



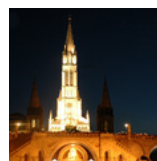
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**SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALER ORDER OF ST. JOHN OF
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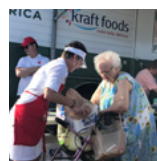
VOLUME 21 SPRING 2021



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The Order of Malta, American Association's Pilgrimage for Life: *An Opportunity for Members to Give Witness to the Faith by Defending Human Life*

Written by Dr. Joseph Dutkowsky, MD, KM

Last month, Dr. Joseph Dutkowsky, KM, Mrs. Nancy Graebe, DM, and Dr. Robert Graebe, KM, the co-chairs of the Pilgrimage for Life, worked together to build a new section of the American Association website dedicated to our calling to Respect Life in all its forms. This new Respect Life section features information regarding the Pilgrimage for Life and Cardinal Issues surrounding Pro-Life topics.

The origin of the Pilgrimage for Life is found in the Holy Spirit's call to a quiet and humble Dame. Karen Dutkowsky was invested in the American Association of the Order of Malta in 2009. The speaker at the dinner that evening was the new Archbishop of New York, Timothy Dolan. During his

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org

Please visit our website at:

orderofmaltaamerican.org to find the latest information about the American Association, our local Areas, and the Order of Malta. Links are also available to other Association websites and the Sovereign Magistry in the "About the Order" section.

Since its redesign, the Order of Malta, American Association mobile app continues to be updated regularly with new photos and user friendly improvements to its features such as daily prayers and the member directory. This app is available for Android and iOS devices in the app store when you search "Order of Malta, American Association."



CONGRATULATIONS ON FOLLOWING OUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION to focus on the charisms of the Order! I am amazed at the number of activities that are listed in our weekly spirituality newsletter as well as the various area emails promoting projects to help the sick and the poor and witness to our faith since the beginning of the year.

We just completed our fourth virtual Board meeting which means we haven't interacted in person as a Board for over a year. This lack of contact has taken a toll on all of us on the Board and I know has been challenging for all of you. We are a religious community and find our strength in working together in person. I'm optimistic that we will be able to resume in-person meetings during the summer.

At our Board meeting we welcomed 5 new members, Kathy Gantz, Deb O'Hara-Rusckowski, Tony Gagliardi, Fernando Blanco-DoPazo, and George Molinsky. We also welcomed back for a second term Mary Beth Fessler, Bill Besgen and Ken Craig. During the meeting, we elected a new Treasurer, Laure Aubuchon. Congratulations to all of them.

Frá Richard Wolff, a board member, gave us an update on the reform/renewal process. He informed us that a number of the professed are working to provide input into this process. They are hopeful and praying for a positive outcome that will benefit the Order going forward.

As I enter my second and last term as President, I would like to share with you as I did with the Board my vision for the next 3 years.

I SEE US DEVELOPING MORE ASSOCIATION WIDE MINISTRIES SUCH AS:

1. Mobile Van Ministry which has successfully begun in St Louis and could expand to other areas.
2. Pro-life initiatives which are now covered in a new section of our website and will give all areas access to information about activities that could be sponsored throughout the Association.
 - Palliative care initiative that a committee has been developing over the past year and can be shared in every area once the restrictions from the pandemic are eased. This is a response against the strong movement to allow assisted suicide and euthanasia occurring in many states, most recently Connecticut and Massachusetts.
 - Human trafficking initiative which has been started by our new Board member, Deb O'Hara-Rusckowski. The first step in this effort is to educate our members about this tragic issue and then to find ways to help the victims. This initiative is part of a cooperative effort among all three US associations.
3. A focus on sharing successful ministries among all the areas. This will continue at future leadership meetings where presentations on successful ministries will be provided as an aid to Area Chairs and Area Hospitalers to start them in their own areas.

We were sorry announce the cancellation of the Detroit Area Leadership/Chaplains Meeting due to continuing restrictions on meetings.

In order to accomplish the growth in our ministries throughout the Association, we will need to increase our funding of grants. As you know, the American Association's Capital Campaign has been underway and continues in the quiet phase. Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of just a small number of Knights and Dames, the campaign has generated commitments of more than \$7 million. Gail and Joe Berardino have been leading a small group of active members to achieve this remarkable level of generosity. The purpose of this campaign is to increase the endowment in the Malta Human Services Foundation which provides the funds for our Area Grants Program and to increase the endowment in the Pilgrimage Foundation to fund Malade and Caregiver participation in the Annual Lourdes Pilgrimage.

So, as we continue our Lenten journey and hopefully move towards more in-person activities, let's continue our prayers and our focus on the charisms of the Order.

God bless you and all that you do,

Peter J. Kelly, MD, GCM

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Lourdes Pilgrimage 2021

Since the first year the American Association took a small group of Pilgrims to join the Order of Malta in 1986, the Lourdes Pilgrimage has grown to be a focal point in the Association's calendar each year. Over the years, the signature work of the Order has become the signature work of the Order's largest Association. From those early years, the pilgrimage has steadily grown to over four hundred.

