



The Healing, Teaching and Chivalric Order of St. Raphael



www.orderofstaphael.org.uk

Newsletter - Autumn 2014

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A MESSAGE FROM THE GRAND MASTER

I write to greet the members of our Order and to congratulate you all on an exciting and fruitful year.

In late March, my wife and I travelled up to Inverurie near Aberdeen where I consecrated the Lion Rampant Conclave, the Order’s first in Scotland. The meeting was very well organised and attended and I had the great



pleasure of investing Excellent Chevalier David Starritt as the first Knight Commander. This was followed by a delightful Scottish-themed meal, at



which David presented the Order with a Quaich filled with malt whisky and passed it around all the members at the table.

At the Annual Meeting, this gift from our Scottish Conclave was passed round those present and this will now be the custom for all our future Annual Investitures. The Quaiche is a Highland ‘loving cup’ which has a long history in Scotland and King James VI of Scotland gave a quaiche to his Queen, Anne of Denmark, in 1589.

The Annual Investiture itself was held in May and was well attended. Our tireless webmaster, Right Excellent Chevalier David Haywood, has

updated the Order's website and you will find there some really good pictures of the day in the Gallery section.

During the Meeting, I consecrated our fourth Conclave, Thomas a Becket, to be held in West London under the Knight Commandership of Excellent Chevalier Norman Offield. We also invested two junior members from Scotland, which enabled me to perform this ceremony which is not often used in the Order.

In January, my wife and I went to Spain for a short holiday and I visited Cordoba to see the great Mosque, only to find that it is a city dedicated to St. Raphael. In 1274, Cordoba was first struck by an outbreak of a deadly plague and set up a hospital and cemetery



for those afflicted, situated where the statue of St. Raphael known as the Triunfo [See picture] now stands. St. Raphael is reputed to have appeared to Simon de Sousa, the headmaster of a local convent and said to him: "Tell the Bishop Don Pascual that God is very satisfied with the labour and care of his prayers for other people. Put my image on the top of the tower of the Great Mosque and celebrate my saint's day every year." After several other appearances to the faithful, it was agreed in 1655 to form a

Brotherhood of Saint Raphael which is still active today and has its own church in the city. St. Raphael is said to have appeared again to a local priest in 1349 when the city was again cursed with an outbreak of the plague, known in England as the Black Death, and the archangel told the priest that he would spare Cordoba from the worst effects of the pestilence because of the piety of the priest and Cordoba's citizens.



Once the plague had subsided, several monuments were erected to honour St. Raphael, who then became the city's patron saint.

St. Raphael is of course the patron saint of healing and there is so much in the present world which results from races and other groups focussing on their differences instead of tolerating and celebrating each other's value as members of a common humanity. It is the role of each of us in the Order to contribute, as far as we can, to this healing process by showing in our lives tolerance and humanity and teaching others the value of this approach whenever opportunity occurs.



May I conclude by wishing you and your loved ones a healthy and happy autumn and I look forward to meeting you all again in May if not earlier.

+Howard

M.E. The Chevalier Howard F Doe, GCSR, GCSM,
Baron St Raphael, Grand Master

ANNUAL INVESTITURE 2014

This year's meeting took place on 10th May, after the decision made at last year's AGM to move the annual investiture to the second Saturday in May.

There was just one postulant this year – Penny Bell-Wright, but we were delighted to also welcome two junior members – Melanie and Ross McLellan. For many of the members present this was our first experience of the Ritual for junior members, and it was a unique and interesting experience.

The Grand Master then had great pleasure in promoting Dame Margaret Gunnell to the rank of Dame Grand Cross in acknowledgement of her continuing hard work as Custodian of Insignia.

Finally, the Consecration of the new Conclave of St Thomas Becket – Martyr took place, and the Grand Master presented the Conclave's new Commander – Chevalier Norman Offield – with the Patent.

Following the service, the usual convivial meal took place, and after an enlightning talk by Jessica Hiscocks, the new Regional Fundraiser, the Grand Master took great delight in presenting a cheque for £350 to Whizz-Kidz.

The Grand Council meeting took place after lunch, and items discussed were as follows:

- Some difficulties had been experienced over the past year and the Grand Master has appointed David Starritt as Grand Treasurer. The GM reported that we currently had £1256 in current account and £1000 on deposit.
- Charitable donations – no new beneficiaries were put forward, but we have today given £350 to Whizz-Kidz.
- The Custodian of Insignia reported that Light and Boston have gone into liquidation and their assets purchased by Toye Kenning Spencer. There is currently an ongoing discussion with them to try and get the dyes back. The meeting also confirmed that Juniors will now officially have the Miniature medal as their jewel.
- There was only one promotion today, and Commanders and Vice Chancellors are encouraged to put names forward from their Conclaves for promotions and awards in the future.
- The GM confirmed that he has put the St William of Rochester Conclave into suspense for another year, and no meetings are to take place without his express permission. The Conclave will be made defunct in one year's time if no meetings are held. The GM also expressed his delight at the recent Consecration of the Lion Rampant Conclave in Scotland and hoped it would go from strength to strength.
- The GM thanked David Haywood for the new website, and Margaret Gunnell for the re-written Consecration Ritual. The main Ritual service still contains some minor errors and DH offered to reproduce this. Any suggested amendments should be sent to DH by the end of July.
- The Grand Council instructed the new Grand Treasurer that a revised membership list be produced in conjunction with the Grand Registrar to ensure that only those paid to date should remain on the list.

