



HOSPITALLERS

Fellow members of the American Association:



I am writing this on Thanksgiving weekend, in the wake of our Association's events over the weekend of November 12th. By all accounts, our Annual Business Meeting, Investiture, and Dinner were great successes, and, for that, among many other blessings, we give THANKS.

Over the annual events weekend, we were fortunate that the Grand Magistry was well represented by the Prelate of the Order, Archbishop Angelo Acerbi, as well as four members of the Sovereign Council – H.E. Gian Luca Chiavari, Receiver of the Common Treasure (CFO); Fra' Elie de Comminges; Fra' John MacPherson; and H.E. Antonio Sanchez – Corea, Jr.

Moving the weekend to the November timeframe from January paid off in increased participation by our membership. Attendance at all functions appeared to be up significantly from that of last January, but the only real measure we took was of Annual Dinner attendance – 750, up 25% from 600 in January.

Highlights of the Annual Business Meeting, on Friday morning, included:

- The unveiling of our new and vastly improved web site by John Bycraft KM, who managed the renovation. Over time, our web site will become the main vehicle for our communications with our membership.
- A video and presentation by Fran Hardart DM, our Hospitaller, about Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem, which is financially supported by all facets of the Order, world-wide.
- As always, the Treasurer's Report from Joe Finn KM

At our Investiture ceremony Friday afternoon, we welcomed into the Order:

- 105 Dames and Knights
- One Conventual Chaplain ad honorem
- Eight Magistral Chaplains, and
- Four Deputy Chaplains.

And, for the first time during our Annual Investiture, four of our members moved to the second class of membership, three becoming Knights of Obedience – Victor Coudert KMOB, Joe Metz KMOB, and Jim O'Connor KMOB, and one a Dame of Obedience – Hope Carter DMOB.

At our Annual Dinner Friday evening, the Most Rev. Sean O'Malley, Archbishop of Boston, delivered a powerful, inspiring, and thought provoking message. Then, again for the first time, major honors for outstanding service to the Order were bestowed on Drs. Tom Flynn KM and Dick Milone KM, by Fra' Elie de Comminges of the Grand Magistry.

Saturday morning, the Rev. Richard John Neuhaus celebrated Mass for us and then struck many well sounding cords talking about self proclaimed Catholics, including public officials, whose beliefs are out of tune with the Magisterium. What a wonderful weekend!

Over the previous weekend, Rosemary and I were able to go to Boston and attend the Boston Area's Annual Mass, celebrated by Archbishop Sean O'Malley, on Thursday, and the Area's outstanding conference on bio-ethics, organized by Gus Grace KM, on Saturday. On Friday, Lynn Finn DM took us on a tour of the new Malta Wellness Center, located in downtown Boston in the Franciscan Friary, which she spearheaded. Then we accompanied street nurse Cheryl Kane DM, along with a psychiatrist and a young medical intern, to meet several street people in Downtown Boston. It was amazing to see how effective Cheryl's team was in getting necessary medical help to these homeless people. Another great weekend!

As you know, this year's Board of Councillors election is over. Outgoing Board members are Pepe Fanjul KM, Bob Reers KM, and Gene Vilfordi KM. As we mentioned at the Annual Business Meeting, we appreciate very much their past contributions to the successful workings of our Board. We welcome three new members to the 2005 Board: Anne Burke DM, Jack Pohrer KM, and Joe Hagan KHDOB, and look forward to working with them.

Regarding membership, great strides have been made, stemming from efforts led by Joe Miller KM, our Chancellor, Cissie Ix DM, and Jim Claus KM, going back to May 2003. Our membership count now stands at 1,719, an increase of 145 since January 1, 2004. We have over 120 in the year of preparation program, in queue to be invested next November. So a year from now, after considering deaths, our count should be well over 1,800. As you know, we want to attract only high

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New York's Kids Deserve Respect – Healthy Respect

By James P. Manning, K.M. and John P. Margand, Esq.

Sexual abstinence is not a popular subject among teenagers attending schools in the New York City area. To make matters worse, there is stiff entrenched opposition to abstinence education at the highest levels of New York's educational community, where a failed condom social marketing policy in city schools continues to spawn sexual promiscuity, disease, and a host of health-related behavioral disorders.



In spite of these long odds, Project REACH's Healthy Respect program has succeeded, in less than twelve months, in reaching over 800 at-risk students with up to twenty hours of character-based abstinence education in six public and private schools in the New York City area.

The need for the program could not be greater. New York has an abortion rate three times higher than the national average, with over 60 percent (15,000) of all teen pregnancies ending in abortion. It has the country's highest rate of AIDS infection, and other sexually transmitted diseases are increasing at alarming rates. Clearly, the "safe sex," condom curriculum has failed New York's students. A fresh, positive approach is needed, which is what the Healthy Respect program offers. The curriculum conforms to federal guidelines on abstinence education that mandate abstinence be presented as the only truly "safe sex."

Student response has been overwhelming: many say they have never been told that abstinence was even an option. "Why didn't anybody ever tell me this before?" is a common question in student evaluations of the course.

There is no other abstinence education program in the New York City area that is similar in scope and intensity. Highly trained male-female instructor teams present twenty hours of abstinence education to needy students in some of New York's toughest neighborhoods. Weekend and evening workshops are used to foster parent-child communication and keep parents and guardians informed about all aspects of classroom content.

The program is designed to connect with the students on a deeply personal level in order to challenge them to make healthy decisions and change risky behaviors. A researcher from Columbia University carefully evaluates each course. Preliminary results reveal that students taking the course have a greater understanding of the risks associated with extra-marital sexual activity. Students also demonstrate higher educational goals after taking the course. Plans are in place to track long-term behavioral change among program participants.

Project REACH, a pro-life organization based in midtown Manhattan, began with the vision and financial support of Knight James P. Manning and the late Dame Eileen Manning who sought to address the abortion crisis in New York City, where nearly half of all pregnancies end in abortion. The project was championed by the late John Cardinal O'Connor, who welcomed a fresh coordinated response to the abortion crisis. Funding provided by the Order of Malta has been matched dollar for dollar by the Manning's to reach abortion-bound women with counseling and material support. A \$40,000 grant from Knight John Kaneb helped to launch a challenging semester-long certification program for pregnancy center counselors, to ensure that women considering abortion were given accurate information regarding the risks and alternatives to abortion procedures. The college-level course is now available nationwide. Project Reach has since been designated as one of the official projects of the New York Area of the Order of Malta.

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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.



Sign of the Cross

The sign of the cross is: a confession of faith; a renewal of baptism; a mark of discipleship; an acceptance of suffering; a defense against the devil; and a victory over self-indulgence. (Bert Ghezzi, Author of the Sign of the Cross; Recovering the Power of Ancient Prayer (Loyola Press) (Zenit, November 24, 2004)

Hope for Haiti

The people of Haiti have an overwhelming feeling of hope and love for their children. Despite the abject poverty, parents struggle to afford the sum necessary to give their children an education and hope for a better future.

Even after a large rainstorm when the massive holes in the road become filled with water creating ponds in the street, a father rides his old bicycle with his two daughters dressed in their clean, neatly pressed school uniforms. The littlest sits on the handle bars, the older stands on the back fender, as he, with rolled up pants, rides through the traffic and two foot deep puddles to make sure his daughters arrive to school on time and properly dressed.

The school propagates this love with tender little touches, such as the raised heart welded onto the school gate. The children respond to this love with bright smiles and laughter.

In the midst of the seemingly unending struggle that is Haiti are these wonderful islands of hope and happiness, a true triumph of love and the human spirit.

MALTA has helped to keep these islands afloat. If you would like to see more about the schools MALTA has helped to support, please visit www.hopeforhaiti.com.



XX ANNIVERSARY, LOURDES PILGRIMAGE APRIL 27, 2005 – MAY 4, 2005

By John & JoAnne Connolly, Co-Chairs 2005 Lourdes Pilgrimage

As of this writing there are just about 140 days left 'til the 2005 Lourdes Pilgrimage takes off from Newark Airport. It is the season, as they say, isn't it? What a curious parallel. We are now looking forward to Christmas and Mary bringing Jesus to us. And in the same breath, we are also looking forward to being with Mary in Lourdes where we can be brought closer to Jesus by her. An interesting thought, isn't it?

We are happy to report that the 2005 Malta Pilgrimage to Lourdes is presently on track. The talented members of our Committee have been working diligently and we are experiencing vigorous participation by our members. With the continued help of Our Lady of Lourdes, the 2005 Pilgrimage will be a resounding success.

Invitations to our Knights and Dames to the Malta world-wide annual 2005 Pilgrimage to Lourdes were mailed in early November. The first application was submitted by Victor Couderd, K.M. of Greenwich, CT. Victor has participated in many Lourdes Pilgrimages and we welcome him to the '05 Pilgrimage.



Our target is to have about 50 malades and this number will require over 200 Knights and Dames for support. We desperately need many more of our members on the '05 Pilgrimage. Please join Victor and the Lourdes Committee; come to Lourdes.