It is often said, and plainly visible, that the Lourdes pilgrimage provides the clearest demonstration of the Order's commitment to grow in sanctity through service to those in need. Nowhere is the challenge of the Daily Prayer, "forgetful of myself" more clearly met than in the service to the Malades on the streets of the little town in the Pyrenees and in the sanctuary where the Blessed Mother appeared to a poor girl in a wooded area outside of the town.

The pandemic has taken its toll on the world and on

Lourdes. In 2020, the sanctuary was closed for two months and most 2020 group pilgrimages from around the world were cancelled. The Marian Shrine at Lourdes hosted the first ever online world pilgrimage on July 16, 2020, the anniversary of the final apparition to St. Bernadette Soubirous.

Last year, in the face of the pandemic, and on sound advice of the best international infectious disease experts, the Association and the Order cancelled the live pilgrimage to Lourdes. The disappointment was audible as everyone involved in the pilgrimage felt the pain of separation from the heart and source of commitment to service to the sick and the poor. The Association provided a virtual pilgrimage with significant participation from Knights and Dames as well as the 2020 Malades who would have come to France for the Pilgrimage. While not the same, it was appreciated by many as a window into the pilgrimage and the only alternative available.

As preparations for a pilgrimage in 2021 were being considered, the Association sought the guidance of the medical team; based on their advice, the Association decided not to open the registration for a 2021 Pilgrimage. Given the likelihood of restrictions to travel and the high element of risk for the Malades, their Caregivers *(continued on page 4)*

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and all the pilgrims as the pandemic continued to rage, it was the prudent decision.

Travel to France continues to be restricted. The Lourdes Sanctuary issued a lengthy document on the requirements for visitors to observe to provide a “safe visit”. At the end of January, all travelers from outside the EU were banned from entering France unless they have a compelling reason for visiting. The US Embassy released the following in February: “On January 29, the French government announced the closure of its borders to all travel to non-European countries, except when compelling circumstances exist, effective January 31. On January 30, the French government released the new attestation forms for travelers departing or entering France. This form included the accepted “compelling reasons” for travel. On February 9, the

French Ministry of the Interior updated their website with new attestation forms, which changed — and in some cases reduced — the list of compelling reasons.”

News reports at the end of February continued to describe France as one of the hardest hit countries in Europe; cases declined in early December but have surged again. The situation in France remains critical, with ongoing concerns about hospital capacity.

A virtual Lourdes Pilgrimage will be presented again in 2021. Everyone looks forward to our being together in Lourdes in 2022. Pray for all our past Malades, Malades in Spirit and all those suffering from during the pandemic. ■

The complete 2020 Lourdes Spiritual Pilgrimage is available on the American Association website. Watch for more information on the Association's 2021 Lourdes Spiritual Pilgrimage.



Pilgrimage for Life

(continued from cover)

talk, he graded the American Association concerning the three charisms of the Order. For living a pious life and serving the sick and the poor, he gave us two As. For defending the faith, he gave us an F.

This deeply troubled Karen. For many years, she had participated in the March for Life in Washington DC, even leading groups of young people on overnight buses. She knew individual members of the Order were involved; but it bothered her that the Order of Malta was not there as a group and a unified voice. This burning in her soul reached a point where this shy woman did the unthinkable. She wrote Cardinal Dolan and told him that the Order of Malta needed to be there. A week later, she was diagnosed with stage four cancer. She wrote the Cardinal a second letter. She shared that she had been diagnosed with terminal cancer but the Order still needed to be there and she would lead it.

The first year, there were five in attendance. By 2020, there were over one hundred members of the Order participating. The Pilgrimage for Life is now a recognized Order of Malta event by the Sovereign Council in Rome and all participants receive a medal similar to the medal received in Lourdes. In 2016, Karen lost her fight with cancer and she now rests in The Our Lady of Lourdes Oratory consecrated by Bishop Edward Scharfenberger until her Lord returns for her. The first Medal for Life hangs in “Karen’s Chapel”.

Karen insisted that this would be a pilgrimage addressing all three charisms of the Order and not just a participation in the March For Life. Currently, we meet the day before the march for a reflection and prayer with the Sisters of Life and a shared meal. Volunteer members then serve as the ushers for persons with disabilities at the Vigil Mass for Life at The Basilica of the Immaculate Conception. All come together afterward for an evening of food and fellowship. On the morning of the march, we attend Mass at a local church celebrated by Bishop Scharfenberger. We meet for brunch



and instructions are given. All travel by bus to a staging area and join the march as it passes. We stop across from the Supreme Court and pray the rosary. After the march, a meal is offered to participants and guests.

The Pilgrimage for Life is currently led by Karen’s husband, Dr. Joseph Dutkowsky and Dr. Robert A. Graebe and Nancy Graebe. Even though the pandemic restricted the traditional plans of the March for Life and our participation in it in 2021, the American Association was still able to take part in a unique way. A total of 65 members and guests, along with thousands of online viewers, attended the livestreamed Pilgrimage for Life Mass with the Sisters of Life at St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York City.

On January 28, 2021, Dr. Graebe and Nancy Graebe traveled to Washington DC, by invitation of the USCCB, to represent the Order of Malta, American Association at the Vigil Mass for Life at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. The following day, they marched in the “Live” 2021 March for Life as representatives of the Order of Malta, American Association, along with leaders of Pro-Life organizations from across the country.

