayeth says. Some residents also received construction tools such as wheelbarrows and shovels in order to remove the debris and rubble from their villages. 2,500 children went back to school in 40 large-capacity tents, which Malteser International provided to serve as temporary classrooms. The new notebooks, backpacks and pencils allowed the children to make a fresh start in the school year. “The return to our everyday routine at school also helps to take our minds away from the horrible memories of the typhoon,” Mayeth says.

In four villages on Bantayan and Samar islands, where 80 to 95 percent of the homes were either heavily damaged or completely destroyed, Malteser International will help the residents rebuild 700 homes and make them resistant to future storms. Our engineers

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and technicians will train the homeowners and coach them through construction and repairs. Our teams will also help repair and improve the villages' water supply systems, build latrines and organize hygiene campaigns.

For the many residents on Samar who lost their means to provide for their families, Malteser International will provide support and counseling so they can build up new businesses and generate income. The projects will be based on the residents' ideas and wishes, and will be planned and brought to life by the residents themselves. "We can do many things on our own. But we can reach so much more together," Mayeth exclaims. "We will put all the help we've received to good use and carry out our projects in the best way possible. Even the smallest gestures are important. Together, all of these small things are a huge help for our village."

To find out more about Malteser International's relief efforts in the Philippines, visit [www.malteser-international.org](http://www.malteser-international.org).

### **AMBITIOUS PROJECT IMPROVES HEALTH CARE FOR REMOTE COLOMBIAN TRIBE**

When Dr. Carlos Omeñaca, a Miami physician specializing in infectious diseases and a Knight of the Cuban Association of the Order of Malta, heard from a patient about a remote indigenous village in the middle of the Colombian Sierra Nevada where there was great need for health care, he did not think twice. He and his wife Tanya packed their bags and embarked on a long and difficult journey to find out how they could help.

To reach the village, the Omeñacas had to face a bumpy ride on a 4x4, then a raft crossing of the river, followed by a three-hour mule ride. The area is inhabited by various indigenous groups, the largest being the Arhuaco. Because the region is so hard to reach, the Arhuaco people are often left without any health care. The Colombian government sends two to three doctors to the region every four to six months. "The Arhuaco people are largely marginalized by the authorities," Omeñaca explains. "The government alone is not able to cover their medical needs."

So when the leaders of the Arhuaco community requested that a new health clinic be built on the outskirts of the village of Bunkwimake, Omeñaca turned to Malteser International, the Order of Malta's humanitarian relief agency, for help. The

agency, which opened its American headquarters in Miami last November, specializes in emergency relief, health and water programs for vulnerable and marginalized communities around the globe.

The Omeñacas, Malteser International, and the Cuban and Colombian Associations of the Order of Malta teamed up to create the DUNI Project — "Duni", in the Arhuaco language, means "thank you". "We are grateful for the opportunity to work with the Arhuaco people," Omeñaca says. "As much as we will be there to help improve the health conditions in their villages, we will also learn a lot from their millenary culture and spirituality. For this opportunity, we say 'thanks'".

The region's nearly 3,000 residents struggle with many deadly, but

preventable health problems, ranging from malnutrition and maternal and infant diseases such as pre-eclampsia to tropical diseases, tuberculosis, and snake bites. In addition to helping to design and build the clinic together with the village residents, the Duni Project will coordinate with the government health authorities to provide at least two additional medical missions with Colombian doctors to the region every year. A water analysis and sanitation project will also follow. The project counts on support and guidance from the Fundación Pro-Sierra Nevada, a local NGO working for ecological conservation and protecting the cultural heritage of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta region.

*For more information, visit [www.duniweb.org](http://www.duniweb.org).*

**Relief in numbers:**  
**Typhoon Haiyan emergency relief**  
99,200 pounds of rice and 42,000 cans of food  
36,000 toothbrushes and soap bars  
50 large-capacity tents which served as emergency medical spaces, classrooms and playrooms  
6,500 water canisters and 7,500 blankets  
320 different types of seeds for small farmers  
Equipment for 5 electricians for restoring power supply to four villages





Photos courtesy of Michelle Babyak

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## American Association's 2014 Pilgrimage — A Grace-Filled Moment in Time