The Annual Investiture gala for our Order was held in early November in New York City. We had an opportunity to make a brief presentation on Lourdes to over 100 men and women who were invested in St. Patrick's Cathedral.

These new members understand the concept of service to the sick and the poor intrinsic to our Order. We tried to make the point that coming to Lourdes right after being invested is a wonderful way to 'jump start' their lives as a Knights or Dames. They seemed very responsive and we hope many of them will come in '05.

We were pleased to make a Lourdes presentation at the well attended Business Meeting. One of the points we made is worth repeating here. Our Pilgrimage is for all Knights and Dames, even for our older ones who might have lost a step or two and might not be able to work pushing a voiture. People in this situation are welcome. There is only one caveat, you must tell us about your limitations so that we can get a pilgrimage assignment which will work for you and your fellow Pilgrims.

Many members have submitted names of malade candidates and worked hard to get medical forms submitted to the Malade Medical Selection Committee. The first meeting of this committee was held in mid-November and a substantial number of those malade candidates were medically approved. We are now in the final review phase for this group. Meanwhile we continue to solicit malade candidates as we have room for more. So, if you are thinking about recommending a person as a malade candidate, please do so soon.

We want to expand our base of 'younger and stronger' people who come to the Pilgrimage to do the 'heavy lifting' while serving as Auxiliary. So, if you know a young person, 21 to 40, who is not a member of our Auxiliary and wants to come to Lourdes to serve as a volunteer Auxiliary, please send his/her name, address and phone number along with a brief paragraph describing their interests to the Co-Chairs.

They will be contacted by the Auxiliary Committee as space becomes available.

As a reminder, the '05 Pilgrimage will be our 20th anniversary. A celebration of this major milestone in our history is being planned and we hope all past Chairs and Co-Chairs will come to Lourdes in 2005.

There is a significant new program in development right now. Potentially, it will involve more malades and more Knights and Dames. We can't wait for the details to be worked out so that we can inform our members about it. Stay tuned for more information in upcoming Newsletters and other communications with our membership.

Our Pilgrimage is the largest hands-on activity sponsored by our Association. Every malade and caregiver comes as our guest; they pay nothing. In recent years we have had over 175 Knights and Dames doing real work with the sick and poor each year. In the nineteen years we have had our Pilgrimage; over 2,500 Pilgrims have been to Lourdes. Our '05 budget is well over three quarters of a million dollars. And how is this operation financed? By our members, that's right – YOU!

The largest component of this financing comes from the fee charged each Knight and Dame who comes as a Pilgrim. The balance comes from contributions primarily from members who do not or cannot come to Lourdes. It is critical that these contributions continue and even increase. A Contributions Committee is being formed to develop methods to accomplish these goals. We hope you will be receptive to learning more about the financial situation of the Pilgrimage and decide to help support it financially.

Best of all though, if you'd like to have a smoother, safer and better trip on the way to your salvation, come with us to Lourdes in 2005.

Our Lady of Lourdes – Pray for us. ✠

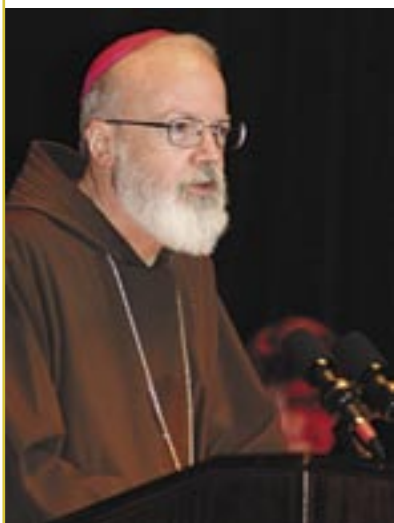




Chaplain's Column

Archbishop Sean O'Malley

The following is the speech which Archbishop O'Malley the Archbishop of Boston gave at the Annual Dinner for members at the Waldorf Astoria on November 12, 2004.



Thank you very much for that very kind introduction. I am delighted to be here. It is always great joy to be in the presence of my dear friend Cardinal Egan and to be able to concelebrate mass with him in his beautiful cathedral and to be with all of you here today. The Waldorf=Astoria is such a mystical place. When I told my sister I was coming here for dinner, she said "don't embarrass me. Remember what you did when you went to the Whitehouse." I was invited once to the Whitehouse to a state dinner and only because the President of Brazil was visiting and President Bush, the father, was looking for a Portuguese speaking bishop. There is a very short list and, ironically enough, the name is O'Malley and I'm on the list. So I arrived at the Whitehouse. They sat me at a table between the President whom I recognized almost immediately

and this lovely young lady on the other side who introduced herself as Gloria Estefan. I asked her: "Do you work at the Whitehouse?" She said, "No, I am a famous singer." I said: "you obviously don't sing Gregorian chant." So I hope I don't embarrass my sister tonight

I did want to begin by telling you a story of one of our friars who was a very famous preacher. He liked to preach about hell and his descriptions of hell were so awful that he brought many people to repentance. When he died, before he entered heaven, he asked Saint Peter if he would allow a little glimpse of hell. He was curious. He wanted to know how accurate his descriptions were. Saint Peter said that it can be arranged. We will send you down in this elevator. When the door opens, you can look through the glass observation area there. So the friar went down and the elevator arrived in hell; the door opened and he saw all these people skiing. Some were sledding and skating. The friar was so amazed. When he went back up to heaven Saint Peter said: "Well, what did you think?" He said: "Wow, I was amazed. It was like a winter wonderland." Saint Peter said: "Oh, I guess the Red Sox won." We are all very happy about that obviously, especially in Boston. I don't know about New York.

Well I just want to tell you one more story about lawyers. I am from a lawyer's family so I think I have a right to talk about them. They tell a story about this lawyer who realized that his client had just been terribly bilked because he was sued by fraudulent claims. This man said that he had slipped on his client's sidewalk and was permanently crippled and had been awarded millions of dollars by the court. After the last appeal was lost, he went up to the man who was sitting there in this wheelchair smirking at him and he said: "You know, you're not going to be able to enjoy this money because I am going to follow you to the ends of the earth and the day you get out of that wheelchair I am going to have you in prison for fraud, for perjury, for embezzlement, and for everything else." The man said: "I'll save you the trouble. I'll tell you where I am going. I have a stretch limousine waiting for me outside the courtroom to take me to Kennedy airport and I am getting on the Concord and I'm going to Paris, France. There will be another stretch limousine waiting for me there and I am going to the South of France to Lourdes and you are going to see the biggest miracle in the history books."

But seriously you are the big miracle and I am here to thank all of you for being members of the Order of Malta which accomplishes so much good in the name of the Church especially in ministering to the sick and to the poor. I want to add a word of congratulations to the new members who have been received into the Order today and to those who have made their Promise of Obedience. I especially want to congratulate Jim O'Connor as the first one from Boston to make that step. I told his children that, if we got a lot of work out of him before, imagine now that he is going to be Obedient; I mean, that is wonderful.

During this last month a number of significant events have transpired: the Catholic Church has begun the Eucharistic Year, the Holy See has published a compendium of the Church's social teachings; we have just experienced an election in our country, which was profoundly influenced by Americans' religious and moral convictions. All of this must say something to us as believers and, indeed, as members of the Order of Malta with its two-fold mission of defending the faith and serving the poor and sick and the forgotten. In former times the Catholic Church was bitterly persecuted for what we taught about God, about Christ, about the Blessed Trinity. In today's world, the Church is attacked for what we teach about human beings; about the dignity of each irreplaceable person, the rights of the unborn and the sacredness of marriage and the importance of family life. Growing up in the Midwest in one of those red states back in the "Leave it to Beaver" fifties, we used to eat together everyday as a family. As children, I am sure we would have loved to be out having a hot dog at the corner or pizza someplace, but six days a week we were at our dinner table and on the seventh day we were at Nana's house for dinner. Not that the Irish cuisine was so great – you know, they say the world's shortest book is the Irish cookbook; lots of boiled dinners. But at table, we prayed together, we shared the news of our lives with each other, we laughed with and at each other. We grew in our sense of belonging, our identity, our common aspirations and ideals. Sadly enough, the family meal is becoming obsolete in our country but the truth is that, when families stop eating together – often they stop acting like a family and when we stop coming to Mass, we cease to act like Catholics. I remember in the seminary reading an interview with Flandery O'Connor. They were asking her what it was like to grow up in the South with so few Catholics. She recounted a story from her childhood where she said she had this little girlfriend, a little Baptist girl. She always wanted to take that little girl to mass and finally she was able to get permission from the girl's parents. They went to Sun-

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HONORS GIVEN

At the Annual Dinner at the Waldorf=Astoria, Dr. Thomas Flynn and Dr. Richard Milone were awarded Honors by the Grand Master, Frá Andrew Bertie and the Sovereign Council. Dr. Flynn was awarded the Cross of Commander "Pro Merito Militensi" for his work at the Sacré Coeur Hospital in Milot, Haiti. Dr. Flynn is currently the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the hospital having assumed this leadership position from Dr. Theodore Dubuque of St. Louis. Dr. Flynn has been a member of the Order and the American Association since 1991. He embodies the all characteristics of a Knight of Malta in his work with the sick and poor of Haiti.