With hope and enthusiasm, the American Association looks forward to the American Association’s 2022 Pilgrimage for Life scheduled for January 20-21, 2022 in Washington DC. Come and join us as we give witness to our faith by respecting and defending life in the womb! ■

To learn more about the Pilgrimage for Life, and to watch the 2021 Pilgrimage for Life Mass, please visit the Respect Life section of the website in our Spirituality in Action tab or visit www.orderofmaltaamerican.org/spirituality-in-action/respect-life.



New Section of Website Dedicated to Our Calling to Respect Life

The year 2021 marks the 48th anniversary of Roe vs. Wade, the Supreme Court decision that established the legality of abortion nationwide. This attack on the most vulnerable is an attack on the dignity and respect for human life; it calls us and all people to respond with our time, our talent, our treasure and most importantly, our prayers, for a change of heart and a respect for all life, from conception to death.

“Tuitio Fidei et Obsequium Pauperum”: nurturing and witnessing our faith by serving the poor and the sick

In response to this calling as members of the Order, Dr. Joseph Dutkowsky, KM, Dr. Robert Graebe, KM, and Mrs. Nancy Graebe, DM, the Co-Chairs of the Pilgrimage for Life, worked with the NY Office to create a new section of the website dedicated entirely to our calling to Respect Life in all its forms. This new section includes important information regarding the Pilgrimage for Life, an approved Pilgrimage of the Order of Malta, American Association, Cardinal Issues related to pro-life topics, as well as helpful resources and recommended reading materials.

Within its first week of being “open for business”, members were already reaching out to provide us with more information to help inform members about pro-life related issues and inspire them to get involved on an Area and Association level.

We know that many American Association members are currently involved in this cause in our 30 Areas. Whether you are assisting at pregnancy centers, praying the Rosary outside of Planned Parenthood locations, participating in local pro-life marches, or in any activity that directly reflects our belief that every life is important, know that you are making a difference by your dedication to our commitment to protect and defend life. We hope that this new section of the website motivates you to continue your work to protect the sacredness of human life or start a new initiative in your Area.

As you review the new Respect Life section, we ask that you take this opportunity to ask yourself, “Am I answering my calling as a member?” We remember Dr. Kelly’s recommendation in January that we all find ways to be involved as our New Year’s resolution. This is an area in our society that is under increasing attack; your help and your prayers give witness to your commitment.

You can visit the Respect Life section of the website in our Spirituality in Action tab or visit www.orderofmaltaamerican.org/spirituality-in-action/respect-life. We hope that this section will provide members with a “home base” for information surrounding our call to protect life.

■ IN MEMORIAM

Deceased Members

January 1, 2020 – December 2020

Carl E. Agliozzo, MD, KM	Spring Lake, NJ
Joan Clarke Arrigan, DM	Narragansett, RI
Joseph Anthony Atkinson, KM	Palm Beach, FL
Thomas James Aylward IV, KM	New Canaan, CT
Norberto Azqueta, KM	West Palm Beach, FL
Marjorie Lane Bycraft, DM	South Bend, IN
Richard F. Chapdelaine, KM	Manhasset, NY
Mary Higgins Clark Conheeney, DM	Saddle River, NJ
Richard W. Collins, KM	Indian River Shores, FL
Roger Holmes Cook, KM	Marana, AZ
Edith C. Cunnane, DM	Creve Coeur, MO
Gerald W. Cunningham, KM	New Rochelle, NY
James A. Dawson, KM	Hamilton, MA

Robert F. Eiseman, KM	Hilton Head, SC
Jeanne Kathleen Ferguson, DM	West Palm Beach, FL
Lawrence J. Ferolie, KM	Alpine, NJ
Daniel J. Ferry, Jr, KM	Kirkwood, MO
Ellen M. Flynn, DM	La Crosse, WI
Claire Marie Foster, DM	St. Thomas, VI
Luis J. Fujimoto, DMD, KM	New York, NY
Terence J. Gallagher, KM	Bronxville, NY
Thomas Garesche, KM	Holderness, NH
Robert Charles Golden, KM	Brooklyn, NY
Frances O'Connor Hardart, GCDM	Bronxville, NY
James J. Hartnett, KM	Dallas, TX
James G. Hoehn, MD, KM	Loudonville, NY
Elza J. Howard, KM	Indianapolis, IN
Joseph Francis Kane, KM	Portsmouth, NH
William Michael Kearns, Jr, KM	New Vernon, NJ
Neta Marie Kolasa, PsyD, DM	Boca Raton, FL



Serving the Sick and the Poor in the Time of Covid-19

Not everyone can be all things to all people. Saint Teresa of Calcutta told us to do small things with great love. And when questioned about the final test for those souls in front of Christ at the day of judgment, she noted the single response had to be in the form of a question. The final Jeopardy category is Salvation, and the final Jeopardy answer is, "You did it for them."

Knights and Dames in the American Association have a variety of activities they can draw on to write their final question. Who were the hungry I fed at the soup kitchen? Who was the prisoner I wrote to as a pen pal? Who was the baby whose mother I counselled at a pregnancy support center? Who were the children who took home the back packs? Who was the teenager I mentored through high school?