Each year, as we travel to Lourdes, we look for a message, a sign from Our Blessed Mother, a moment that will satisfy us until the next time we find ourselves in Her presence. There are many signs of faith in Lourdes, too numerous to count, revealing themselves daily. On Sunday afternoon, one of our Malades returned to God, welcomed there by the outstretched arms of His Mother. On Sunday evening, after emerging from a prayer service in his memory at St. Joseph's chapel, we learned that the Federal and Western Associations, after learning of our loss, held our position to lead the Candlelight procession. We were grateful for their solidarity, but we were not prepared for the sight in front of us as we

crossed over the bridge and continued walking towards the Statue of the Crowned Virgin. Immediately our eyes were drawn to a group of women, Dames of Malta, linked arm and arm forming a barrier so that we could begin the procession. As I focused in on one of them, she smiled. At that moment, her act of generosity, kindness and selflessness brought tears to my eyes. Often we forget, because we are so busy sharing this special place with our guests, that each year, on the first Sunday in May, members of the Order of Malta from around the world all gather in Lourdes with a common goal, to serve the sick. We are all there working together to serve out our Order's mission. However, this notion has never been so clear as it was on this first Sunday in Lourdes 2014. This first Sunday, all members of the Order of Malta were working together to honor James Long, our Malade who had returned home to Our Father hours earlier. And at that moment, Our Lady's message was clear, and the

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"A candle burns in the Grotto in gratitude to all whose generosity made the miracle of Lourdes possible for our 2014 Malades and their caregivers!"

Kristy Snyder, DM  
Jack Sise, KM  
2014 Pilgrimage Co-Chairs

Mary Beth Fessler, DM  
Bill Fessler, DDS, KM  
2015 Pilgrimage Co-Chairs

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Daily Prayer of Our Order was put into action. "Give me the strength I need to carry out this my resolve, forgetful of myself, learning ever from the Holy Gospel a spirit of deep and generous Christian devotion, striving ever to promote God's glory, the world's peace, and all that may benefit the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem" took on a whole new meaning.

Throughout the pilgrimage, our entire group seemed to personify this verse of our daily prayer. During the week we had all forgotten about ourselves and quickly attended to the needs of our Malades, their caregivers and our fellow Knights and Dames. Differences melted and we rejoiced in our common ground. Each member of the pilgrimage was happy to serve and the result was a deeply spiritual pilgrimage. From the start, we were humbled by the opportunity to serve as your co-chairs. In the end, we felt so blessed to have had the opportunity to serve with a group so devoted to the mission of our Order.

*Our Lady of Lourdes, pray for us.*

Jack Sise, KM  
Co-Chair

Kristy Snyder, DM  
Co-Chair

## American Association's Lourdes Pilgrimage Themes over the Years

Each year, the American Association's Lourdes Pilgrimage co-chairs have chosen a theme in which to focus the energies and resources of the pilgrimage. Prayer, thought and communication are channeled through theme. The 2014 theme was "Walk as a Child of the Light."

Themes for the last decade include the following:

- 2013**    **Our Lady Queen of Peace**
- 2012**    **Ave Maria**
- 2011**    **Life with Christ through Mary**
- 2010**    **Renewing Our Vocations**
- 2009**    **A Personal Journey**
- 2008**    **Sent to Love and Serve**
- 2007**    **Be Reconciled with God**
- 2006**    **Come Be My Light**
- 2005**    **Be Not Afraid**
- 2004**    **The Sign of the Rock**

*Order of Malta,  
American Association  
XXIX Lourdes Pilgrimage 2014  
April 30<sup>th</sup> - May 6<sup>th</sup>*



*"Walk as a Child of the Light"*

So many graces and blessings come to those who take part in the pilgrimage. Pilgrims and pilgrimage supporters seek the Blessed Mother's intercession — the same Mother whose apparitions to Saint Bernadette in a marshy plain along a river in the Pyrenees Mountains draw millions to that place each year, the same Mother who told the servants at the wedding feast at Cana to "Do whatever He tells

you," the same Mother whom Christ offered to the world as our own Mother while she stood at the foot of the Cross with Saint John — that Mother! In 2015, the Association will be celebrating its thirtieth Annual Pilgrimage to Lourdes. Registration will begin in September, but it is never too early to start praying for the success of the XXX American Association Lourdes Pilgrimage.



# Lord, Show Us the Father

by the Most Reverend Timothy P. Broglio

Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, Archbishop of the Military Services, USA, delivered this moving homily on the 2014 Lourdes Pilgrimage on Saturday morning at the Grotto

A certain affection coupled with apprehension characterizes my approach to this Feast of the Apostles Philip and James. It was this day in 1990 as I was about to leave Paraguay that the Rector of the Major Seminary of Asunción invited me to preside at the community Mass. I presumed that it would be the celebration of the Apostles and prepared appropriately.

Just a few minutes before the Mass was to begin, I realized that in Paraguay as in many Latin American countries, certain feasts are observed according to the former calendar. Hence, the Mass to be celebrated was that of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. There was no time to adjust the homily, which became a hastily adapted Spanish version of a reflection on the Cross as an avenue for apostolic witness!

*“Lord, show us the Father.”*

Philip’s request expresses the desire of every believer of all times and explains our presence at the Grotto this morning. However, it is very much like the famous situation of a person who goes all around his or her house to look for a pair of glasses, only to discover that the spectacles are already on one’s nose. Or it is similar to the person who looks high and low for a key and discovers that it is right where it is supposed to be. Certainly, we ask our Blessed Mother to guide us to the Father and the Lord invites us to the Eucharist, to look at Him, the image of the Father, and to transmit what we have received to future generations.