Dr. Richard Milone was awarded the Cross of Officer of the Order "Pro Merito Militensi" for his work as the leader of the Medical Team of the Annual Lourdes Pilgrimages. Dr. Milone's work exemplifies the care and concern which Brother Gerard, our founder, exemplified when he founded the first hospice in Jerusalem to support and care for the pilgrims in the Holy Land.

GRANTS DUE

All applications for grants must be received by April 15, 2005. Grants will be considered only once during the 2005 year. This is a change from a previous practice of considering grants in the spring and the fall. Grant applications can be accessed from the Association's website: www.maltausa.org. All grants will be considered by the Grants Committee in early May and will be approved by the Board of Councillors at its May 19, 2005 meeting.



Killing in the Cause of Healing Is Wrong

By Robert P. George

Professor Robert P. George was the speaker at the October 18, 2004, medical ethics lecture at the University of Notre Dame sponsored in part by the Members of the Indiana Area of Order of Malta. The presentation immediately followed the White Mass in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart on the Notre Dame campus. This essay first appeared in the Philadelphia Inquirer on October 17, 2004. Robert P. George is McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence and Director of the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions at Princeton University, and serves on the President's Council on Bioethics.

John Kerry, Ron Reagan Jr., and others have loudly denounced President George W. Bush for his policy of refusing to authorize the use of federal money in biomedical research involving the killing of human embryos. They have shamefully hyped this research, falsely suggesting to victims of horrible diseases and their loved ones that cures are just around the corner, if only the President would place healing ahead of his “right-wing ideology.”

The truth is that the therapeutic value of embryonic stem cells is speculative. By contrast, people are being treated and even cured today with therapies involving non-embryonic stem cells that can be harvested harmlessly from umbilical cord blood, adult bone marrow, fat, and other sources.

But, some might ask, why not explore both avenues: adult stem cells and embryonic stem cells? The answer – though neither John Kerry nor Ron Reagan wants to say it out loud – is that embryonic stem cells cannot yet be obtained without destroying the embryonic human beings from whom they are harvested.

Of course, some partisans of embryo-destructive research say that human embryos are not really human beings. It is therefore morally acceptable, they insist, to “disaggregate” them for the sake of science. After all, human embryos are very tiny – smaller than the period at the end of this sentence. They haven’t yet developed a brain and neural system, so they don’t yet exercise mental functions and are not even sentient. They don’t “look human.”

But none of these considerations are determinative of the moral status of the embryo. For the crucial and undeniable fact is that a human embryo is not something different in nature or kind from a human being – like a stone, a potato, or an alligator. A human embryo is a human being – a distinct, living member of the species *Homo Sapiens* – at the earliest stage of his or her natural development.

In the embryonic stage, each of us was already a complete human organism possessing the genetic constitution and active disposition to develop by a process of internal self-direction and self-integration from the embryonic into and through the fetal, infant, child, and adolescent stages of development, and into adulthood with our unity, determinateness, and identity intact.

None of us was ever a sperm cell or an ovum. These gametes whose union brought us into existence were genetically and functionally parts of other human beings, our parents. But each of us was once an embryo, just as each of us was once an adolescent, child, infant, and fetus. These terms refer not to different kinds of beings, but to stages in human development.

Those who would justify killing human beings in the embryonic stage sometimes suggest that there is a great mystery about “when life begins.” They depict it as a metaphysical or theological question that cannot be answered by science.

But there is no mystery here. Human embryogenesis and intrauterine development are, in their essentials, well understood. Every textbook of human embryology and developmental biology currently in use in American medical schools confirms the fact that the life of a new human individual begins at conception.

Although in the embryonic stage we were indeed very small and underdeveloped, we were nonetheless human. We didn’t look like adults, or even like babies, because we weren’t yet at those stages of development. Rather, we looked just like what human beings look like in the embryonic stage.

As modern embryology has decisively shown, the developing embryo is no mere maternal body part. What the embryo needs, and what the womb provides for humans in the embryonic and fetal stages, is exactly what human beings in every stage and condition need for their survival, namely, sustenance and a hospitable environment.

Human beings in the embryonic stage are, to be sure, highly dependent and vulnerable individuals. But dependency and vulnerability – at any stage of development – do not alter one’s essential humanity. They certainly do not erase one’s human dignity and right to be treated with respect, nor do they relegate a human being to the status of disposable “research material.”

Critics of the Bush stem-cell policy propose killing in the cause of healing. To accept that bargain would be to compromise the moral foundations of biomedical science. We would never tolerate subjecting people to harmful or deadly experimentation based on race, sex, or ethnicity. Nor should we do so based on age, size, or stage of development. ❖

Beatification of Charles, Emperor of Austria, Member of the Order of Malta

CHARLES, Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary (1887-1922) was beatified on October 3, 2004 by Pope John Paul II.

After the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914, Charles, nephew of Emperor/King Francis Joseph I, became heir to the throne of the Austro/Hungarian Monarchy.

On the death of Francis Joseph I, Charles was crowned Emperor of Austria as Charles I, and King of Hungary as Charles IV. He immediately – and unsuccessfully tried to stop the carnage of World War I. However, his endeavors through his brothers-in-law, Sixtus and Xavier of Bourbon-Parma, were rejected.

Aware of the meager nourishment available to the civilian population as a consequence of the war, Charles restricted the food served at the palace to that which was readily available to the people.

After WWI, he abdicated from the throne of Austria and withdrew from active government in Hungary. Later he twice attempted to return to Hungary but was rejected by the postwar government. Then he was exiled to Funchal in Madeira where he died from influenza at age 35.

He was a devoted Catholic and a Baillif Grand Cross of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.

The movement towards his eventual canonization is supported by a miraculous healing of a Brazilian nun and by the prayers of many of his admirers for his peace efforts and piety.

Hungarians are proud that their last king is on the way to sainthood, as was their first king, Saint Stephen (+1038) who converted his people to Christianity after settling in the Danubian Basin. ❖

Concerning Homosexuality and Christian Marriage

by Craig de Paulo Ph.D.

**Dear Order of Malta Confreres, Candidates and Friends,
I have recently had to defend the Christian definition of Marriage with regard to a question on homosexuality with a Quaker colleague at Temple University, and I thought this might interest you, or perhaps, assist in your own dealings with these issues.**

1. According to sacred Revelation in the both the Old Testament (Genesis.19:1-29) and the New Testament (Romans.1:24-27; 1 Corinthians.6:10; 1 Timothy.1:10), the ancient, apostolic teaching of the Church on homosexuality (and all “unnatural acts” associated with homosexuality, as the Apostle St. Paul first addresses in his Letter to the Romans) remains steadfast that such acts (and today, the commitment of a lifestyle) is a “mortal sin.” As with any sin of this gravity, the persistent and repeated commitment of homosexual acts (and even more so in a life of homosexual acts) may lead to everlasting death. St. Clement of Rome writes that “neither adulterers or homosexuals shall enter the kingdom of Heaven.” Such acts directly violate: a) the Natural Law and b) the Divine Law. Further, according to the papal magisterium, these acts would also offend a formed conscience, and therefore, Christ Himself, Who is the Voice of conscience dwelling within us. Thus, it is an absolute moral imperative for the Christian to avoid the temptation of the flesh, and especially the occasion of unnatural sexuality between men and between women. The Christian is called by Christ Himself in the Gospel to cleanliness of heart, purity and chastity. Thus, the Contemporary Christian who regards him or herself as “homosexual” must commit him or herself to chastity. Likewise, all Christians called to chastity in every state life (single, married, priestly and monastic, rising in a spiritual hierarchy that resembles our ultimate celestial vocation).

2. According to the ancient, Apostolic teaching of the Church, human sexuality is linked with the conjugal contract and the divine commandment to procreate (cf. Genesis.1:27-28 and Genesis.2:24), which further links “holy matrimony” with creation. According to this ancient, revealed definition, marriage is a contract between a man and a woman for the purpose of the procreation of children. This ideal is, of course, recognized by our Lord by virtue of His presence at the Wedding at Cana (Gospel of St. John.2:1-11), and further developed by St. Paul as an image of the bond that exists between the soul and Christ, and more accurately, between Christ (the Bridegroom) and the Church (the spiritual Bride) – or, in Jewish thought, between Israel and the Lord-when the Apostle commands that “wives be submissive to their husbands” and “husbands love their wives as Christ loves the Church.” (Ephesians.5:21). Further, according to St. Paul, the spiritual purpose of marriage is to avoid “temptation to immorality.” (1 Cor.2) and to be a commitment of temperance (cf 1 Cor.8) and a resolution to living “afire with passion” (1 Cor.9). In short, according to the ancient, apostolic Christian teaching, marriage is the only means of justified sexuality, which is strictly directed toward procreation and any other kind of sexual commerce between husband and wife is strictly forbidden. In antiquity, as you know, Christian revealed sexual morality starkly contrasts pagan customs on this matter, which is perhaps the most important illustration of the ancient rivalry between these two cultures, as St. Augustine addresses at length in the City of God.