There are dozens of answers with variations on a single theme: Tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum. Members of the Order of Malta seek to grow spiritually through their engagement with the sick and the poor. Giving witness to the faith by their service puts them on the path of Blessed Gerard.

In 2020, the world changed and many activities changed with them. New ways had to be found to provide the services which, in many ways, are even more critical now in the face of the pandemic. Did you ever see a drive-through food collection?

People drive to a spot, pop open their trunks and volunteers in masks and gloves removes staples that will go a long way to serve the growing population of hungry people.

Safety for those who serve and for those who are served has been a priority so creative responses from committed Knights and Dames resulted in a "touchless" socks and gloves drive. Order from here and ship to there; the result is that the homeless are served with items that have been critical in the winter of darkness, cold and blankets of snow.

Filling a backpack with food essentials in a socially distanced environment might not seem that important but the child and the family who receive the loaded backpack can vouch for the need. Did anyone ever tell you, "Never underestimate the power of prayer"? Everyone can pray and now might be a good time to build or enhance your daily prayer routine, especially when other forms of 'hands-on' activities may not be available.

Visit the American Association website (<https://orderofmaltaamerican.org/covid-19/>) to see some of the things the Areas are doing to serve the sick and the poor. For a more comprehensive list of Area activities in service to the sick and the poor and witness to the Faith, see the Spirituality in Action Resource Book in the Members Only section of the website. There are many activities that could be 'transported' to other Areas.

Edward Anthony Landry, KM	Los Angeles, CA
Dolores E. Loughlin, DM	Charlotte, NC
Sirio Maccioni, KM	New York, NY
Thomas M. McEvoy, KM	Larchmont, NY
Julie Marie Callahan Miller, DM	Dallas, TX
Joseph John Morrow, KM	Greenwich, CT
Peter Frederick Muratore, KMOb	Morristown, NJ
Richard Murphy, ChD	Vero Beach, FL
Most Rev. George V. Murry, SJ, ChC	Youngstown, OH
Most Rev. John J. Myers, ChC	Newark, NJ
James F. O'Connor, GCMOb	Wellesley Hills, MA
Hubert J. O'Toole, KM	Convent Station, NJ
Geraldine Chapey Pasternak, PhD, DM	Belle Harbor, NY
Gerard P. Peplowski, KM	Grosse Pointe Woods, MI
Frank H. Reis, KM	Naples, FL
Roberta Arend Ryan, DM	Timonium, MD
Anthony F. Sansone, Sr, KM	St. Louis, MO

Rev. Msgr. Dennis Francis Sheehan, ChC	Newton, MA
Kathleen O. Shine, DM	Walpole, MA
Scott J. Steffan, KM	Jacksonville, FL
Edward P. Walsh, KM	New York, NY

January 1, 2021 – March 1, 2021

Joseph C. Tranfo, KHD	Stuart, FL
James Patrick Furlong II, MD, KM	Sand Lake, NY
Maureen J. Pesavento, DM	Scranton, PA
Edward F. McHugh, Jr, KM	Scituate, MA
Bertrand de Looz Karageorgiades, KM	New York, NY
Kevin Gerard McCarthy, KM	Island Park, NY
Mary Louise Formato, MD, DM	Belle Mead, NJ
John Francis Murray, KM	New Canaan, CT

Hands-on Work

The Calling Card of the Order of Malta

When men and women choose to become members of the Order of Malta, they make a critical choice on how they want to live their lives. Following in the path of Blessed Gerard requires a commitment to achieve personal sanctification through a life that brings them face to face with Christ in the faces of the poor and the sick whom they seek out in order to serve them. Knights, Dames, Chaplains, Affiliates and Candidates serve the marginalized, the suffering, the poor and the destitute. To paraphrase a famous movie line, “We are people of action; lying still does not become us.”

The commitment reflected in the charism is summed up in this famous quote from Saint Teresa of Avila: “Christ has no body now on earth, but yours. No hands but yours. No feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which the compassion of Christ must look out on the world. Yours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good. Yours are the hands with which He is to bless His people.”

The 2021 Area Grants Program is open now and it features three important elements. The traditional applications are available for Areas who want to consider giving a grant to an organization serving the sick or the poor in their Area, provided their organization is supported by Area members hands-on work directly with the organization’s clients. Areas are working through the process with select organizations. Grant applications are completed and submitted online. These grant applications will be reviewed for approval by the Association Grants Committee. Final decisions will be made for disburse of approved grants in early summer.

According to legend, Blessed Gerard passed bread through the walls around Jerusalem to the hungry Crusaders; when



challenged by the Muslims who had control of Jerusalem, the bread in the folds of Blessed Gerard's robes appeared as stones. From the earliest days, the Order has been feeding the hungry and caring for the sick. The Food Support Grants that were important in 2020 because of the pandemic's impact on the available food resources for a growing population needing help are available again in 2021 as the need has not diminished for such support. The process is simple, and the review is expedited so the grant checks can be distributed within days of the receipt of a completed application. The simplified application is one page and is completed online by the Area Chair.