Indeed the passage from St. Paul, the oldest part of the New Testament, invites us to taste the role of tradition, of handing down, what united the Christian community from the beginning. The Resurrection of the Lord, which we continue to celebrate in these days, is known to us, because it has been transmitted to us by the Apostles, whose witness has inserted us into the stream of salvation history. In all probability what Paul repeats is an ancient profession of faith.

*“Lord, show us the Father.”*

To see God is one of the deepest desires of the human person. We celebrate the Resurrection of Christ, but we want His victory over sin and death to be perceptible in our bodies. We hope that you, the malades, will experience that glorious presence in a way that heals you. We pray that the Lord will renew us through our prayer at His mother’s shrine.

The Psalms are prayers which reveal the deepest desires of the heart. “My soul thirsts for God.” This is the desire to know a person deeply and develop a friendship with him. We all know the difference between thinking about someone, seeing him or her and being in their company. For a quarter of a century, my mission was to make the Holy Father present in faraway places. Certainly, we can send and receive letters, organize a video-conference, or send an e-mail. All are ways to be present, but as a Marine told me the other day in Afghanistan, “Skype” is great, but it is not the same thing as holding your child in your arms. Nothing really replaces physical presence.

Our most fundamental and perfect meeting with Christ is what we are doing now: celebrating the Eucharist. We meet the Risen Lord under the appearances of bread and wine. Ordinary food items are transformed to allow us entrance into the divine world.

Consuming Holy Communion, we experience the opposite of what happens with ordinary food. Usually, the body transforms what is consumed into the energy necessary for the organism. With Holy Communion we are transformed by the elements into the dwelling place of God.

So we come to this sanctuary, often called the heart of the Church, to seek the intercession of Our Mother for the malades among us and for those who remain at home and have asked us to pray for them here at the Grotto. We beg our Mother for healing and serenity. As Archbishop Vigneron said on Thursday afternoon, the grace of healing manifests itself in many ways.

Touching was the decision by Pope Francis to make an initial visit to *Salus populi romani* the day after his election. He would know that the image is the dearest to the Roman people and he was, as it were, placing his ministry as Bishop of that diocese under her special protection. We come to this shrine at Lourdes with similar sentiments. We are members of a believing family (over one billion) and we have experienced a mother’s love and offer a son or daughter’s care.

Having God as our Father and Mary as our mother brings home the relationship among all of us. We are brothers and sisters and we must care for each other. Part of that task is to appreciate how it all fits together. St. Paul continually stresses the idea of communion and uses many images to describe that

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unity perfected in the faith. Do we not appreciate that all the more here at Lourdes where we gather with the members of the Order of Malta from various Associations in the US, along with our fellow Knights and Dames from Ireland and Australia.

*“Lord, show us the Father.”*

It has been said that a picture is worth a thousand words. That is all the more true when we speak about living our Catholic faith. The most convincing argument still is the way Catholics live. The pagans already said it in the first centuries: see how those Christians love one another. Even Lenin said it: “if Christians would practice evangelical charity, there would never be a power on earth capable of opposing it.”

To see the Father, we must practice the works of Jesus, show that His face is ever alive and active in the Church. We come to the grotto also to sustain our Christian lifestyle. We know that it is not always easy to live according to the word of God. We look for our Lady and our Lord to lead us on the way. We seek the example of the great saints so that we can be little saints ourselves.

As members of the Body of Christ we are challenged to reflect the light of Christ in every time and place. We must make His face shine for all people. Cardinal Bergoglio, just before he was elected Holy Father, reminded the other Cardinals that the Church must reflect Christ, lest she be lost in herself.

Let us see Christ in those we help in these days and let us see Him also in those who help.

*“Lord, show us the Father.”*

The great theologian Hans Urs Von Balthasar reminded us: “Whoever intends to listen to, and to heed, the Gospel...

see[s] the total picture of Mary, of her person and function, light up. Anyone who fails to do so...can hardly be called an attentive hearer of the Word.” We cannot really read the Scriptures and not be taken in by the role of Mary and by her fidelity to the call of Almighty God. The Blessed Virgin Mary teaches us to hear, contemplate, and act on the word of God. She conducts us to her Son.

Despite what anyone might tell you or you might have observed in the day to day working of the parish, Marian spirituality is not an optional private devotion. God wills this woman to be an integral part of our Christian spiritual lives. Remember what the Council says about the first Christian.