3. According to the Apostolic Fathers, and in the Latin Church, St. Augustine, in particular, who is the single most important figure in the development of doctrine, all human sexuality is fallen and disordered according to degree since it occurs after the Fall and, therefore, subject to original sin and its perversity. Even though marriage is a sacrament in the Roman Church and a source of grace between the spouses if they are living righteously and according to Apostolic teaching, it nevertheless falls under the regime of lust (and “the flesh”). Conjugal chastity not only forbids adultery, but requires purity and “seasons” of abstinence in addition to the strict avoidance of unnatural acts (e.g.sodomy), other violations of purity and chastity (e.g. pornography) and, of course, the sin of masturbation. Likewise, any sexual act that prevents life is considered grave matter since, as I mentioned, human sexuality is revealed to be directed toward procreation, and not pleasure (a Contemporary heresy and a pagan characteristic). Since there is no biological, or natural purpose to homosexual acts, they are regarded by the tradition as grave depravity, intrinsically disordered and, therefore, evil. But, this is also the case with heterosexual acts that are merely directed toward pleasure and not for procreation under the bond of matrimony.

4. On the matter of Holy Matrimony, when the Christian Church promotes, permits or provides benediction to the union of two men or two women, it can be said to have departed from the ancient, Apostolic Tradition, rendering it and its congregation to be outside of the Communion of the Apostolic Church, the See of Rome and, in effect, the Body of Christ.

5. However, the Church of Rome today acknowledges that those individuals with “deep-seated homosexual tendencies are not negligible...and, that “They do not choose their homosexual condition; for most of them it is a trial.” Further, the papal Catechism of the Catholic Church (1994) states, that “They (homosexuals) must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided. These persons are called to fulfill God’s Will in their lives and, if they are Christians, to unite to the sacrifice of the Lord’s Cross the difficulties they may encounter from their condition.” (2358) It concludes on this matter, stating the ancient exhortation, that “Homosexual persons are called to chastity” and that they have the possibility of Christian perfection by sacramental grace, disinterested friendship and prayer. (2359)

I hope this may be helpful to you in your own defense of the faith and the moral teaching of the Church as Knights and Dames of the Religion. If you are not trained in the sacred sciences, I highly recommend that you read the Catechism of the Catholic Church regularly to learn the Magisterium, an imperative of any ecclesiastical Knight or Dame. ✠

Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem A Work of the Order of Malta

Ghada was a 29 year old and going into premature labor at only 29 weeks. She naturally went to the local government hospital where she expected to find help. When the hospital realized they were unequipped to handle the severity of her case the state doctors concluded that Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem was the best hope for Ghada and her unborn child.

After arriving safely at the Hospital she was immediately taken into the delivery room.

Ghada’s husband and in-laws waited anxiously for news. To the family’s joy, Holy Family Hospital was able to save Ghada and her baby boy. Since the baby weighed only 3.4 lbs his survival was still in question.

Thankfully Holy Family Hospital and its advanced medical services, which include the only neonatal intensive care unit in the region, were able to nurse this infant to safety.

Ghada and Ghazi have been married for three years and they live in a village south of Bethlehem. They share a small two room house with her in-laws. Though Ghada’s husband is employed they are still affected by the increased poverty, unemployment and malnutrition in the West Bank where they live.

Since Ghazi and Ghada were concerned that they could not afford expenses of neonatal intensive care they desperately sought consultation with the Hospital’s social worker. After reviewing their situation, the social worker granted them the good news that the hospital would be able to cover the medical expenses of their baby.

These acts of charity to the poor of Bethlehem are only made possible through the generosity of donors such as yourselves. ✠



His Eminence James Cardinal Hickey

The following was written by Catherine Abel DMOB of the Federal Association on the death of His Eminence James Cardinal Hickey. Mrs. Abel has been very involved in the formation and growth of the Holy Family Hospital Foundation James Cardinal Hickey, our great friend and benefactor, went to God this morning at 6:15 AM.

Cardinal Hickey was the driving force behind our endowment campaign for Holy Family Hospital, and we owe the success of it to him. When Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, asked the Cardinal to spearhead a campaign to raise funds for the hospital, Cardinal Hickey dropped everything and flew immediately from Rome to Bethlehem. Not content just to tour the facilities and interview the staff, he met with the poor in their own homes – to talk with them about their needs and what the hospital meant in their lives. He held the children in his arms and said it was that which committed him to the campaign. For all the great things he accomplished, Cardinal Hickey first and foremost was a shepherd who loved his flock.

During the course of the campaign, Cardinal Hickey met with individuals, talked to groups, and attended planning sessions all over the United States and on the Lourdes Pilgrimage of the Order of Malta – anything he was asked to do. The Cardinal never refused any request. He took a personal interest in the campaign, and donors responded to him generously. Even when his health was failing, he would ask, “How is our hospital?” whenever he met someone from the foundation.

It is because of his interest and assistance that the U.S. foundation is able to help Holy Family Hospital today. It is because of his commitment that the hospital is saving the lives of mothers and babies so near where the Blessed Mother gave birth to the Savior of the World.

The U.S. Foundation deeply feels the loss of its great benefactor, James Cardinal Hickey, and asks your prayers for his deliverance into heaven and for the family and priestly family he loved so much. He will be sorely missed.

Respect Life

Monsignor William Smith

The following is the homily given by Monsignor Smith at the Respect for Life Mass at the Lady Chapel in St. Patrick's Cathedral on October 24, 2004.

Two men went up to the Temple to pray. One prayed, the other did not. Prayer, we say, is the “raising of the mind and heart to God” (CCC, #2559). Prayer, of course, is directed to God – whereas, the Pharisee in the gospel (Lk. 18) prayed to himself, mostly about himself, largely in praise of himself. Notice: all his credits begin with the first person singular: I give; I fast; I tithe. God, he seems to think, needs reminders of how good he is.

Whereas, the humble tax-collector was content to be in the presence of God, trusting God as God, and importantly treating God as God. That sounds simple but it is an effort not everyone makes all the time.

Surely, no one can genuinely place himself in the presence of God and use that privileged period to congratulate himself on his own piety: “Dear God,” or, “God knows I have my faults but being wrong isn’t one of them!” Or, the text we just read: “Thank God I am not like the rest of men!” or to put it to music with Henry Higgins: “Why can’t everyone be like me” (My Fair Lady).

What we have here is mixed-up and misplaced sovereignty God is NOT made in the image and likeness of us; that’s completely backwards. The truth is, we, all of us, we are made in the Image and Likeness of God. That truth is revealed in the first book of everybody’s Bible. Gen. 1:26 “Then God said: Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. ... 1:27 God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them.”

Now, that is a truth that’s a first truth. As we celebrate October as ‘Respect Life Month’, as we offer any Mass for Life, we must not forget nor cover up first things and first truths.

Life, especially human life, is threatened in our society first at the edges, and, more and more now, in between. At the edges, life’s beginning (the unborn) is now a legal free-fire zone; life’s end (at least in Oregon) is another close out choice called assisted suicide. In between, some propose that we initiate human life just to be able to use the parts and pieces and cells – to destroy tiny lives to improve supposedly bigger lives; some promote human cloning as a kind of “spare-parts” industry. To destroy lives to improve lives: what an awkward, unbalanced equation.

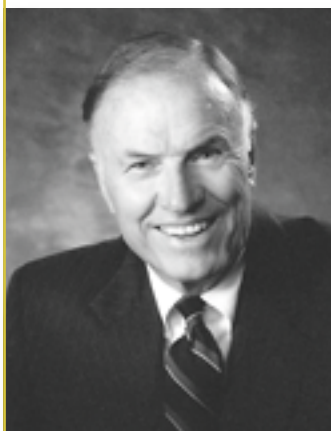
(continued on page 9)

Malta Human Services Foundation

John R. Mullen, President

It has only been ten months since the reorganization of your Malta Human Services Foundation and some exciting things have happened and a very positive outlook for its future exists.

This year for the first time, the Foundation had the honor of speaking with the new inductees of the American Association just prior to their installation in St. Patrick’s Cathedral.



Later in the afternoon, the annual meeting of the Foundation was conducted. On the following day, The Malta Human Services Foundation was privileged to make a presentation to the attendees at the Annual Meeting of the American Association. It was very encouraging to see such a great crowd in attendance.

In less than a year, a program of work was established by the Foundation Board.

As previously advised, we have retained the services of Donahue and Smith, a respected fund development group, to assist us in initiating efforts to grow our \$8 million dollar Foundation endowment.

Our Investment Committee interviewed each of our portfolio managers and where performance was deemed lacking those underperforming managers have been replaced.

