

SPIRITUALITY IN ACTION

What's going on throughout the Areas of the American Association of the Order of Malta

AUGUST 2015

INSPIRATION FROM THE AREAS AND THE ORDER OF MALTA WORLDWIDE:

POPE FRANCIS NOMINATES THE NEW PRELATE OF THE SOVEREIGN ORDER OF MALTA

Rome, July 4, 2015

Pope Francis has today nominated Monsignor Jean Laffitte as the new Prelate of the Sovereign Order of Malta.

Born in France, at Oloron-Sainte-Marie in 1952, Monsignor Laffitte graduated in Political Science at the University of Toulouse in 1973. He attended courses at the University of Cambridge in 1979 and the University of Salamanca in 1980, and entered the Pontifical



French Seminary in Rome in 1984, reading philosophy and theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University and moral theology at the John Paul II Pontifical Institute. Titular Bishop of Entrevaux, he is the current secretary of the Pontifical Council for the Family. Monsignor Laffitte succeeds Monsignor Angelo Acerbi, who is retiring after 14 years in the post.

In welcoming Monsignor Laffitte, the Grand Master of the Order Fra' Matthew Festing acknowledged with great warmth the work and dedication of the retiring Prelate, Monsignor Angelo Acerbi: "It is with the deepest gratitude that I thank Monsignor Acerbi for his dedication and commitment over these 14 years and for the strong spiritual guidance he has given the Order. And I extend to Monsignor Jean Laffitte a most cordial welcome and good wishes for the work he now undertakes with us."

The Prelate is the religious superior of the clergy of the Order with priestly functions. He ensures that the religious and priestly life of the Chaplains and their apostolate are followed according to the discipline and spirit of the Order. He supports the Grand Master and the Grand Commander in supervising the religious life and devotion of the members of the Order and in any aspect related to the spiritual

nature of the Order's initiatives. The Prelate is appointed by the Supreme Pontiff, who chooses from among three candidates presented by the Grand Master, with the deciding vote of the Sovereign Council. The Prelate assists the Cardinalis Patronus in the exercise of his office with the Order.

SCRANTON, PA AREA: The Scranton Diocese chapter of the Order of Malta recently held its annual meeting at the University of Scranton. It is the annual reunion of former malades, their families, Order of Malta members and prospective members. The event includes Mass, dinner, and sharing stories of our lives since we met last year. Pictured at the reunion are: Row 1 Sadie Coyne Day, Joanne Coyne



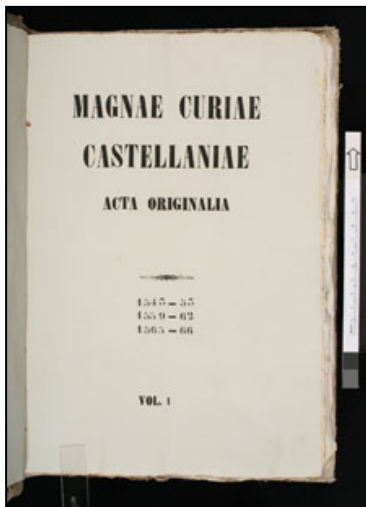
(malade), Christine Vaccaro (malade), Christian Budney(malade), JoAnne Kuehner DM, Maureen Pesavento DM, Row 2 Msgr. Neil Van Loon (chaplain), Brian Coyne, Rosemary Coyne, John Vaccaro, Ann Hawk DM, Grace Dawgert DM, Joe Budney, Angie Budney, Carl Kuehner KM, Row 3 Harry Coleman, Peter Cognetti, James McKenna, David Hawk KM, Dennis Dawgert KM, Vincent Chesney, Corey Comstock. This annual event helps us and the families to maintain contact with and to support each other.

NEW YORK CITY AREA: On Sunday, July 19th, His Eminence Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan confirmed one of our Lourdes Malades, 7 year-old Payton O'Brien, at the 10:15 am Solemn Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral. It was in Lourdes that Payton received his first Holy Communion from the Most Reverend Allen Vigneron, Archbishop of Detroit and Conventual Chaplain ad honorem of the Order. Payton has now received the Sacrament of Confirmation from His Eminence Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan, Archbishop of New York and Bailiff Grand Cross of Honor and Devotion of the Order at the Cathedral of Saint Patrick in New York.