“This most Holy Synod deliberately teaches this Catholic doctrine and at the same time admonishes all the sons of the Church that the cult, especially the liturgical cult, of the Blessed Virgin, be generously fostered, and the practices and exercises of piety, recommended by the Magisterium of the Church toward her in the course of centuries be made of great moment, and those decrees, which have been given in the early days regarding the cult of images of Christ, the Blessed Virgin and the saints, be religiously observed...Let the faithful remember moreover that true devotion consists neither in sterile or transitory affection, nor in a certain vain credulity, but proceeds from true faith, by which we are led to know the excellence of the Mother of God, and we are moved to a filial love toward our mother and to the imitation of her virtues.

Jesus Christ is so evident here—just like those glasses on your nose or the key in its place. We ask Philip and James and all the saints to walk with us so as to guide us to the full and brilliant presence of the Father!

## Mary, a Unique Icon of Faith

by Very Rev. David G. Caron, OP

*Most of the sermons, talks, and reflections are spoken from the hearts of the homilists with no record in print. We are fortunate to have a copy of the reflection given by Magistral Chaplain of the Order, the Very Reverend David G. Caron, OP, from Saint Louis, which was delivered in Saint Bernadette’s Chapel on Friday morning of the pilgrimage.*

In preparing myself for the Lourdes Pilgrimage I always realize that this is my yearly chance to see many of the Knights and Dames. Yes, sometime we see each other in New York in November but sometimes calendars, family events, religious congregational expectations for me and other reason keep some away. So for me, it is a blessing to come here and to spend these days with so many good and faith-filled people, during the Easter season, ...and we leave here recommitted to Christ in a new and different way...as well as recommitted to

taking care of the poor and sick. It’s almost like it’s New Years’ eve and we are making resolutions. And you, our Malades and caregivers, we come here annually and to assist you...in order for you to have your pilgrimage be spiritually successful but can I tell you something? You do more for us than you can ever imagine—for you are the icon of Christ for us.

As I was reflecting on the Lourdes Pilgrimage as being a “sort of” New Years’ experience for me, I couldn’t help but think...No matter how many times we exchange with others—the words, “Happy New Year,” none of us has any idea what the new year will bring, whether it will bring happiness or loss, great success or failure, prosperity or poverty, health or sickness, peace or war. We don’t really know if it will be HAPPY! Isn’t that right? Think about all that has transpired in your life since last year when we (some of us) were here together! Think about all that has

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transpired in the world since then! This journey, called the Christian life, is a journey into the unknown!

And as we venture into the unknown of life, the Church sets before us, this person we call Mary, the Mother of God; the Mother of Jesus and here... in this place she has the title, Our Lady of Lourdes, —all to show us how to live throughout the year in a way in which, no matter what occurs to us, in us and in spite of us, it will be a truly blessed year.



St. Paul writes in his beautiful letter to the Romans, “Neither death, nor life, nor present things, nor future things, nor anything under all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 8:38-39), and the Blessed Virgin Mary; Our Lady of Lourdes, shows us how to unite whatever happens to us— to God and to God’s saving plan. It’s important for all of us — Knights, Dames, chaplains, Malades and caregivers—all of us, to learn from Mary how to live by faith, how to entrust everything with confidence to God, no matter how humanly difficult it may be.

Friends, for us Mary is a unique icon of faith. While still in her teens, Mary was asked by God to venture into an unknown future, filled with both joys and sufferings, the purpose and end of which she could not possibly understand in advance. We think of the angel’s message to Mary—that she was to be the mother of God’s Son—as something wonderful. And it is!

To Mary, however, it initially was frightening—it meant being an unmarried mother in a little village, where everyone would talk. To her it meant a possible rejection from St. Joseph with whom she was engaged. How could he understand that she was impregnated miraculously and had never been unfaithful to him or to God? It surely meant lots of questions from her parents Joachim and Anne and so many others. But

Mary said “yes” to the invitation brought by the angel! She says, “Fiat” to God with courage regardless.

And that was just the beginning.

There was to be suffering and poverty in this story... beginning at his birth in a stable. There was great confusion when the child Jesus was presented in the temple and Simeon prophesied that he would be the cause for the ruin and the rise of many in Israel, a sign to be contradicted, and that her own heart a sword would pierce. There was great danger in this couple’s escape to Egypt when Herod sought to murder the child. Later, as an adult there would be great pain when Mary saw the people of Nazareth trying to kill her Son, trying to throwing him off the cliff on which Nazareth was built. There was indescribable sorrow when she would witness her Son dying a criminal’s death on Calvary.

Did she understand everything that was happening? The answer is a clear and emphatic. NO! In the Gospel for the Feast of the Holy Family, in January, you may remember that when Mary and Joseph found Jesus in the temple after three days of a frantic search and Jesus asks, “Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I had to be in my Father’s house,” St. Luke tells us very clearly that Mary did not understand Jesus’ words. Even though she didn’t foresee these events or even understand them when they occurred, however, she responded—I would think most often with patience—and with deep faith.

The Church sets Mary before us because we, like her, need faith to journey into the unknown; the unknown of our own lives and Mary’s faith can inspire us.