The third feature of the 2021 Grants Program is new and is intended to support the Areas as they seek to serve the sick and the poor directly. While much service is done under the auspices of organizations already in place, many projects involve direct service. Projects such as Malta Walks, Backpack projects, Food Drives, Socks and Gloves collections and others do not necessarily involve working with a separate organization (although such organizations may be the recipients of handiwork of an Area project. Backpacks loaded with food for

the weekend may be delivered to a school. But the materials are purchased, packed and delivered in the Area by members without any involvement from the school.

Once a journalist asked Mother Teresa of Calcutta the secret that allowed her to work with the people whom others considered the rejects of society. Her response was, "My secret is very simple: I pray. Through prayer I become one in love with Christ. I realize that praying to him is loving him. That means that I am fulfilling his commandment. Let us not forget what he tells us: I was hungry and you fed me not. The poor who live in the slums of the world are the suffering Christ. The Son of God lives and dies through them God shows me his true face. For me, prayer means being united to the will of God twenty-four hours a day, to live for him, through him, and with him."

The Grants Program is funded by the Malta Human Services Foundation with money which is transferred to the American Association each year. Five percent of the five-year rolling average value of the MHSF endowment is transferred to the American Association each year to support the grants program, including the Area Grants Program. ■



1. **Boston:** Members celebrate Mass with the Sisters and residents of the Jeanne Jugan Residence and assist the dining staff with serving lunch in the home's two dining rooms.
2. **Florida – Naples:** Members purchase clothing and personal care items and assemble backpacks for victims of Human Trafficking being helped by Catholic Charities.
3. **Florida – Northeast:** Members prepare and serve meals for several hundred homeless and needy at the Sulzbacher Shelter.
4. **Florida – Vero Beach:** Members staff the Treasure Coast Mobile Food Pantry that provides food and essential home items to those in need.
5. **Indiana – Northern:** Members host a "Lourdes Day of Grace and Healing", with a Rosary, Anointing of the Sick, and Mass, for those in the community unable to travel with us on the American Association's Lourdes Pilgrimage.
6. **New York – NYC:** Members attend evening prayer before packing bags with food, hats, gloves, and other needed items and distributing these bags to the homeless on the streets in lower Manhattan.
7. **Pennsylvania – Philadelphia:** Members attend Mass and prepare delicious and healthy meals for the homebound in their local parish.

The Missouri Area Continues Service Activities During Pandemic



The Missouri Area has continued to serve the sick, despite the limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of its efforts are the continuation of long-standing commitments, some new endeavors.

The newest effort is the Malta Mobile Ministry. The idea for this ministry and its administrative structure come from the Western Association. In response to wildfires and other emergencies that showed the need many charities have for assistance in transportation, Knights and Dames in the Western Association organized to acquire and equip vans that can be put to a number of uses. The success of this effort inspired the American Association to invest in the same enterprise, and the Missouri Area was chosen as home for the Association's first unit of the mobile ministry. The Missouri effort has built on the work done in California, which solved problems involving titling and insuring the vans and training and ensuring liability coverage for the drivers.

Nevertheless, a great deal of work remained before a van could be brought to St. Louis, Missouri. Money had to be found in addition to what the American Association provided. A secure parking place for the van had to be located. Volunteers had to be recruited. And local organizations that need transportation had to be informed that help was available and persuaded that that help would be dependable.

Thanks to the leadership of Greg and Kathy Gantz, the Area Co-Chairs, and of Randy Weber, the Mobile Ministry Missouri Director, all that has been accomplished. Before the end of 2020, a beautiful van was at its new home, and a number of drivers were trained and outfitted in appropriate work uniforms. (Special thanks must go to Genie and John Wilhelm, who maintain the van and re-stock van supplies, and to Mike Roth, who set up and maintains the van driver online scheduling system).

The Order of Malta in the days of Jean de Vallette must have been proud when a new galley was launched. And today's Knights and Dames may be forgiven if they take the same pleasure in a new piece of equipment. But as in days past, we remember that Order was founded on a mission to provide service to Our Lords, the Sick and the Poor. So, after God's blessing was called down upon our new enterprise, the van was put to use.

During the first weeks of January, the new van was used several times to assist local charities, including the St. Vincent De Paul food bank and St. Louis Criminal Justice ministries.

The weekly runs for the St. Vincent De Paul food bank save that organization the cost of a rental van, provide it with a driver, and allow it not only to get a full load from Operation Food search, which supplies several local food banks, but also to make a trip to a local supermarket for items that are still fresh, but nearing their sell-by dates.

The van has also made runs for the St. Louis Criminal Justice Ministry, which helps ex-offenders re-enter society. Through these efforts, apartments have been furnished for one man who had just been





released from prison and for another who had been homeless. (The Knights and Dames who volunteer as drivers are only expected to drive, but some have helped load and unload the van and even helped carry a mattress or two upstairs.)

It is still early days for Malta Mobile Ministries in Missouri. But those who helped plan and finance it, as well as the Knights and Dames who get to sit in the driver's seat, can know that they have truly accomplished something. Thanks to the St. Vincent Paul food bank, more than 40 families have had food to put on the table. Thanks to Criminal Justice Ministries, men who otherwise would have had nowhere to lay their heads have had beds to sleep in. We have truly served the sick and the poor, and the truth is that we have had a splendid time doing it.