CT AREA: Bishop Frank Caggiano has been inspirational and such an agent for change in the diocese. Last Sept 19th he opened the 4th Synod for our diocese and we will close it this Sept 19th with a Mass at the Webster Arena in Bridgeport. Knights and Dames will also be part of the liturgical procession. Since the Diocese will be dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Mary, Knights will process "a la' Lourdes" with the statue of our Lady into the arena, and the Order will be donating the statue to be

enshrined. The Bishop would like as many knights and dames to be present witnessing to the fact that the Catholic Church is alive and well and thriving in the Diocese of Bridgeport.

MN AREA: The Hill Museum & Manuscript Library's Malta Study Center completes digitization of historic collection at the National Archives of Malta. The Hill Museum & Manuscript Library's Malta Study Center has completed the digitization of the *Acta Originalia* series from the *Magna Curia Castellaniae* collection at the National Archives of Malta. The project which began in 2007 digitized 1,411 volumes of legal documents dated 1543 through 1798.



The *Magna Curia Castellaniae* was the largest secular tribunal in Malta during the time of the Knights, being under the jurisdiction of the Master of the Order. Its chief officer, the Castellano, was a Knight of the Order; the court personnel consisted of a civil judge, a criminal judge, an exchequer, a vice-exchequer, two notaries, and several clerks. It was the largest existing tribunal on the island, and contained significant information about daily life on Malta. The tribunal heard both civil suits and criminal trials. A separate appellate court heard appeals to its judgments. In addition to the tribunal's records, the Malta Study Center digitized the 25-volume index of the collection prepared by Dr. G. Portelli Carbone in the late 19th century.

ILLINOIS AREA: Reprinted from the Illinois newsletter. Our thanks to Karen Leone for permission to reprint.

TUITIO FIDEI FORMATION - Holy Years: In the Roman Catholic tradition, a Holy Year, or Jubilee is a deeply spiritual event: it marks the outpouring of God's grace and mercy and features special celebrations and pilgrimages, strong calls for conversion and repentance, and the offer of special opportunities to experience God's grace through the sacraments, especially confession.

Traditionally, Holy Years, or Jubilees are ordinary; that is, they fall after a set period of years and typically occur every 25 years. The first Christian Jubilee year was proclaimed by Pope Boniface VIII in 1300. The last Ordinary Jubilee year was the Great Jubilee in 2000, proclaimed by Pope St. John Paul II as a celebration of mercy

and the forgiveness of sins. Extraordinary Holy Years are less frequent but offer the same opportunities for spiritual growth. There have been two Extraordinary Jubilees in the last century: one in 1933, proclaimed by Pope Pius XI to mark the 1900th anniversary of Christ's redemption; the other in 1983, proclaimed by Pope St. John Paul II to mark 1,950 years since the redemption.

During his homily for a Lenten penitential service in March, Pope Francis announced an Extraordinary Jubilee to make clear the Church's mission of being a witness of mercy, and to call all Catholics to give consolation to every man and woman. The Holy Father entrusted the Holy Year to Mary, Mother of Mercy, and the biblical passage for the Holy Year's theme is from Luke Chapter 6 verse 36, in which Jesus tells his disciples, "Be merciful as your Father is merciful."

The Holy Year will be a time for the faithful to reflect on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. In the Papal Bull *Misericordiae Vultus* (The Face of Mercy), which formally convoked the Extraordinary Jubilee, Pope Francis wrote, "It will be a way to reawaken our conscience, too often grown dull in the face of poverty. And let us enter more deeply into the heart of the Gospel where the poor have a special experience of God's mercy... Let us rediscover these corporal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead. And let us not forget the spiritual works of mercy: to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offences, bear patiently those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead."

The Holy Year of Mercy officially begins on December 8th, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council, and will close on November 20th, 2016 with the Solemnity of our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. Of local interest, following Mass on June 12th at Holy Name Cathedral, Archbishop Blasé Cupich blessed and sealed one of the Cathedral's main entryways, which will be used as it's official holy door for the Jubilee Year of Mercy. In accordance with the Holy Father's request, the official holy door at Holy Name Cathedral and those at churches and basilicas around the world will be reopened on December 13th.

#



ORDER OF MALTA

American Association

1011 First Avenue, Room 1350

New York, NY 10022

www.orderofmaltaamerican.org