But in order to understand this inspiration we need to ponder more deeply how it is that she lived by faith. If you remember in the Gospel story of the visit of the Shepherds to Bethlehem (Lk 2:15-20), after Mary had heard all that the shepherds had told her about what the angels had said to them, St. Luke tells us that Mary kept all of these things, reflecting on them in her heart. We heard the similar words on the Feast of the Holy Family in Lk 2:41-52, that after finding Jesus in the temple, his mother “kept all of these things in her heart.” These words are a very important expression and central to how Mary’s faith worked. She reflected upon events in her heart. Perhaps that is what we are supposed to be doing as we look upon our lives through the eyes of faith... finding time to reflect; to contemplate as we go about the important work of caring for the sick and the poor as well as defending (and I’ll add—LIVING) the faith!

In his 2008 apostolic exhortation on the Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church, *Verbum Domini*, Pope Emeritus, Benedict said that, “ever attentive to God’s word, [Mary] lives completely attuned to that word; she treasures in her heart the events of her Son, piecing them together as if in a single mosaic.”

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis said of Mary on January

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Ist, the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God,

The “woman” (Mary) became our Mother when she lost her divine Son. Her sorrowing heart was enlarged to make room for all men and women, all, whether good or bad, and she loves them as she loved Jesus. The woman who at the wedding at Cana in Galilee gave her faith-filled cooperation so that the wonders of God could be displayed in the world, at Calvary kept alive the flame of faith in the resurrection of her Son, and she communicates this with maternal affection to each and every person. Mary becomes in this way a source of hope and true joy! She says to us today what she said to the waiters at the wedding feast of Cana: “Do whatever he tells you.” Perhaps these should be the words that we ponder in our hearts?

In using the expression “kept all these things in her heart.” Mary pieced all of the events of her life, including the great challenges, into a much larger mosaic, in a masterpiece puzzle God was making in her. That’s what she did in her Magnificat (Lk 1: 46-55), interweaving so many threads from the Hebrew Scriptures and applying them all to her own circumstances.

That was a pretty typical spiritual posture for the Jews of Mary’s time, as we see in Psalm 136 which they would often pray, seeing how all God’s former actions are signs of how “his love endures forever.” Mary’s story and this Psalm should be something that helps us to remember God’s love when various difficult “puzzle pieces” need to be integrated into this understanding of the whole of our human lives. Mary shows us how to respond to all that we confront—no matter how difficult—and to do that with faith, piecing together all of the events of our life and connecting them to the events of Jesus’ life and to understand our ups and downs within God’s plan of salvation. And this, admittedly, is difficult.

Back in the early 1980s, in a book called *Seek what is Above*, the then future Pope Benedict plumbed the depths of what we can learn from Mary’s contemplative heart. Pope Emeritus Benedict said,

“Memory requires more than a merely external registering of events. We can only receive and hold fast to the uttered word if we are involved inwardly. If something does not touch me, it will not penetrate; it will dissolve in the flux of memories and lose its particular face. Understanding depends on a certain measure of inner identification with what is to be understood. It depends on love. I cannot really understand something for which I have no love whatsoever. So the transmission of the message needs more than the kind of memory that stores telephone numbers: what is required is a memory of the heart, in

which I invest something of myself. Involvement and faithfulness are not opposites: they are interdependent.”

Friends, in St. Luke’s gospel, Mary stands as the embodiment of the Church’s memory. She (Mary and the church) is alert, taking events in and inwardly pondering them. Thus Luke says [literally] that she (Mary) ‘preserved them together’ in her heart, she ‘put them together’ and ‘held on to them.’ Mary compares the words and events of faith with the ongoing experience of her own life and thus discovers the full human depth of each detail, which gradually fits into the total picture—like a mosaic. In this way faith becomes understanding and so it can be handed on to others: it is no longer a merely external word but is saturated with the experience of a life, translated into human terms; now it can be translated, in turn, into the lives of others. Thus Mary becomes a model for the Church’s mission, that is, that of being a dwelling place for the Word, preserving and keeping the Church safe in times of confusion, protecting the church, as it were, from the elements. Is it any wonder why St. Bernadette finds the “Lady” in her grotto vision so attractive? Is it any wonder why we and so many others, the abled and the disabled in body,

mind and spirit come so far to encounter her, here at Lourdes? And she points us to Christ!

Friends, think about this with me for a moment. Hence Mary becomes for us—the interpretation of the parable (MT 13) of the seed sown in good soil

and yielding fruit a hundredfold. Mary is not the thin surface earth that cannot accommodate roots; she is not the barren earth that the sparrows have pecked bare; nor is she overgrown by the weeds of affluence that inhibit new growth. No, Mary is a human being with depth. She lets the word sink deep into her. And that Word calls her to action!