Personal interviews were conducted with members of the Association to ascertain their views on the best possible approaches to assure that the Foundation has the resources to assist the Association in supporting Malta works and programs recommended by Area Committees and the Board of Councillors. The present level of the endowment cannot generate sufficient income to meet the magnitude of your well defined grant requests.

You have recently received a survey requesting your individual input to our deliberations. It is important that you send us your thoughts. We will tabulate your responses, together with those from personal interviews, and attempt to chart a sensible course in the early part of the New Year.

It is exciting for the Foundation to be a part of the efforts being made by the Board of Councillors to give visibility and real substance to the works of the American Association. The year 2005 should be significant in establishing a working partnership among Association members, the Board of Councillors and the Foundation. Thank you for your assistance in this endeavor. ❖



A MESSAGE TO CATHOLIC VOTERS

The following letter was sent to many of the national media by President Daniel J. Kelly

You may have read in the media articles and editorials which strongly implied that Catholics may vote for a Pro-Choice/Pro-Abortion candidate for public office, particularly candidates for high offices which govern our everyday lives.

You may even have read articles written by Catholic clergyman who implied that the myriad social issues affecting the quality of life are more important (or at least as important) than the basic sanctity of all life.

We in the Order of Malta, whose twofold mission is to defend the Roman Catholic faith and to care for the sick and the poor, are so concerned that the media has advanced these fallacious positions that we are publishing this advisory on the true teachings of the Church on this issue.

MAY CATHOLICS VOTE FOR A PRO-ABORTION CANDIDATE? There are several non-negotiable tenets of the Catholic faith which hold, unequivocally, that these actions, which involve the destruction of innocent human life, are intrinsically evil and, therefore, are prohibited:

- abortion at any stage of life
- embryonic stem cell research (from fetal tissue)
- euthanasia/assisted suicide
- human cloning

Social justice issues such as minimum wages, equal rights, equal employment opportunity, universal medical insurance/care, war on poverty, and the like are important “goods” in the social teaching of the Church that affect the quality of life but no single such good, nor any combination of them, can add-up to, equal or offset the moral weight of the sanctity of life. Obviously, there must be life in order to have a concern about the quality of that life.

One recent newspaper article erroneously quoted, out of context, a footnote in a communication from a high Vatican official which seemed to state that it would be permissible for a Catholic to vote for a pro-abortion candidate if the weight of his/her stands on other issues

offset the stand on abortion. **THIS IS SIMPLY NOT TRUE;** as stated elsewhere in the body of that Vatican letter, there is no present social ill or quality of life issue (nor all such factors taken in total) which is proportional to the categorical stand against abortion. **PERIOD.**

IS THERE ANY CONDITION WHEN A CATHOLIC COULD VOTE

FOR A PRO-ABORTION CANDIDATE? Is there any set of circumstances when a Catholic could vote for a pro-abortion (a pro-euthanasia or pro-embryonic stem cell research) candidate? The simple answer is “yes” but only in very limited “lesser of two evils” scenarios. For example, if the two candidates running for office are both pro-abortion, but one is also pro-euthanasia and pro-embryonic stem cell research, while the other pro-abortion candidate is not, a Catholic, in this very limited situation, could vote for the lesser of two evils.

Likewise, if two candidates have the same pro-life positions on the non-negotiable sanctity of life tenets, Catholics would be bound to consider all concerns and vote for the one who clearly had the best positive positions on social justice issues which comport with Catholic social teaching as the US Catholic Bishops have instructed. But, again, under no circumstances can the totality of good positions on social justice issues outweigh or offset the sanctity of life tenets of our faith.

In summary, we urge you to be true to your Catholic faith and its immutable tenets which unequivocally demand that we protect human life from conception to natural death. A vote for a pro-abortion candidate is an action which facilitates and cooperates in the killing of human life.

Don't be misled by statements that say “I am personally opposed to abortion but I would not do anything to interfere with those who believe that abortion is a basic right.” Just substitute the word “slavery” for abortion: “I am personally opposed to slavery but I will not interfere with the rights of those who own slaves.”

CATHOLICS MAY NOT, IN GOOD CONSCIENCE, VOTE FOR CANDIDATES WHO SUPPORT ANTI-LIFE POSITIONS.

WE URGE YOU TO CONSIDER YOUR OBLIGATIONS AS BELIEVING CATHOLICS, TO INFORM YOUR CONSCIENCE, AND TO VOTE ACCORDINGLY.

May God bless you,

Daniel J. Kelly, K.M.
President
American Association
Order of Malta
New York, New York

PROMISE GIVEN New Members of the Second Class

For the first time, the Ceremonial for making the Promise of Obedience was included in the Mass of Investiture. Four members of the American Association made their Promise before Frá John MacPherson, Bailiff Grand Cross of Justice and a member of the Sovereign Council. Hope E. Carter, DMOB, a member since 1987, Victor Coudert, KMOB, a member since 1987, Joseph Metz, KMOB, a member since 1995 and James F. O'Connor, a member since 1993 made the following Promise:

I, _____ calling on the name of God, promise faithfully to observe the laws of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta to carry out the duties proper to Knights/Dames in Obedience; and to render due obedience to whichever Superior shall be given to me. So help me God, the Immaculate Virgin of Philermos, Saint John the Baptist, our Glorious Patron, Blessed Frá Gerard, our Holy Founder, and all the Saints and Blessed of our Order.

These new members of the Second Class joined the following who have made the Promise in the past:

Catherine A. Burleigh, DMOB
William R. Burleigh, KMOB
Thomas F. Carney, Jr., KMOB
Robert J. Fredericks, Ph.D., KMOB
Joseph H. Hagan, Ph.D., KHDOB
Hreinn P. Lindal, KMOB
Daniel D. McCarthy, KMOB
A. Patricia McCarthy, DMOB
John Paul Reiner, KMOB
Mary Elizabeth Reiner, DMOB



Annual Investiture

The Investiture of new members took place at the Cathedral of St. Patrick in New York City on Friday, November 12, 2004. The Mass of Investiture was celebrated by His Eminence Edward Cardinal Egan with Archbishop Angelo Acerbi, Prelate of the Order, Archbishop Emeritus, Couve de Murville of Manchester, England, and Principal Chaplain of the British Association, Archbishop Stephen Soroka, Archbishop of Philadelphia, Ukrainian, Bishop William Lori, Diocese of Bridgeport, Bishop William Murphy, Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York, and some 28 priests concelebrating.

One hundred five (105) members were invested by Daniel J. Kelly, K.M., President of the American Association representing Frá Andrew Bertie, Grand Master of the Order of Malta. Representing the Order in Rome were: Marquis Gian Luca Chiavari, Keeper of the Common Treasure and a member of the Sovereign Council, Frá John MacPherson, Bailiff Grand Cross of Justice and member of the Sovereign Council Frá Elie de Comminges, Librarian, Archivist and member of the Sovereign Council, and H.E. Antonio Sanchez-Corea, KHDOb, member of the Sovereign Council and member of the Western Association. Also present were Hreinn Lindal, recently approved to make first vows as a Knight of Justice, Frá James-Michael von Stroebel, a member of the First Class and member of the Federal Association and John Dunlap, KM, a novice in preparation to enter the First Class and Master of Ceremonies for the investiture of new members and for the ceremony at which four members of the Association took the Promise of Obedience to enter the Second Class.

Joseph H. Miller, Chancellor of the Association read the authorization proclaiming that His Most Eminent Highness the Prince and Grand Master and the Sovereign Council had approved the candidates for investiture. Frances O'C. Hardart, DM, Hospitaller of the Association and Carl A. Schwarz, Jr, KM, Secretary of the Association did the readings. Joseph F. Finn, Treasurer of the Association presented the Prayer of the Faithful.

The members were invested follow:

Chaplains of the Order

Reverend Monsignor Patrick E. Brown – *Magistral Chaplain, Sterling, New Jersey*
Reverend Monsignor Francis J. Caldwell – *Magistral Chaplain, Rockville Centre, Long Island*
Reverend Joseph F. Cavoto S.A. – *Magistral Chaplain, Westeschere, New York*
Reverend David I. Convertino O.F.M. – *Magistral Chaplain, Boston, Massachusetts*
Reverend Francis D. Kelly – *Magistral Chaplain, Boston, Massachusetts*
Very Reverend John P. McGuire O.P. – *Magistral Chaplain, New York City*
Most Reverend Frank J. Rodimer – *Conventual Chaplain ad honorem, Paterson, New Jersey*
Monsignor Dennis F. Sheehan – *Magistral Chaplain, Cambridge, Massachusetts*

The following were commissioned as Deputy Chaplain to Cardinal Egan:

Reverend Monsignor Michael C. LeFevre
Reverend Monsignor J. Reddy O.F.M.
Reverend Monsignor Joseph Francis Schaedel
Reverend Frank Sevola O.F.M.