In the future, we look forward to working with other organizations.

The Missouri Area's other service activities have not been neglected, though Knights, Dames and Auxiliary members devoted to them have faced challenges due to the pandemic. Those ministries include:

- Distributing the Holy Eucharist to the sick at a local hospital.
- Assembling hygiene kits for the poor. Such basic necessities are a great comfort both for the homeless and those newly arrived in a shelter or a new home.
- Reaching out to our own confrères who are ill themselves or quarantined by an illness in the family and offering a listening ear and/or assistance with grocery shopping.
- Working through local chapters of the Society of St. Vincent

de Paul to assist those in immediate need of food, rent, or utility assistance.

- Arranging and underwriting monthly dinners at the Rosati House development, which seeks to alleviate homelessness on a "housing first" model.
- Volunteering through other organizations, such as the VA, to alleviate the isolation with which many in the most vulnerable groups have been afflicted since the pandemic began.
- Continuing to support financially the Holy Family Hospital, Malteser International, and the Crudem Foundation and its hospital in Haiti.

In all their efforts, Knights, Dames, and Auxiliary members in the Missouri Area have been strengthened by their common prayer life. Despite the interruptions caused when the pandemic-related restrictions were most severe, local members have continued to meet for a monthly rosary. And they gathered for Mass in 2020 on the Feast Days of St. John the Baptist in June, Our Lady of Philermo in September, and the Immaculate Conception in December. In celebrating Mass for the World Day of the Sick this year, we prayed in the words of Pope Francis that we would not be numbered among those who "preach but do not practice," but instead will always work to heed our Lord's call to us "to stop and listen, to establish a direct and personal relationship with others, to feel empathy and compassion, and to let their suffering become our own as we seek to serve them."



The young doctors explaining the symptoms of COVID-19 to an elderly couple in Querecotillo. Despite their isolation from technology, Huertas-Sanchez described that the elderly were receptive and understood the symptoms when explained. (Photo courtesy Malteser Perú)

A Senior Center in Peru Brings Hope During the Pandemic

How can you ask the people to wash properly if they have no access to water?" asks Melissa Huertas-Sanchez, Operations Director for Malteser Perú. In a conversation in the fall, Huertas-Sanchez described one of the many daunting challenges that Peru, and particularly its elderly population, faced in the early phases of the COVID-19 pandemic.

She had just returned from the northern city of Querecotillo, after a visit to one of the programs Malteser International Americas supports which cares for the elderly through social activities and health check-ups.

While there, she noticed a combination of issues facing the seniors participating in the program, including water shortages and frequent droughts. Many also expressed difficulty in accessing healthcare and medications,

government assistance, as well as an acute sense of isolation - particularly among those that did not own a mobile phone or have internet access.

The situation Huertas-Sanchez described was alarming for a demographic at the highest-risk for infection and death from COVID-19.

Under normal circumstances, the program implemented by Malteser Perú aims to engage seniors in healthy activities and incorporates them into the larger community at the Querecotillo Senior Center (which MI Americas helped build and has supported since 2013). Here, volunteer teachers would hold interactive workshops like dance, art, and singing classes, while volunteer medical professionals would run basic health check-ups and prescribe medication.

During the pandemic, these activities ended abruptly as the original coordinator of the project was also a

senior citizen. It was not until October (six months later), that things picked up again. But even then, as restrictions on social distancing remained stringent, Malteser Perú had to limit itself to the delivery of non-perishable food items and COVID-19 hygiene kits.

The lives of the 28 program participants have been deeply affected by the virus. "Six of the elderly had COVID, three went to the hospital, and four others had household members who were infected with the virus," says Huertas-Sanchez. The husband of one of the participants passed away.

COVID-19 IN PERU

To date, Peru has suffered one of the highest mortality rates in the world, at 3.7% of cases proving fatal, second only to Mexico at 8.7%. With a population of 32 million, the country has had 1,244,729 cases and 43,880 deaths as of February 17th, 2021.

After a lifetime in the informal economy, none of the seniors enrolled in the program have pensions or savings to rely on. Most of them had worked as small-scale farmers. For seniors no longer physically able to support hard labor, and without the ability to sustain themselves, moving in with their children has been the only option. Yet, unlike the reverence one might associate with older generations, Huertas-Sanchez noticed that in the households she visited, the elderly would seldom get the care and attention they needed.

Over 70% of Peru's population works in the informal economy and many have found themselves in similar predicaments during the pandemic.

LACK OF ACCESS

In the early days of the pandemic, one of Malteser Perú's biggest concerns with COVID-19 was the lack of medical care and follow-up for seniors. Once someone had been released from the hospital, "no one was taking care of them after", or checking on them to make sure they were recovering well. Without access to mobile phones and internet,



the ability to monitor infection and recovery was extremely limited.

In response, the team enlisted two young doctors in their last semester of medical school to visit the participants every other week. They ensured that they were receiving proper care and were taught what COVID-19 symptoms might look like. For those who had been in the hospital, they created personalized post-hospitalization regimens with exercises to follow.