And so, we come, year after year to this holy, sacred place, in the season of Easter, having been sprinkled with holy water to renew our baptism and we come to a place surrounded by water (we take tons of it back in a plane) and hear Mary say...come to the water; come and process—All to assist us in Christian transformation. So the process of fruitful transformation can take place in a twofold direction: Mary saturates the Word with her life (her DNA), as it were, putting the sap and energy of her life at the Word’s disposal; but as a result, conversely, her life is permeated, enriched and deepened by the energies of that Word, which gives everything its meaning.

Malta friends, as we come before our Eucharistic Lord, I know it sounds crazy—but it does feel like New Years for me! And if it does for you too, let’s make some resolutions together—and not the ones you don’t

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The Church sets Mary before us  
because we, like her, need faith to  
journey into the unknown.



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keep. (Save those for January!) And so, if your faith makes you ready to answer please do:

- Do you resolve to live out your baptismal commitments?
- Do you resolve to turn your soul and your life over to Christ and his Church—especially through the sacraments?
- Do you resolve to love people—the easy to love and those who are not so easy to love?
- Do you resolve to study and live the Scriptures and the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, especially the first principle—that all people are made in the image and likeness of God?
- Do you, as consumers of earth’s resources, resolve to consume compassionately?
- Do you resolve to be people of gratitude—instead of being proud of your gifts and successes, instead being grateful to the One who gave you

these gifts—and then share the fruit of your success with others?

- Do you (do we) resolve as an Order in the church (the Order of Malta) to model Jesus in the world by what we say and by what we do; especially with the sick and the poor—defending and living our faith? Friends, this list is not exhausted. Later, add your own resolutions.

And so, now we turn to Mary, our great mother, model and master of faith, and we ask her to teach us and intercede for us that this may be the most faithful year of our life, regardless of what comes our way, so that it may be a truly happy and blessed year leading us one step closer to eternal life. Amen.

*You were chosen by the Father, You were chosen for the Son, You were chosen from all women and for women, shining one.*

*Gentle woman, quiet light, morning star, so strong and bright, gentle Mother, peaceful dove, teach us wisdom, teach us love.*

■ HIGHLIGHTS

## Strategic Plan Implementation Committee Recommendations Approved by the Board of Councillors

At its May meeting, the Board of Councillors reviewed the recommendations of the Strategic Plan Implementation Committee. Chancellor Richard Milone, MD, chaired the Committee and presented the recommendations to the Board. The members of the Board discussed all of the elements of the recommendations and approved them.

Dr. Milone indicated that the plan focuses on four key subjects important to the future of the Association and its members. The first is to give members greater opportunities to enhance their spirituality. The purpose of membership in the Order is to progress on the path to a more spiritual life. Plans will include continued opportunities for spiritual retreats, a new focus on education related to the main texts of the Church regarding the Lay Apostolate, and a reflection on the requirements for lifetime membership in a religious lay Order.

The plan also calls out the critical need to grow the Association’s membership. Dr. Milone said that Committee recommended that this requires the Board to work more closely with the Areas to develop and execute plans to identify candidates, including younger, active Catholics. A number of initiatives will be developed over the coming year to bring the Board and the Areas together to focus on membership.



A third recommendation is to continue the focus of the grants program on the Area Grants, the key Order of Malta worldwide projects, and on prison ministry. Dr. Milone explained that future Foundation funding will be directed to these areas as it was in 2014. Association resources, as they are available, will be used to invest in strengthening and growing the Association. This will be done through leadership meetings and training, Area Development funding, and Association activities to be held in the Areas.

Finally, the Committee recommended and the Board approved a strategy to broaden the Communications efforts of the Association. Dr. Milone shared with the Board a short piece, designed to provide an easy-to-understand summary of what the Order and the Association are all about. The current draft is under review and will be released soon. Plans are being developed to create several communication pieces for

publication in the Hospitaller newsletter related to topics fundamental to the purpose and meaning of our religious lay Order of Malta.

Dr. Milone said that the members of the Committee, Mrs. Gail Bernardino, Mr. Kenneth Craig, Mrs. Sheila Feitelberg, Dr. Peter Kelly, and Mr. Christopher Poch worked hard to put the plan in place; he noted that the plan has been approved by the Board and the implementation plans are now in the hands of the appropriate Board Committees.

(continued from page 2)



**STRATEGIC PLAN**

Our Chancellor Dr. Richard Milone and Joe Feitelberg chaired the committee to develop a two year strategic plan for the American Association going forward. Two years was chosen rather than previous 5 year strategic plans because the world is moving so fast and changes are instant ones. This way

we will be able to react to the world changes in a more timely fashion. The Board at its May meeting adopted an implementation plan that will be used to put the plan in effect. You will be getting more information regarding the Strategic Plan as it is developed by the Board Committees.