Dames of Magistral Grace

Gail Theresa Berardino
Sheila Marie Brown
Suzanne Owren Carcieri
Mary B. Cranwell
Margaret Hughes Crofton
Anne Theresa Dillon
Mary Cecelia Donoghue
Audrey Won Dornier
Marie Elizabeth Doyle
Annie Borello Fiorilla
Laurie Furlong
Robin Garavel
Nancy Higgins
Sheila Slocum Hollis
Suzanne Marie Kearney
Camille Marie Kelleher
Kathleen Celeste Krieg
Mary Louise Leverty
Carla Elizabeth Lucente
Mary Josephine Martin
Lois Ann McGuire
Judith Murchison McHugh
Jean Marie McLaughlin
Joan Orie Melvin
Deborah Catherine Moran
Mary Webster Murphy
Delphine Marie Nalewajek
Donna M. O'Brien
Deborah Ellen O'Hara-Rusckowski
Ellen Forshaw Ross
Karen Garver Santorum
Louise Ann Smith
Yvonne Eleanor Timlin
Yvonne Ann Wallace
Erin Deborah von Uffel
Sarah Coughlin Vorbach
Margaret O'Rourke Walsh
Megan Brennan White
Sandra Drucker Wright
Carol Ellen Zimmermann

Knights of Magistral Grace

Richard Franklin Adams
Digby Wayne Barrios
James Thomas Barry
Joseph Francis Berardino
Joseph J. Brennan
Kevin Michael Butler
James Caparso
Governor Donald L. Carcieri*
John Joseph Carr
James Patrick Conroy
Kenneth R. Craig
William Joseph Cromie
Kraig Edwin Krispen Culbertson
Timothy Henry Czerniec
Frank Mario D'Alessandro
Bertrand De Looz Karageorgiades
Matthew Joseph De Marco
Michael Jerome Donoghue
Daniel Sergey Dornier
Zachary Francis Endress
William Sturtevant English
William Edward Fenton, Jr.
Daniel Foxx
Paul Garavel
Edward Francis Ginty
Rufus Green
Charles Frank Greenwood
John Michael Haas
Paul Francis Hanley
John Roger Hirl
Roger Remy Jean-Charles
Rory Kelleher
Mark Broderick Kerwin
John Raymond Leverty
Peter Joseph Maloy
George John Marlin
Edward Robert Martin, Jr.
Steven Michael Massaro
Michael P. McCooley
Kevin Sean McLaughlin

Patrick Anthony Messina
Patrick John Molyneaux
William M. Moran
Robert Adam Nalewajek
Daniel Edward Neufelder
Michael E. Niedermeier
Thomas J. O'Brien
Thomas Edward O'Leary
John Raymond O'Rourke
Hubert Joseph O'Toole
Gregory P. Oussani
Terrence Lee Piper
Daniel Michael Rowan
Leonid Dennis Rudnytzky
Richard J. Santorum
Thomas Francis Schlafly
Mark Schroeder
Nicholas Ernest Silverio
Brian Stephen Smith
Robert George Smith
Jerome Gregory Timlin, Sr.
Arnold Frank Traupman
George Kurt von Uffel
John Martin Whelan
James Joseph White, IV
Christopher James Wright

*Invested in absentia in 1999



Respect Life

(continued from page 6)

All of this is “misplaced sovereignty”; all of this presumes that we invented human life, or that we own it, own it like you own your shoes, your car, a Bic pen. But, we are not the absolute masters or owners of human life; we are, at best, the custodians of a gift. And that is a first truth some continue to forget at times.

In saying this, I tell you nothing new. When the Church teaches and we Catholics believe that human life is “sacred” (CCC, #2258), it is important; it is absolutely crucial that we know why human life is ‘sacred’.

Clearly, it’s not just saying life is ‘precious’-lots of things are precious; nor that we are all the same and perfectly equal in all ways. Look around the Church, we are not all the same equal age, not all the same equal size; we don’t all have the same functioning and our condition of dependency can vary. Not one of us was born self-sufficient, and most will need some help at the other end of life.

But, there is one thing in which we are all exactly the same. Our Origin (God) and our Destiny (God) is exactly the same for us all. And that’s why human life is ‘sacred’ – because of where we come from (God) and because of where we are destined (God) it is true to say as a first truth: Human Life is a GIFT we have on trust for a while, then we go back to God. We are neither the inventors nor the owners of human life, just possessors of this fragile gift. None of us is more created than another (nor less so) and in that we are all and exactly the same.

Now, when this ‘Gift of Life’ is camouflaged by disease, by being ‘unwanted’, being very young or very old or very sick, these accidents of time and place don’t change that first truth. Because under the disguise of time and place is another One – made in the Image and Likeness of God just like you and me. If not in the Image of God, they would be another species, which they are not.

“Misplaced sovereignty” is a great over-reach; it grabs for itself and claims for itself what it has no right to: no human has the right to decide who will be born and who not; who will die a designer’s death and who not. In shorthand, that over-reach is called “playing God” – playing God with other people’s lives.

And if there are some judges or doctors, some politicians or social scientists who insist on “playing God”, I would suggest to them that if they insist on “playing God”, please, for God’s sake, please play God as God does. Our first reading Sirach 35: 12 says clearly: “He is a God of justice who plays no favorites.”

This is not an isolated Old Testament text that I simply pluck out of the Bible to score some rhetorical point. The same truth and description is repeated over and over in the New Testament:

Acts 10:34: “God is no respecter of persons.”

Rms. 2:11 “With God, there are no favorites”;

Eph. 6:9: “We have a master in heaven, who plays no favorites.” God is no respecter of persons – persons of good quality or poor quality; persons of glow quality or nerd quality. If some physicians, some federal judges or some clergy are going “to play God” under the pre-

tense of providing relief for the human condition, let’s hope they play God as God does, for the text reminds us: “The Lord is a God of justice who plays no favorites.”

In the well-known encyclical of Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae* (3/25/95), ‘The Gospel of Life’, the Pope describes a culture clash – a clash and collision between the ‘Culture of Life’ and the ‘Culture of Death.’ And the ethical fault line of that culture clash is a profound shift of standards. This is not a collision of slogans, buzz words and sound bites, but an ethical clash on how we view and value human life.

It is a shift away from the Judeo-Christian standard, the criterion of human dignity that demands respect, generosity and service – based on what one IS (image of God) to a standard of efficiency, functionality and usefulness based on what one HAS, DOES and MAKES (EV,n.23).

If we view and value others on a standard of what they do and have and make, some will not rate very high in that calculus; some will be seen to draw down more resources than they build up; they will be seen to make more withdrawals from than deposits to the Bank of Life.

Always we come back to that first truth -in the divine image in which we are all made.

Read on in St. Luke’s Gospel, not chapter 18 that we read today, go forward two chapters to Lk. 20:20-26. Remember the passage when they try to trip Jesus up with the tax problem and the taxation question. Recall how Jesus foiled that trick question. He asked them to show Him a coin, a Roman coin, with the question “whose image is on it?”(20:24). “Caesar’s.” they answered. Fine, then you give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, but to God what is God’s.”

Imagine if we had a spiritual X-ray; a spiritual CATscan or MRI on which we could image or picture your soul. And if we had a sonographic image of your soul – what would we read there? Made in U.S.A.? Made in Taiwan or Korea? No! If it could be done, it would read: “Made in the Image of God”!

If human life is a gift from Caesar, by all means, do dialogue with Caesar, stay close to Caesar, stay on good terms with Caesar. But, if life is a gift from God, ah then, respect God’s gift, and, by all means and in all ways, give to God what is God’s.

In the Fourth and last full chapter of the “Gospel of Life”, the Pope calls on all of us to teach, to witness, to serve the Gospel of Life by building up the Culture of Life. He does not tell any one of us WHAT to do, but that every one of us has to do something in witness to and in service to life.

Some people can talk and some can write; some do not. Some take trips, some make presentations; some not. Some can legislate; most can’t. All can educate (especially ourselves) in first things and first truths: that life is a gift from God that we have on trust for a while, then we go back to God. Be convinced of that first truth before you take on any other life effort.

Sometimes, it’s a lot harder to speak the truth about innocent life to a friend over a cup of coffee than to say all sorts of bold things before perfect strangers. Our friends already know that we are not perfect innocents, and so we are afraid they will toss it back at us and say: “And who are you to tell me about this or that destruction?”

That’s why the first truth – that life is a gift from God – must first have an adhesive grip on our mind and heart, and convictions for us to make any contribution toward building up the Culture of Life.

Two men went up to the Temple to pray. There are a lot more than two of us here. So, let us pray here for ‘Respect for Life’ – respect for life always and in all ways. Be convinced; never ashamed and never confused, of the first truth – Life is a gift from God, we have on trust for a while. A gift from God – a good gift from the good God. For that, let us say and pray: Thanks be to God. ✠

**He does not tell any one of us WHAT to do,
but that every one of us has to do something
in witness to and in service to life.**

day Mass. She couldn't wait to hear a reaction. After the Mass she said: "Well, what did you think, what did you think?" The little girl said: "Wow, you Catholics really have something. I was so impressed. The sermon was so boring, the music was so lousy, the priest mumbled in a language nobody could understand and all those people were there." Those were the days when going to mass was nonnegotiable. I always thought, if I had said to my dad: "Oh, we are not going to Mass, we are going to a soccer practice, I think he would have said – what with two broken legs."