WATER SHORTAGES & FREQUENT FLOODS

Querecotillo faces serious risks due to its frequent floods and the scarcity of potable water. The city is in the northern department of Piura, an arid region that suffers from occasional heavy rains caused by the El Niño phenomenon. These weather patterns are unpredictable and can be devastating, from severe water shortages to dramatic floods.

Many residents might have running water in their house for only a

few hours a day. To compensate, they fill large buckets when the tap is open and keep them in their house for later use. But this comes with its own set of risks, particularly the proliferation of dengue fever — an infectious disease carried by mosquitoes usually attracted to stagnant water.

“I have family in southern Piura who tell me that sometimes the water is open three hours in the morning, from 5 to 8am,” says Huertas-Sanchez. “In Piura’s capital, they open the water from 6am to 8pm and at night, there’s no water.”

Lack of fresh, clean water is an obstacle for hygiene, with heightened concern during the pandemic.

In all, Querecotillo’s seniors face a steep road ahead, while Malteser Perú continues delivering basic food items and hygiene kits to the participant’s homes. With the hygiene kits — which contain hand sanitizer, soap, and information on COVID-19 — Malteser Perú hopes to mitigate the effects of the water shortages, at least in the short-term. For the long-term, they are trying to de-

velop a better follow-up program with the local Health Ministry to ensure that proper care and attention is given to those recovering from COVID-19, and that capacities for monitoring recovery are improved.

While the Senior Center itself remains physically closed, the team’s dedication is palpable — Huertas-Sanchez traveled over 16 hours to reach Querecotillo from Lima, where she resides. The pandemic has tested every aspect of our societies and has shined a light on many of the ills that have long plagued us. But it is the tenacity of those fighting for the vulnerable that continues to carry us through and will hopefully be remembered once the crisis is over. ■

To learn more about our work, please visit: www.orderofmaltarelief.org and follow us on social media:

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Part of the follow-up program is ensuring that the elderly get the proper care and attention for pre-existing conditions, in addition to sensitization to COVID-19. (Photo courtesy Malteser Perú)



Delivering non-perishable food items as well as COVID-19 hygiene kits to the elderly in Querecotillo. (Photo courtesy Malteser Perú)

By the Numbers

As we recognize the 1-year anniversary of the beginning of the pandemic, we look back on the American Association and how it has helped members and those in need through this time, whether it was through the COVID-19 Food-related Emergency Assistance grants or live weekly Rosaries on Sunday evenings. Zoom and event livestreams quickly replaced in-person events, and we hope the virtual opportunities available have provided members with even a few moments of quiet time, reflection, and prayer.

25

COVID-19 Emergency Food-Related Assistance Grants Provided in 2020

Putting our charism to work in a time of historical need, over \$90,000 in grants were given to a total of 25 charities providing emergency food-related assistance during the pandemic, not including additional donations made by local Area funds. This program continues in 2021.

50+

Live Weekly Rosaries Every Sunday in 2020

Since March 22, with the exception of 1 Sunday in May for the Lourdes Spiritual Pilgrimage, the American Association has hosted live weekly Rosaries on Zoom for all members.

79

New Members Welcomed as the Class of 2020

We welcomed a total of 72 Knights and Dames and 7 Chaplains into the American Association at our Mass of Thanksgiving in November. We hope to have the Class of 2020 join the Class of 2021 in-person at this year's Investiture.

75+

Virtual Association-level events

The American Association has worked to bring over 75 virtual events to American Association members. In addition to the Live Weekly Rosaries, events included the virtual Pilgrimages to Lourdes and Wisconsin, Feast Day Masses, the Stations of the Cross, an Area Leadership Bootcamp, a Human Trafficking Seminar, a virtual movie screening, exclusive access to the NAPA conference, and more.

1,000+

Views for the 2020 Lourdes Spiritual Pilgrimage

The 2020 Lourdes Spiritual Pilgrimage welcomed Knights, Dames, Auxiliary, Associates, Chaplains, Candidates, Malades, Caregivers, family, and friends to an 8-day virtual Lourdes Pilgrimage that included the Grotto Mass, Rosary Procession, and other hallmark events of the Lourdes Pilgrimage.

1,800+

Views for the 2020 Virtual Wisconsin Pilgrimage

The 2020 Order of Malta Tri-Association Our Lady of Good Help Virtual Pilgrimage was a 4-day event that welcomed members from across the American, Federal, and Western Associations. Viewers traveled to Champion, Wisconsin from the comfort of their homes to visit the National Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help.

1,500+

Views for the 2020 Annual Business Meeting and Mass of Thanksgiving for the Class of 2020

Although we were not able to welcome the Class of 2020 in-person, new candidates and Association members were invited to a virtual event, which began with the 2020 Annual Business Meeting and ended with a Mass of Thanksgiving, livestreamed from Saint Patrick's Cathedral, for the newest members of the Order of Malta, American Association.

6,900+

Views for the live-streamed Mass for Life

More than sixty members and guests were in Saint Patrick's Cathedral while the live-streamed Mass for Life has had almost 7,000 views.