- It was agreed that all Grand Officers must try to attend the annual Investiture, and if they did not attend for two consecutive years they would lose their post.

The Grand Master closed the Grand Council Meeting at 3.00pm.

New members admitted:

Dame Penelope Bell-Wright (DSR)

Master Ross McLellan & Miss Melanie McLellan (Juniors)

Promotions:

Dame Margaret Gunnell to GCSR

Photographs of the event can be viewed in the Gallery on the website.

www.orderofstraphael.org.uk

'THE ST RAPHAEL LINK'

Those of you for whom we have a registered email address should have been receiving copies of a regular e-newsletter from our Grand Prior, Rt Rev'd Geoffrey Robinson, which has proved to be a popular and welcome addition to the ways in which we communicate with our membership. If you have not been receiving this, please contact Bishop Geoffrey at gp@orderofstraphael.org.uk so that he can update his mailing list.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions for 2014 were due in the summer, and the new Grand Treasurer has been contacting members who have not paid. If you have not yet paid, and have not had a reminder, please contact David Starritt as soon as possible to arrange payment.

Payment by Bank Standing order is an excellent way of keeping the Order's affairs in good standing, for there is no need to chase members for outstanding payments, and is the Order's preferred method of receiving annual subscriptions. With a standing order, no personal information is

given to the payee, and the member remains in full control of the payment with his bank. To pay future subscriptions by standing order please contact David Starritt gt@orderofstraphael.org.uk for further details.

The annual subscription for members is £20, this amount having been agreed in 2008. £12 of this goes towards the running costs of the Conclave/Order, with £8 being a donation towards the Order's nominated charity, which is currently Whizz-Kidz. Life Members do not pay subscriptions but are encouraged to make the £8 donation in line with other members.

CONSECRATION OF THE LION RAMPANT CONCLAVE

This Consecration service took place on 29th March at Inverurie, Aberdeenshire.

The Grand Conclave was opened in the customary manner, led by the Grand Master, Grand Prior and Grand Chancellor, with R.E. Chevalier Julian Gunnell acting as Grand Marshal before handing over to the Conclave Marshal for the final section.

Michael Stephen, Anne Stephen, Gordon Wackett, Jeannie Wackett, Ian Ross, Sabina Cameron, John Farquharson, Lesley Farquharson, Rhoda Ross were all admitted as members of the Order. They were then all promoted to receive the accolade of Knight or Dame of the Order.

The Grand Master then consecrated the Lion Rampant Conclave, and David Starritt was appointed as the first Commander of the Conclave. He then appointed his own officers who took over their duties immediately to close the meeting.



The Conclave was closed in traditional form, and those present retired for a banquet. Some suitable and brief toasts and speeches were proposed and given. The Grand Master was presented with a quaich for the Order. It was filled with a good single malt

whisky and passed to the left around the members. The Commander promised that if the Quaich were taken to the meeting of the Order, the Lion Rampant Conclave would ensure there was something to put in it. He also promised that the Lion Rampant Conclave would give the Grand Master a suitable sum for the charitable work of the Order, but we would do this in May after we have balanced our accounts for the day. A raffle raised £120.

E Chevalier David Starritt, KCSR, GCSM

INSIGNIA

Margaret Gunnell reminds members that a variety of gifts and insignia is in stock, and that orders are now being taken. The price list appears below, and pictures of the various items appear on the website. Margaret's details can be found near the end of this newsletter.

Regalia

Breast Star		£40.00
Collarette & Jewel	(KSR)	£34.00
Bow & Jewel	(Dame)	£38.00
Collarette	(KSR)	£10.00
Collarette	(KCSR)	£18.00
Collarette & Jewel	(KCSR)	£40.00
Bow only	(DCSR)	£20.00
Miniature Jewel (Mark & Raphael)		£18.00 (Ladies bow also)
St Mark Breast Medal		£20.00
Rosette with flashes (Silver)		£ 2.00
Mantle Cross		£20.00
Mantle (Direct order from suppliers)		£117.50 inc. VAT

Miscellaneous

Cuff links	£15.00
Lapel Pins	£ 3.50
Tie of the Order	£16.00
Paper weight	£15.00

Prices are, of course, subject to change as stock is replenished, so please check with Margaret before placing any orders.

NO ONE KNOWS THE DAY OR THE HOUR!

Jesus said: “But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in the heavens will be shaking. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then He will send His angels, and gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven.



Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see these things happening, know that it is near—at the doors! Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”

I wonder if you have ever noticed how, when Jesus has to teach something very difficult to understand, he tends to do so by illustration and the use of a parable.



The illustration which has been used in the above portion of scripture from Saint Mark is of a fig tree. Not easy for you and I to be given such an explanation; living as we do in our part of the world, when the only encounter with figs is in biscuits or cakes!

So what is this piece of Sacred Scripture really all about? I think that the opening words are quite frightening: ‘the sun will be darkened’ – ‘the

moon will lose its brightness' – 'the stars will fall from heaven' – 'the heavens will be shaken'.

Yes, very powerful words to illustrate what is to come; but I suppose that when that time does come, there will be no need for any explanation and illustrations of fig trees to be given; everyone will know without a shadow of a doubt that the end of the world is taking place!

Jesus is trying to make the point to his followers to be ready for the time when the world as we know it will end. He then goes on to make what perhaps is the more important point; that only God knows when this will come about. So what does all this really mean for you and me?

I'm afraid that we live in a world that has become something other than what God intended. Certainly in our part of the world most people are more interested in spending their time in obtaining material possessions. They would prefer to enjoy their leisure time taking holidays or pursuing recreational activities rather than living out the Gospel and worshipping God.

I am always heartened when I hear or see for myself, reports of countries or communities where Christianity is really taken very seriously indeed. A priest friend has just returned from Ecuador where he had been attending a Convention. He was full of enthusiasm; explaining how the large churches there were bulging at the seams. How when walking in the streets, he was mobbed by crowds asking for God's Blessing for themselves and their children. I have seen with my own eyes in places like Malta how the churches have to hold hourly masses starting at 5am on Sunday in order to accommodate all who wish to attend.

So I suppose that it will not be a total waste of time when God sends his holy angels to gather his chosen from the four winds, from the end of the world to the ends of heaven. The question is; have we been faithful to God by following the teachings of Jesus in our daily lives, for as scripture says: 'No One Knows the Day or the Hour'.

So when the time does come for God to send His Holy Angels to gather his elect, I pray that I will be counted amongst them and be found worthy to share in that heavenly inheritance.

How about you?

+Geoffrey

GRAND PRIOR

A THANK YOU FROM THE GRAND TREASURER

When I was appointed to this post in May, I found myself working in an information vacuum. Slowly, slowly, like working on a jigsaw, the picture has emerged. And for this I must thank everyone who has been so understanding and co-operative, the Grand Master, the Grand Chancellor, and all those Knights and Dames who had to search their records and send replacement payments. Of course, I shouldn't be surprised at this co-operation. After all, this is our Order, and we all want it to work well. But thanks anyway.

David Starritt

CONCLAVES GET TOGETHER IN 2015

The Conclaves of St Martin at Sées and The Lion Rampant are organising a joint visit to the holy site of Lindisfarne, Northumbria, during the weekend of 19-21st June 2015, and other members of the Order will be most welcome to join in if they wish.

At this stage we have no further details, but if you wish to express an interest and receive more information in due course, please contact one of the Commanders, David Haywood or David Starritt.

ST MARTIN OUTING

Following recent tradition several members of the St. Martin's Conclave met for an informal social event which included a guided tour of the



atmospheric Whalley Abbey. Members met in the car park to the Abbey which is entered through an impressive gateway suitable for a building of such importance. Members were taken on a guided tour of the site, much of which is in ruins, although there are still several majestic walls and

arches which remain to indicate the splendour of the building. Whalley Abbey was founded in 1296 by monks from Stanlow in Cheshire. Although a substantial building with a hospice/infirmary and large kitchens, only 30 monks and around 90 lay brothers actually lived there. The site contains examples of Gothic, Medieval, Tudor and even Victorian architecture as renovations have been made. The Guide was informative and interesting as well as humorous and obviously had a love of the Abbey.

Following the visit to the Abbey, members enjoyed a lunch together in a nearby hotel before visiting the local Churchyard with a view to touring the inside of the church when it opened later that afternoon. Regretfully, the church was not opened



to the public for some unexplained reason so that part of the visit was concluded by having a short service of contemplation in the churchyard. Members stood around a Celtic cross (one of three in the churchyard) and the Grand Prior led members in the 'Service of the Crosses'.

The visit concluded with members having afternoon tea together in the town of Clitheroe before making their various ways home after thanking David Haywood for organising the event.

The day proved to be one of education, pleasure, spiritual contemplation and friendship which was much enjoyed by all.

KEY CONTACTS

Restricted information – not available in online version

The Healing, Teaching and Chivalric Order of St. Raphael

The Order is not an Order of Merit, but a stateless International Order of Chivalry. It exists for the express purpose of healing the sick, giving spiritual refreshment to those who suffer, the protection of the Wisdom Religion of the Ages and the creation of a Nobility of Spiritually Enlightened men and women to work for Universal Brotherhood.

All communications should be addressed to the Grand Chancellor, details as above:

» «Initials» «Surname», «Postnominals»

ess1»

ess2»

ess3»

n»

itv»