A friend who regularly attends the meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous characterized those events in this way – he said its funny, the meetings are always the same. The exact same things are said over and over. Everything is totally predictable. Everyone except for those who are going for the first time knows already what was going to be said. We are not there to show our best side to each other. I don't go to the AA meetings to show my talents or to be a nice guy. No, I go because if I don't I know for sure that I'll start drinking again and eventually destroy myself. It is that simple. I go there to stay alive.

I think we can say the same thing about the Eucharist. When all is said and done, we don't go there to be entertained or to showoff our rags. We don't expect surprises every week. We go there to stay alive. Eucharist is meant to be God's regular nourishment for us, manna to keep us alive in our sojourn through life; the soul food that Christ gives us to strengthen us for the mission. In the Holy Father's magnificent encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistica*, he reminds us that the Eucharist is to strengthen us for our mission of transforming society. He says Eucharist is a sacrament for humanity; a sign in an instrument of the salvation achieved by Christ; the light of the world and salt of the earth for the redemption of all. I pray that the members of the Order of Malta who represent such a talented and influential group of people will take full advantage of this Eucharistic Year; to be reenergized in your efforts to promote the new evangelization to build a civilization of love; to promote what George Weigle has called a culture that can sustain democracy.

Pope John Paul II said that the value of democracy stands or falls with the values, which it embodies and promotes. Democracy is not a good in itself. Its value is instrumental and it depends on the vision that it serves. Unfortunately our present form of democracy has become so ideological and so secularized that it conceives democracy as a means of promoting a series of breakthroughs against social taboos in pursuit of the individual's absolute autonomy. If we embrace this form of democracy, where does it lead? Cardinal George Pell asked the questions recently: does democracy need a burgeoning billion dollar pornography industry to be truly democratic? Does it need an abortion rate in the tens of millions? Does it need the high levels of marriage breakdowns with growing rates of family dysfunction? We have come to recognize as a church and as a society that democracy is the best expression of the direct participation of citizens in political choices. But democracy needs to be based on the true and solid foundation of nonnegotiable ethical principles, which are the underpinnings of life in society. This was the firm conviction of Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Toqueville and hosts of people who launched the democratic experiment in this part of the World. Pope John Paul II in *Gentesimos Annos* discusses with this reasoning. He says authentic democracy is possible only in a state ruled by law and on the basis of a correct concept of the human person. If there is no ultimate truth to guide and direct political activities, then ideas and convictions can easily be manipulated for reasons of power. As history demonstrates, a democracy without values easily turns into an opened or thinly disguised totalitarianism. The foundations of the house of freedom are the virtues of the people and the moral truths that provide a framework for society. This Holy Father wrote in *Fides Ad Ratio* "Truth and freedom either go hand in hand or together they perish in misery." In a society in which truth is so often not mentioned or sought, every form of authentic exercise of freedom will be weakened opening the way to libertine and individualistic distortions and undermining the protection of the good of the human person in the entire society. The religious Jew speaks of *tikkun olan*, repairing the world. We Catholics also feel called to cooperate with God in repairing our world. Building a culture that can support democracy is a special challenge for believers. For over two centuries religious voices have called Americans to be a better people, to challenge the institution of slavery, the legacy of racism left behind, to question the morality of war and nuclear weapons, to defend the interest of the poor, women, immigrants, prisoners and to defend the gospel of life. Jesus tells us that our whole religion, the law

and the prophets, can be summed up in the great commandment of love; love of God and love of neighbor. But love means connectedness. It is a lie to think that we can be church alone. Discipleship means being in relationships that are real indeed; that our sacred. The new age privatization of religion tries to substitute the warm fuzzies for the community of faith. But God is the glue that keeps us together. When God is missing, society becomes unraveled. One of the great maladies of modern times is our spiritual amnesia.

The Russian Noble Prize winner Alexander Solzenitzen says he recalls three episodes from his boyhood that are seared in his memory: one was being taunted by the other boys in his village when he and his mother went to the only remaining church; another incident was when someone ripped a crucifix from his neck; and the third memory was that of a conversation of the old villagers who said people have forgotten God; that is why all this has happened – all the oppression, hopelessness, the Gulag, the tortures, the despair. Forgetting God is

very dangerous. If we forget God, we forget who we are and why we are here. If we are going to be able to counter the culture of death with the culture of life, if we are going to counteract an ethic of self with a civilization of love, we must rediscover the power and beauty

of Christ self-giving in the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the paradigm for discipleship. It is Christ making a gift of Himself. It is an act of love caring to the extreme. In the Eucharist we glimpse God's love and beauty and it is there that we find the strength to transform ourselves and the world around us. When we recognize him in the "breaking of the bread," he helps us to see his face in the poor, in the sick and in the suffering. Our service of them must grow out of our faith life. We are not called to be philanthropists, but to see in each hungry, sick and homeless person a brother or a sister who is a sacrament of Jesus crucified. Mother Theresa embodies for all of us how our Eucharistic life leads to serving Christ in the distressing disguise of those whom we are called to serve. Gandhi once said there is so much hunger in the world that God could appear only in the form of bread. If we discover Jesus in that loving disguise, then we will discover him in the distressing disguise of the poor of the sick of the marginalized.

Three weeks ago I made my first trip to Malta to give a conference at the International Priest Retreat with 1,200 priests there from 80 countries – a marvelous experience. The retreat was held in a place called the Mediterranean Conference Center, which was actually an old hospital, built by the Knights of Malta in the 1500's. It is a magnificent structure. It is a palace and it certainly showed me how the Order truly regards the sick as their liege lords and ladies to be served with reverence and devotion. The attitude was nothing is too good for the sick and the suffering because in serving them we are serving our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ – that kind of mindset resulting from a deep faith and Eucharistic vision of the world. There is something about pain and crisis that strips away the superficial barriers and allows people to come together in a very special kind of communion.

In the biography of Dorothy Day, she recalls her childhood in

California and how she experienced a serious earthquake. She was fascinated to see how the day after the earthquake all of the neighbors and the people in her town who never spoke to each other and never seemed to care about each other were thrown together and expressed a love and concern that had never been

evidenced before. Throughout her life she was looking for ways to recapture that sense of community and communion that she felt after the earthquake. That experience eventually brought her into the church and she founded to the Catholic Worker Movement. Similarly our contact, our direct and personal contact with the sick and the suffering can unite us to Christ and to our brothers and sisters in a communion, which no other circumstances can achieve. In this love and communion, we should see the seeds for the civilization of love, which is our goal.

A couple of years ago Mother Theresa visited us in New Bedford. She spent hours greeting the people. I noticed she was giving out these little business cards and I thought, I wonder if that is her e-mail address or cell phone number, so I got in line and I got one. On the card was written one of her saying. It turned out to be her Eucharistic formula for success as I called it. Mother Theresa wrote: "The fruit of silence is prayer, the fruit of prayer is faith, the fruit of faith is love and the fruit of love is service." There's our plan for discipleship. A program for sanctity.

God bless all of you. Thank you for being members of the Order. ❄️

Truth and freedom either go hand in hand or together they perish in misery.

If we forget God, we forget who we are and why we are here.

Freedom Answers the Higher Call at South Bend Malta House

Freedom (a pseudonym) had just received notice that she was being deployed to Iraq. She had enlisted in the Army right out of high school and was highly motivated to answer the call of her country. Then



the bottom dropped out of her world. She found out that she was pregnant.

Freedom called the Women's Care Center hotline at the suggestion of a friend. She really needed to talk to someone. She spoke to Head Counselor Ellen Sommer and agreed to come in the next day for counseling. When Freedom came for her counseling appointment at the Women's

Care Center Malta House, it was apparent that she had been crying. She was only nineteen and did not know where to turn. She knew she was not allowed to report for duty pregnant and if she did not report, she would be fined \$1,000 for each month she was unable to serve. People close to her were pressuring her to have an abortion as the only way out.

Freedom remembers: "Ellen was so encouraging. We talked for hours. Most importantly, Ellen helped me to put a plan in place." Ellen arranged for Freedom to see her baby on their ultrasound machine, which was funded by the Order of Malta. On the ultrasound screen, it looked like Freedom's baby was waving to her. This clinched it. Freedom realized that she had a higher calling to choose life for her baby.

Together, Freedom and Ellen made a plan to inform her military superiors. Ellen had the center's nurse write two letters confirming the pregnancy and explaining why Freedom would be unable to report for duty. Her military superiors relented and gave Freedom a medical leave. Ellen helped Freedom enroll in prenatal care and parenting classes offered at the Women's Care Center. She also arranged for Freedom to spend her pregnancy at Hannah's House, a South Bend home for pregnant women.

Freedom gave birth to a healthy baby girl. Little Makayla, who weighed in at eight pounds, nine ounces, has become such a joy to her mother. Freedom now receives a lot of support from her parents, who adore their new little granddaughter.

