



## The Address by the Provincial Prior at the Annual Meeting of Provincial Priory on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2021



Right Eminent, Very Eminent, Eminent and Brother Knights all.

Two years have passed since our last gathering to celebrate the meeting of our Provincial Priory. The Pandemic, known as COVID-19 has impacted on society, throughout the world in so many ways and seems to have reached a new and tragic milestone in terms of devastating deaths, caused by the dreadful virus. Caution had to be exercised (and continues to be applied) in relation to; individual contact, large gatherings of people, attendance at special gatherings such as Masonic meetings and sadly, paying respect to departed merit.

Since March, 2020, we have learned to live and cope with the effects of COVID-19 and ironically celebrated the success of the brilliant Scientists who identified and developed the vaccines which have provided a form of immunity to the Virus. There is no doubt Covid-19 has made a lasting (negative) impact on society. But it has, ironically, given us something special, the opportunity to; work together, grow together, learn together, reach out and help each other.

Significant contributions have been made by Knights throughout this Province (in conjunction with Masons from other Orders in the Province), in the distribution of food parcels to those in need, helping elderly residents who are housebound, stewarding at Vaccination Centres and a range of other areas of special needs. To each and every one involved in these roles I say, on behalf of the Province of Knight Templars and your local Community, 'Thank you for your dedication' at this time of need.

Inevitably, the role of Almoner, within our Preceptories has been called upon during this period, to provide support and assistance in many different forms. On your behalf, I say 'thank you' to our Provincial and Preceptory Almoners for all the great work and great deeds they perform.

Turning to other matters, I am happy to report that, the Most Eminent and Supreme Grand Master, Paul Raymond Clement, G.C.T has been pleased to award the following Great Priory ranks to Knights of this Province:

E.Kt. John Coleman, promoted to Past Great Herald;

E.Kt. John Edser, promoted to Past Great Standard Bearer Vexillum Belli;

E.Kt. Peter Vosser, appointed to Past Great Warden of Regalia; and

E.Kt. Leslie Grout, appointed to Past Great Chamberlain.

Congratulations to each of you on receiving these appointments.

Brother Knights, as a result of your generosity, the 'Outreach Programme' of medical treatment, carried out by the Medical Team, based at the Eye Hospital in the West Bank, has continued with great success. The sum of all donations from this province in the past two years is over £8,000 and in recognition of our fund raising the Provincial Priory is to be presented with a Swift Award. A replica Swift bearing our name will also be added to the tree statue in the Garden of Hope at the Hospital.

The demand for this specialised treatment has increased significantly in recent months, especially in the age group of 5-7 years and elderly members of the community.

It is hoped the International Community will resume funding for this important and ongoing medical treatment. However, nothing adds more to the success than the donations you have all graciously made.

In his report, the Provincial Vice-Chancellor gave details of Brother Knights who have obeyed the command of the Great Captain of Salvation, to reside with him in that happy abode we call heaven. We shall remember them all with; fondness, sadness and respect. Requiescat in Pace (RiP).

Regrettably, it was not possible for me, members of the Executive, and Officers of the Year (2020/2021), due to 'Lockdown' to visit Preceptories in the Province. This year I hope the Officers of the Year will take the opportunity to form part of a 'Full Team' visit during 2021/2022 and enjoy the special occasions. I have asked the Provincial Vice-Chancellor to extend an invitation to the Officers of the Year from last year to accompany members of the Executive on their 'Official Visits' this year.

Congratulations to all of those Knights in the Province who have received Appointments or Promotions today. Unfortunately, I am unable to confer these personally, today but hopefully that opportunity will present itself at the Provincial Malta meeting in September 2021.

The development and management of Knight Templar activities within the Province is founded on the important and supportive contributions made by; The Provincial Sub-Prior, E.Kt. Peter Brown; Provincial Vice-Chancellor, E.Kt. Dr Miguel Godfrey and Provincial Chancellor, V.E.Kt. Christopher Cradock. To this excellent team of experienced Knights, I offer my thanks for all their support, guidance and dedication in assisting me in my role as Provincial Prior.

As always, E.Kt. Alan Carroll and the other members of the Provincial Prior's Bodyguard keep a discreet but watchful eye on me to ensure I do not get up to mischief. On a serious note, the dedication and commitment of the Knights who perform this role is greatly appreciated by me.

It would be remiss of me if I failed to offer my thanks to E.Kt. Christopher Wenham Eley, who is standing down as Provincial Marshal. E.Kt. Chris has performed this role in a most confident, competent and energetic manner on every occasion he has been called on to perform. The Province has, indeed, benefitted from the attention to detail Chris has applied to all our special occasions and ceremonies. I am also pleased to report, when out on the last Provincial visit he did indeed remember the correct name of the Provincial Prior, who was attending the Meeting!!

E.Kt. Chris, on behalf of all the Knights of the Province, thank you for the excellent and dedicated manner you applied to your role. I know your successor, E.Kt. Tim Ford will welcome your advice when called upon, in your new role as Deputy Provincial Marshal.

So, what of the future challenges we may face as we gradually emerge from restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic? In many ways it will be a different world and possibly one where elements of the 'Old Order' will no longer exist.

Challenges we may face in life do not necessarily have to be complex or profound. In addressing these challenges, at this time in our history, perhaps we could consider:

# Start your day with the Lord's Prayer and give thanks for vaccines received.

# Complete a 'Gratitude Journal' each day to record; the kindness we have received, either by word or deed. What help, assistance, kind gesture we offered to others.

# How we have made TIME to look after; our family, friends, those in need, the weak, the poor, the lonely. Not just in one moment but at every opportunity. Time is a great and precious gift. Once you give the gift of TIME, you can never take it back.

# Encourage, but not force, demand or embarrass our Brother Knights to participate in our Preceptory Meetings, social activities and Masonry in general especially at this particular time.

Brother Knights, do take care of your health and that of your family. Remain fit and strong in body and mind. Be an example to the world of the contribution Masonic Knight Templars play in creating a caring society.

Our next meeting of Provincial Priory of the Order of the Temple will be on **Saturday 9 July 2022** when St George at Stoneleigh No. 364 will be our hosts as Banner Preceptory.

Finally, I remain dedicated to you all and thank you for allowing me to continue as your Provincial Prior. The honour of leading this Province of Knight Templars is a wonderful experience.

My sincere good wishes to each of you and your family. Please stay safe and well.

R.E.Kt. Patrick P Crossan

***Provincial Prior***

***Provincial Priory of Surrey***