2021 ASSOCIATION CALENDAR

March 28-April 4

Holy Week and Easter

April 2

Good Friday Stations
of the Cross
(hosted on Zoom)

April 27-May 5

Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage
(dates and times TBD)

May 13

Ascension Thursday

May 23

Pentecost Sunday

May 27

Board of Councillors Meeting

June 10

Virtual Area Leadership Bootcamp

June 10

Virtual Chaplains' Convocation

June 24

Feast of Saint John the Baptist

August 5-8

Wisconsin

Pilgrimage to Our Lady of
Good Help

August 15

Feast of the Assumption

September 8

Feast of Our Lady of Philermo

September 15-16

St. Louis, MO

Board of Councillors Meeting

September 24-26

Medway, MA

Association Retreat

November 1

All Saints' Day

November 4-6

New York City

Investiture Weekend

November 4

New York City

Board of Councillors Meeting

November 5

New York City

Annual Meeting, Investiture,
Annual Dinner

November 6

New York City

Mass for Malades, Caregivers,
and Malades in Spirit

November 6

New York City

Subpriory Mass

November 14

World Day of the Poor

November 25

Thanksgiving

December 8

Feast of the Immaculate
Conception

December 25

Christmas

On the first Wednesday of each month, there is a Spiritual Outreach call at 11AM ET
Every Sunday, there is a live Rosary hosted on Zoom at 7 PM ET.

Be sure to visit our website and read our weekly email newsletters for
the latest information regarding American Association events.

HIGHLIGHTS

The Capital Campaign — An Update

(continued from backcover)

including the Area Grants Program, is the Malta Human Services Foundation, it stands to reason that the larger the endowment grows, the more funding will be available for grants. Our discussions have opened the eyes of some of our most generous members to a key observation which they have embraced — that the size of the endowment in the MHSF can never be “too big” because the needs will always be there.

It may seem obvious but the ability to provide opportunities for hands-on work in service to the sick and the poor is fundamental to members as they travel toward Heaven; it also provides the window through which non-members can see more clearly how that path might be attractive to them. The combination of spirituality, service and camaraderie is a magnet that can draw others to the Order. The Grants Program supports that hands-on work.

Another one of the goals of the Campaign is to grow the endowment of the Pilgrimage Foundation to generate the income necessary to cover the expenses of sending fifty-five Malades and their caregivers to Lourdes on an annual basis every year into and beyond the foreseeable future. Donations toward this goal will make good on the ability of the Association, in good times and in “not so good times,” to be able to take our beloved Malades to Lourdes.

We are happy to be leading this campaign, but we remind the leaders that this is an American Association Campaign; we are merely playing a role. Ultimately, this is your campaign. We look forward to working with all of you. We ask for your prayers and your feedback. You can contact us at jfberardino@gmail.com or gtberardino@gmail.com.



HIGHLIGHTS

The Capital Campaign – An Update

The Capital Campaign continues in its quiet phase. To date, the Campaign has received over \$7.3M in commitments from over sixty contributors. This represents an unprecedented level of giving among the donors who have been contacted so far. These leadership gifts are paving the way for a campaign whose goals are to significantly increase the ability of the American Association to deliver on its members' charism of commitment to serve the sick and the poor as the road to our own personal sanctification.

We are learning a lot from individual discussions and from Zoom group meetings that can be translated into action that will benefit the Association for the foreseeable future and goes well beyond the financial goals of the Capital Campaign.

One of the key facts we have learned from the members we have spoken to is that you love the spiritual nature of your relationship to the Order of Malta. You cherish the camaraderie of working with your fellow Knights, Dames, Chaplains and Volunteers in service to the sick and the poor. You love the path you have chosen to give witness to your faith by your active involvement in the hands-on work that is the outward sign of your commitment to your faith.

You also told us that you greatly miss the opportunities provided to work together "in close quarters" with other Knights and Dames due to restrictions and legitimate concerns for the safety and well-being of all because of the pandemic.

Something else we have learned is that many of you never thought about making the Order a high priority in your philanthropic giving. The gap between your deeply-felt connection to the spirituality of the Order and the place the Order holds for your financial support is significant; we are hoping that the Capital Campaign will help to bridge that gap. This shift in philanthropic line of sight could have a positive impact that goes far beyond the boundaries of the Capital Campaign.

We also discovered that many members do not know that the funding for the American Association grants program has been coming annually directly from the Malta Human Services Foundation. Even in leadership, we have found an information gap. Members are surprised to learn that their Annual Contributions do not support the Grants Program. The Malta Human Services Foundation is the source of that funding.

That insight has opened the discussion about a simple arithmetic exercise — if the source of the funding for the Grants Program, *(continued on page 15)*

Our Mission

The American Association of the Order of Malta has as its mission to promote the glory of God through the sanctification of its members, through witness to and support of the Catholic faith and through active service to the sick and the poor.

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*Photos for this issue have been graciously provided
by Michelle Babyak, Malteser International
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Change of address?
Please notify the New York Office.

If you have recently moved, changed phone numbers, or created a new email address, we encourage you to visit: www.orderofmaltaamerican.org/members/update and fill out our information update form. This online form provides members with a quick and simple way to update any, or all, of their information that is stored in the American Association's database. Members with and without active email addresses can now submit an update to their home address, professional, and even educational information on our website using this new form. We hope that you will utilize this new method and help keep the American Association's records up to date.

You can also email mail@orderofmaltaamerican.org or call our office at (212) 371-1522 with your contact information updates.