I attended the Chapter General meeting in Rome in June. Every 5 years a Chapter General meeting takes place. The purpose of this event is to elect the Sovereign Council, the Government Council and the Board of Auditors. The leadership is also elected at this meeting – the Grand Commander, the Grand Chancellor, the Grand Hospitaller, and the Receiver of the Common Treasurer. All the leadership elected by the Chapter General serve 5 year terms. The Grand Master serves

for life and is only replaced by election upon his death. I sent you an e-mail regarding the results – they are also available on our website.

I look forward to working closely with the leadership, including Geoff Gamble, current President of the Federal Association who was just elected to the Sovereign Council and John Dunlap from the American Association, who was re-elected to the Sovereign Council. Both men are great leaders and have worked closely with me over the years to strengthen the Order. We pray for all those elected at the Chapter General, that the Holy Spirit may guide them in their work for the Order.

I thank all of the Dames and Knights and Auxiliary for all of your many good works you accomplish. I am particularly grateful to our Area Chairs and Area Hospitallers who achieve such success in all of our Areas.

Thank you and God Bless,

Jack E. Pohrer, GCM  
President

■ HIGHLIGHTS

**American Association Sponsors 2014 Retreats**

Thomas J. Reedy, KMOB, Association Hospitaller and Peter Kelly, MD, KM, Association Vice Hospitaller, announced that the American Association’s Fall Retreat, scheduled for October 10 to October 12, 2014, will be held north of Chicago at the University of Saint Mary of the Lake/Mundelein Seminary, in Mundelein, Illinois,

Father Eric Hollas, a face familiar to many of our members, will be the retreat master. Father Hollas, OSB, is a Benedictine monk and priest of Saint John’s Abbey in Collegeville, MN. He led the Association’s retreat in Long Island in the Fall of 2013.

It was also confirmed that Father Robert Barron, author, speaker and theologian, founder of the global media ministry Word on Fire ([www.WordOnFire.org](http://www.WordOnFire.org)) and creator of the documentary series, Catholicism, will say Mass on Saturday morning as part of the Retreat. Father Barron was the Association’s Annual Dinner Speaker in November 2013 in New York City.

Registration materials have been distributed. Please reserve your place and mark your calendars for a trip to Chicago for the weekend of October 10th to October 12th. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Kathy Trabucco in the Executive Office at [kt@orderofmaltaamerican.org](mailto:kt@orderofmaltaamerican.org) or at 212-371-1522.





■ **ON MEMBERSHIP**

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### Identifying Good Candidates for Membership is Our Responsibility

As a sponsor, please keep in mind that you must have personal knowledge of the candidate and affirm that they are active and practicing Catholics. We look to you to ensure that the individual meets the Order's membership criteria and to the best of your knowledge supports the Church's position on matters of faith and morals.

If you believe you have identified a potential candidate, please contact your Area Chair(s) so they may work with you to introduce the candidate to the Order. To begin their Year of Preparation for Investiture in November 2015, candidates must submit the first two pages of the membership application (which may be found on the Association's website) to their Area Chair(s) by August 31st. Applications received after this date cannot be guaranteed for 2015 consideration.

The Board of Councillors and the Membership Committee in particular thank you for all that you do in the name of the Order and for helping to support the growth of our Association. With your assistance, we can be assured that the Order will continue to grow and be, as Pope Benedict XVI said in his reflections to those gathered in St. Peter's Basilica for our 900th Anniversary celebration one year ago, "an effective expression and living testimony of evangelical love."

■ **IN MEMORIAM**

### Deceased Members: January 1, 2014 – June 3, 2014

- |                                   |                      |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Vincent Bernard Carlesimo, KM     | Verona, NJ           |
| John J. Coleman, KM               | Milton, MA           |
| Edward T. Connolly, MD, KM        | New York, NY         |
| Laurence Pascal DeFazio, MD, KM   | Brooklyn, NY         |
| Alphonse Della-Donna, KM          | Ft. Lauderdale, FL   |
| Gaetana M. Enders, DM             | New York, NY         |
| Fred J. England, KM               | Staten Island, NY    |
| Anne B. Fosbre, PhD, DM           | Sandypoint Brick, NJ |
| Margaret F. Grace, DM             | Manhasset, NY        |
| Donald G. Hoy, KM                 | Ft. Myers, FL        |
| Mary Reilly Hunt, DM              | Mishawaka, IN        |
| Kathryn M. Luff, DM               | New Canaan, CT       |
| James P. Manning, KM              | New York, NY         |
| Philip Anthony Marrassini, MD, KM | Harrison, NY         |
| James W. McCue, KM                | Palm Coast, FL       |
| John A. McGreavy, KM              | Tiverton, RI         |
| John Francis Monroe, Jr, KM       | Milwaukee, WI        |
| Paul B. Murray, GCM               | New Canaan, CT       |
| Claude V. Offray, Jr, KM          | Bernardsville, NJ    |
| Robert H. Quinn, KM               | Dorchester, MA       |
| Robert Charles Radice, KM         | Fort Lauderdale, FL  |
| Steven George Rothmeier, KM       | Naples, FL           |
| Elizabeth J. Sheridan, DM         | Winnetka, IL         |