The Women's Care Center is a non-profit ecumenical service agency with ten neighborhood centers located throughout northern Indiana. Since its founding in 1984, the Center has served over 70,000 young women and their babies. The Center's Malta House, located near the University of Notre Dame campus, has been recognized as a model for compassionate service delivery and includes a state-of-the-art ultrasound machine. Their website can be found at www.womenscarecenter.org.

Questions & Answers

By Chancellor Joseph H. Miller, KM



This column is the responsibility of Chancellor Joseph H. Miller, KM, Chancellor of the American Association. Please direct your questions by e-mail staff@maltausa.org or mail to: Order of Malta, 1011 First Avenue, Room 1350, New York, NY 10022.

Q: *How many years may a member serve on the Board of Councillors of the American Association?*

A: *A member may be elected to serve a three year term and be re-elected for a second three year term. At the end of the second three year term, the member must leave the Board for at least one year after which he or she is eligible to run for another three year term.*

Q: *How many members serve on the Board of Councillors?*

A: *The Board of Councillors is composed of 24 Councillors, each elected to serve three-year terms. Each year, eight (8) members of the Board of Councillors stand for election.*

Q: *How does a member of the Association get nominated to run for the Board of Councillors?*

A: *The Nominating Committee, appointed by the Board of Councillors, writes all members to suggest members for consideration. The Nominating Committee consults with three Area Chairs elected by all of the Area Chairs and nominates members to run for election. Incumbent members are usually nominated for a second term if they express an interest in running. With the approval of the Board of Councillors, the membership is informed by the Secretary of the names of those members nominated by the Nominating Committee. Any member not nominated by the Nominating Committee will be placed on the ballot with the written support of ten (10) members.*

FROM CATHOLIC AMERICAN TO AMERICAN CATHOLIC

Remarks by Rev. Richard John Neuhaus To the Order of Malta during the Investiture Weekend

For the most part, Catholics did not participate in formulating the major precepts of the American Constitution. The foundations were laid by our Protestant brothers, but the multinational immigrant Catholic, who subsequently came to our shores, materially contributed to the political and social structure that now constitutes the American Experiment. In the early days the immigrant Catholic was aware that he was in a distinctly different cultural environment and that he needed to prove through achievement and service that it was okay to be a Catholic in America. That phase ended with the election of President Kennedy in 1960 when Catholics voted overwhelmingly for their co-religionist. Another milestone was reached in the 2004 election when a majority of Catholics voted against the candidacy of a fellow Catholic. Being a Catholic in America is no longer an exceptional status and Fr. Neuhaus asked what contribution can and should the contemporary Catholic make to ensure that the American Experiment in liberty and freedom does not falter.

The Roe v Wade decision in 1973, legalizing abortion on demand was a defining moment for America. The secularists greeted the decision as simply another step in the enlightened path of human progress. Almost all Christian denominations accepted the incursion of the culture of death with weary resignation – succumbing to what seemed to be the inevitable tide of history. The only public institution, religious or temporal, that officially opposed Roe v Wade was the Catholic Church despite the confusion sown by many Catholic leaders among the clergy and public life. It took the Southern Baptist Convention five more years to begin the process of aligning its force against abortion and the culture of death. Neuhaus said that the Catholic Church does not just support the Pro-Life Movement it is the eternal Pro-Life Movement. He lauded those bishops who publicly injected themselves into the 2004 Presidential election on moral grounds and took some heat for it. He pointed out that the exit polls identified moral values

as the issue that most concerned the voting public – more than the economy or the war in Iraq. Abortion, embryonic stem-cell research, same-sex marriage and public decency were the issues that encompassed the moral values identified. Of those who named moral values as their priority concern, 80% voted for the candidate that espoused them.

It is one of the ironies of history that the ecumenical movement has received its strongest push from the evolving alignment of Catholics and Evangelical Protestants on the issue of abortion. Fr. Neuhaus called it the ecumenism of the trenches – an unexpected outcome of Roe v Wade. Those who have been enlisted and baptized in the Pro-Life Movement have signed on for life. He said there always will be a need for a pro-life movement, even if abortion was outlawed tomorrow. The right to life will be threatened by the seemingly compassionate right to euthanasia, cloning, embryonic stem-cell research and same-sex marriage and others not yet identified. The American Catholic, now fully accepted, has the historic opportunity to call fellow citizens back to their moral roots. The American Catholic is seen as having the decisive duty to pick up the flag of the American Experiment and carry it forward. Fr. Neuhaus sees the present as a "kairos" moment for Catholics to reclaim from the addiction to materialistic humanism, the true freedom and liberty envisioned in the Constitution.

Fr. Neuhaus is a great champion of Pope John Paul II, whom he believes will one day be called "the Great". The Pope's witness to pain and suffering as he ages is an open invitation to all to accept God's unique plan for each individual – to embrace life regardless of the circumstances. For now, the Pope is urging Catholics to be counter-cultural in opposing the culture of death but he reminds us that the Church has a larger role than just the loyal opposition. Fr. Neuhaus said that the way of Jesus Christ is simply a better way of living. The Church does not impose – it proposes a better way. The role of the Church is to be an icon – to point out the better way while simultaneously embracing the struggling pilgrim on the journey.

New York's Kids Deserve Respect – Healthy Respect

(continued from front)

In 2003, Project REACH turned its attention to the dire need for abstinence education among New York's at-risk teens. Mr. Manning provided Project REACH with a 5-story townhouse and over \$250,000 in annual funding to launch and sustain the program. A \$40,000 federal sub-grant through the Compassion Capital Fund helped Project REACH to develop the Healthy Respect abstinence education program for the New York City area.

Project REACH launched the pilot program for Healthy Respect in the fall of 2003, and reached 107 students in a six-week course at a public high school in Yonkers. Healthy Respect has since expanded to six schools, with more than 800 students taking the course. The program needs \$173,000 to fund a team to present twenty hours of character-based abstinence education to 600 students. The program has (unfunded) opportunities to present the program to nine school districts and private schools in 2005.

There is compelling evidence that abstinence education programs work to reduce teen pregnancy. Yet, until abstinence programs such as Healthy Respect receive the full support of the educational community in New York, private donations will continue to be the cornerstone of this character-based initiative.

We know of no better way to promote the Culture of Life in New York City, the nation's abortion capital.

For further information, you are invited to visit the Healthy Respect Web site at www.healthrespect.org.

Message From the President

(continued from front)

quality candidates who meet our standards, with emphasis on those in the 40 – 50 age range. Also, we are targeting the Midwest for extraordinary membership development there.

The Board of the Malta Human Services Foundation, Chaired by Jack Mullen KM, is busy surveying our membership. The purpose is to heighten the awareness of the Foundation, and to gain information which will help us take the right steps to significantly increase the Foundation's funds. Enlarged funds will enable the Foundation to pass more and more to the Association each year for grants, in perpetuity.

I want to commend our Communications Committee, led by Tom Flood KM, for significantly improving communications among our membership during 2004. The updated Membership Directory, these Hospitallers newsletters, and the new web site are examples of our progress, and I know there will be even more next year when we place more emphasis on external communications.

Finally, I want to report that, at our Board of Councillors meeting on November 10th, Paul Durnan KM was appointed to spearhead an Association-wide initiative to greatly expand our Auxiliary and form the Auxiliary Corps of the American Association. Members of the Auxiliary Corps will include high quality people of all ages who wish to volunteer on Malta Works, Projects, and Ministries, but who do not necessarily aspire to become Knights and Dames. Including volunteers of all ages will allow us to enlarge our forces and expand our capacity to serve our Lords, the Sick and the Poor.

Have a Blessed, Peaceful Christmas, and a Happy, Healthy New Year! ❄️

Daniel J. Kelly, KM
President



Check the News and Update Section www.maltausa.org

Prayer of the Order

Lord Jesus, Thou hast seen fit to enlist me for Thy service among the Knights and Dames of Saint John of Jerusalem.

I humbly entreat Thee through the intercession of the Most Holy Virgin of Philermo, of Saint John the Baptist, Blessed Gerard and all the saints and blessed of our Order, to keep me faithful to the tradition of our Order.

Be it mine to practice and defend the Catholic, the Apostolic, and the Roman Faith against the enemies of religion; be it mine to practice charity towards my neighbors, especially the poor and sick.

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. Amen.

The Beatitudes

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.

Bless are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.

Bless are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5: 3-10

The Cardinal Virtues

Prudence – act rightly in any given situation.

Justice – give to each what is due to him, beginning with God.

Fortitude – endure difficulties and pain for the sake of what is good.

Temperance – be moderate in the pleasure and use of created good.

Board of Councillors Meetings

The following is the schedule for Board of Councillor Meeting for 2005:

January 6, 2005

March 11, 2005

Marywood Retreat Center, Switzerland, Florida

May 19, 2005

September 16, 2005

In conjunction with the Membership Conference at Fairfield University

November 9, 2005

In conjunction with the Annual Investiture and Dinner

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