

SPEECH OF THE GRAND MASTER TO THE POSTULANTS

Malta, 28 July 2019

Dear Postulants,

Soon you will become Knights of our Sovereign Order and citizens of our State and as venue for this so important moment in your lives we have chosen the Sacra Infermeria, which is probably the most significant historical place of the old order of St. John, of which our Federation of Pories is the direct, legal and Sovereign descendant.

This place is very meaningful to us, Knights of St. John also known as Hospitaller knights or as knights of Malta, and its meaning resides in the fact that this was not only the most advanced hospital in the World of the times, but it was a hospital where Knights of St. John, the Maltese soldiers and common people were given treatment for their illnesses or their wounds and injuries received in the many wars that they had to fight in defence of the free trade in the Mediterranean but also in defence of Europe itself.

In the past, the stones of these walls have seen many suffering and the stone slabs of this pavement have been stained with the blood of many brave men. If only these walls could speak they would tell us stories that are examples of the suffering, that comes with Triumph and of Glory, and also examples of how men, so different from each other as the Knights, themselves coming from so many different countries, languages and cultures were from the Maltese, and even so, they were able to fight together as brothers in Arms, suffer together as brothers in Pain and, in many cases, die together as brothers in Faith, and all this for common objectives and for common ideals.

The Knights had a very important role in the history of Malta, but it is fair to recognize that they could have done nothing, or very little, without the Maltese population. In fact, the people of Malta made of their island/nation throughout History a most remarkable monument to Courage, Tenacity and Faith of Mankind.

You are here to be knighted and to continue the work that the Knights of St. John have been carrying for almost 1.000 years and in fact, in the 21st Century the Knights of St. John are still important and trendy, due to the fact that our Sovereign Order is based on principles and values of all time, not on perishable interests of the moment.

We are different and if our Order exists for about 10 centuries and our Federation of Pories exists for more than 100 years it is because we keep making the difference.

We respect our Christian background that is why we observe the Christian humanist principle that all men are born equal to the eyes of God. For us only the actions and the deeds make people different: some, by their acts become nobles, others, by their acts become villains.

On the 21st century, as in its beginning, the true nobility resides in our actions, therefore i can say that we continue respecting not only the tradition of our order being an Order of Nobles, but also the principle of equality of all men enshrined in the Universal Declaration of the Human Rights of the United Nations which we, both as Knights but also as a State respect and follow.

As Knights, we do not discriminate people by their birth, by family titles, believes, options or races, but we discriminate people by their actions, by their merit and by the work they do for the others.

Regarding Religion, as Knights we must respect the several names people call to their God, because He is our God, too.

Regarding Education and Environment, as Knights we have the obligation of not only to leave a better World to our children, but we must also leave better children to our World.

As Knights, you can only know one race: the human race!

Surely you are asking yourselves: how can I be a good knight? My answer is: be like the Water is.

To be good the Water must be pure and stay pure, as you, as Knights, must be and stay pure in all situations of your life.

The Water brings Life and Prosperity and to all corners of Earth, as you, as Knights, shall bring a better life to the people around you and to the Environment.

The Water cleans wounds and helps to cure them, as you, as Knights shall clean and help to cure the wounds and the suffering of the ill, the poor and of those in need.

The Water is transparent, and as Knights you must be transparent in your life and in your actions.

The Water serves all of those who need it, with no discrimination whatsoever: no discrimination of age, sex, colour of the skin or religion, as you, as knights, must serve all those in need with no discrimination.

The Water is soft but by continuously hitting the sharp pointed rocks, stones and obstacles it softens the sharpness, breaks the stones and digs through the obstacles, as you, as Knights must, with persistence, break and soften the stones and obstacles in your life and in the life of others.

When you put the Water in a glass it takes the shape of the glass but if you put it in a bottle it takes the shape of the bottle. Inside, the Water is the same, its characteristics do not change, it only adapts itself to the containers, as good Knights you must adapt yourselves to the different circumstances of life but never changing your character or principles.

Like the Water is how we must be as knights of St John, like the Water is how the Government of our State is, and must continue to be.

One of the most crucial problems of our times is Peace, but Peace is not the absence of War, Peace is the absence of Violence and Poverty, Ignorance, Illnesses, Destruction of human values, Terrorism, Fundamentalism, Discrimination, Child abuse, Drugs and Intolerance, are different forms of Violence, so we can say that we do not live in Peace and we must continue our noble fight, and I call it noble because our fight is not against people but is in favour of the people who needs us. It's a fight not to kill but to give life. A fight where there will be no loser but only winners. A fight not to destroy but to build: to build bridges to unite people, not to build walls to divide them. We do not have to like the people whom we assist and we fight for, we don't have to like or understand their culture and their origin, we don't even have to agree or to sympathise with their options of life, or with their religions. We, Knights of St. John assist and help them because they need us, because we respect them, we respect their dignity and their rights as human beings. To assist people in need is not a proof that we like them as individuals. To assist people in need is a proof of our love for the Mankind.

Dear postulants, the states are rich not because they have gold, crude oil or diamonds, no! States are rich because of the people they have and I am sure that today, by having you as our Knights, our Sovereign Order and our State will be much richer than before.

Alone we can do nothing, but together we can do a lot.

We must have no illusions: we will not change the World. But we have the obligation of making of this World a better place to live and also to prepare a better world for the future generations.

Alone we cannot do this, but Together we can!