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**June 24**

Feast of Saint John the Baptist

**September 4**

Board of Councillors Meeting  
(New York City)

**September 8**

Feast of Our Lady of Philermo

**October 10-12**

Association Retreat at Saint Mary of the  
Lake Conference Center, Mundelein, IL

**October 13**

Feast of Blessed Gerard,  
Founder of the Order of Malta

**October 15**

Ballots mailed for American Association  
Elections

**November 13**

Board of Councillors Meeting (NYC)

**November 13**

New Member Orientation (NYC)

**November 14**

Annual Business Meeting (NYC)

**November 14**

Annual Dinner (NYC)

**November 15**

Mass and Presentation (NYC)

■ ON MEMBERSHIP

## Identifying Good Candidates for Membership is Our Responsibility

Just recently, Pope Francis celebrated the first anniversary of his election and I think it is fair to say that we are all marveling at the perspective his papacy has brought in just twelve months. His strong desire to have dialogue with all, the simplicity of his message, and his intense focus on the plight of the poor and the sick has given us all reason to pause and reflect on our own lives. We in the Order of Malta should be energized by the Holy Father's focus on the poor and the sick and see it as an affirmation of our works over the past nine hundred years and a challenge for our future.

As we ponder the future and the work ahead of us, it is crucial that we grow our membership. This past November we were very fortunate to receive 44 Knights and 32 Dames into the Association at our Investiture ceremony in St. Patrick's Cathedral. The Board of Councillors recently approved 70 candidates to be sent to Rome for review and approval. We have several others in preparation, giving us a healthy number but still not sufficient to boost our ranks to our desired levels. As has been emphasized by the Grand Master and our president, Jack Pohrer, if our vitality is to be preserved and our capacity to perform works increased, we must grow and focus attention on identifying candidates across the age spectrum, especially younger candidates. The average age for our Candidates this year is about fifty-two.

As we continue our 2015 membership effort, we would once again like to solicit your help in sponsoring candidates. Reflect on how membership in the Order has affected your life, deepened your faith, and challenged you to engage more deeply in service to the sick and the poor. Look within your parishes, your professions, and your circle of friends. Consider your children or siblings and how membership across generations could deepen the spirituality and tradition of your families. Think about the Auxiliary with whom you work and whether they have been asked to consider becoming a Knight or Dame. Also, please bear in mind that whilst candidates of all ages are welcome, the Board of Councillors recently lowered the minimum age for membership to 25 and that fees for members under 40 are lower. Age shouldn't be an obstacle to membership if a person has passion in their heart and is ready to make a lifelong commitment!

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### Our Mission

The American Association of the Order of Malta, carefully observing the centuries-old tradition of the Order, has as its mission, to enhance the glory of God through the sanctification of its members, through dedication to and defense of the faith and the Holy See and through service to our fellow man, especially the sick and poor.

#### EXECUTIVE OFFICE

1011 First Avenue, Suite 1350  
New York, NY 10022-4112 USA

Telephone: (212) 371-1522 Fax: (212) 486-9427

[www.orderofmaltaamerican.org](http://www.orderofmaltaamerican.org)

#### EXECUTIVE OFFICE STAFF

**Rev. Dr. Jeffrey R. Trexler**  
Executive Director

**Raymond J. LaRose**  
Assistant Executive Director,  
Newsletter, Board Meetings

**Kathleen L. Lyons**  
Controller

**Maria Di Giacomo**  
Administrative Assistant  
for Member Services

**Carla L. Gunerard**  
Program Coordinator  
for Major Events

**Matthew T. LaRose**  
IT Systems Manager/Assistant to the Controller

**Miquan A. McLaurin**  
Administrative/Accounting Assistant

**Ann R. Peabody**  
Program Support — Lourdes, Annual Dinner

**Kathleen Glynn Trabucco**  
Administrative/Communications Project Support

**Design/Production:** Rappy & Company, Inc.

Articles for future issues of this  
newsletter should be mailed to:

Raymond J. LaRose  
American Association

1011 First Avenue, Suite 1350, New York, NY 10022  
or sent via email to: [rlarose@orderofmaltaamerican.org](mailto:rlarose@orderofmaltaamerican.org)

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#### Change of address (physical or virtual)?

Please notify the New York office of all  
changes of address.

If your primary mailing address or your e-mail address changes, please be sure to notify the American Association's administrative team. Just send a note to the New York office or send an e-mail to [Miquan@orderofmaltaamerican.org](mailto:Miquan@orderofmaltaamerican.org) or call our office at (212) 371-1522. Maintaining correct addresses ensures that you will receive mailings on a timely basis. It can also save the American Association a significant amount of time and money.