



Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem
Knights Hospitaller

Cleveland Commandery

Summer 2022 Newsletter

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Dear Knights and Dames,

We hope you and your family are well and enjoying the opportunity to be outside in the sunshine. Seeing family and friends again is heartwarming.

While we have been able to stay connected through the internet, it was great to see many of you at our May 19th business meeting and dinner graciously hosted at the home of Dame Marie Coyne.

Our perspective member reception held on July 6th at the Cleveland Yacht Club was a great success. Many thanks go to Karen and John Kirk for hosting the reception and to Membership Chair, Bert Moyar and all those who brought prospective members.

Also, please note our next business meeting will be held on Thursday, August 18th at 5:00 PM followed by a 6:00 PM reception at the Canterbury Country Club in Shaker Hts, hosted by Alex and Carol Machaskee RSVP to Claire at Claire.Rosacco@Tri-C.edu by Wednesday, August 10th



Looking forward to seeing you soon,

Cleveland Commander
Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem

PHILANTHROPY

In response to COVID and agency needs, the Cleveland Commandery had two funding cycles totaling \$60,800. In April 2021 donations consisted of the following:

- \$20,000 to the Greater Cleveland Hunger Network, an organization with more than 70 hunger centers throughout Cuyahoga County, providing emergency food supplies and hot meals. This grant was enhanced by a generous matching grant from the Mandel Foundation in the amount of \$20,000 made possible by Dame Jerry Sue Thornton. Additionally, The Hunger Network locates food that would otherwise go to waste and, through its volunteers and innovative technology, moves the food from its source into the hands of the food insecure in less than one hour.
- \$15,000 to the East End Neighborhood House for their Senior Program, one that gives Elders (Wisdom Keepers) a place to network, socialize, break bread with friends, and remain engaged in their neighborhood.

The second round of donations in December 2021, in part made possible by an anonymous and generous gift from two of our members totaling \$25,000, was distributed as follows:

- \$10,000 to the Hitchcock Center for Women, used to initiate a program to supply women with clothing, luggage, and necessities to enhance their sense of dignity and worth as they prepare for departure from the facility.
- \$15,000 to East End Neighborhood House for their East End's Star Parents and Children's Services which is housed in two elementary schools.
- \$ 800 for the Thanksgiving meal at the Hitchcock Center for Women which the Commandery usually serves in person. While we could not attend in person again this year because of COVID, we did provide for the women to receive the holiday dinner. Additionally, we reached out again to the women with Christmas cards, well wishes of support, and cards bearing the words of the Serenity Prayer. A special thank you to Dame Susan Smith for providing the holiday cards.

BUSINESS MEETINGS

The Cleveland Commandery holds quarterly business meetings and our members were all very grateful that we could finally hold our February, 2022 meeting in person at the Shoreby Club courtesy of Dame Bettyann Helms. While we are thankful that virtual meetings allowed us to continue to "meet" during the pandemic, virtual reality does not and cannot compare to the personal interaction that face-to-face interaction stimulates.

We were also able to hold our May 19, 2022 Business Meeting in person at Dame Maria Coyne's home. All enjoyed Maria and Tom's hospitality.



Thank you to **Chevalier Alex Machaskee** and his wife, Carol, for hosting a meeting and reception at Canterbury Country Club in August 2021. As always, we enjoyed work, camaraderie, and new acquaintances.

Our next quarterly Business Meeting will be courtesy of Alex and Carol at the Canterbury Country Club on Thursday, August 18th at 5:00 p.m. Please RSVP to Claire at Claire.Rosacco@Tri-C.edu by August 10th. Thank you.

FAITH -THE FOUNDATION OF OUR WORK

During the fifteen-month period from January 2021 through March 2022, the Cleveland Commandery held three virtual faith discussions, all of which were received enthusiastically.

February, 2021 (Justice)

This faith discussion, led by **Dame Sister Diana Stano**, focused on the virtue of justice. It is a primary virtue because without it, there can be no peace. Justice is all about being in the right relationship with each other and with the earth. Are we willing to set an example of justice? Embrace the mercy that swirls within it? Consider the *human* quality, not just the rules? Engage in less judgment and more conversation? We thought about how justice influences us as a Commandery and considered that individuals and organizations are beginning to take up causes to promote justice.

We learned that there are many key principles in the area of social justice.

- The life and dignity of the human person, a child of God, is absolutely necessary. Anything offensive to that dignity is unjust.
- The common good. In order to be just, our institutions, cultural practices, governance structures, etc. need to respect and allow human dignity to flourish.
- The universal destination of goods. Every human being has an inherent right to the material goods that allow us to sustain our physical lives and fulfill our potential.
- Subsidiarity is about returning decision making power, or allowing decision making power, to exist in those most near or most affected by the issue. This is about preserving and permitting local lifeways to flourish and preventing unjustified intervention.
- And the principle of solidarity emphasizes that none of us lives alone; rather, we live interdependently and therefore, what we do with our lives impacts the lives of others.
- A preferential option for the poor reminds us to put the needs of those who are most vulnerable first.
- And as stewards of God's creation, we have a responsibility to care for the world's goods as stewards and trustees, not primarily as consumers.

There is much for each of us to consider. May the words of the prophet Micah (6:8) be always in our hearts: "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

June 24, 2021 (The Feast Day of John the Baptist – Fortitude)

This faith discussion, led by **Chevalier Father James Roach**, used the medium of art to investigate the virtue of fortitude and the life of John the Baptist. The first painting we contemplated was that of The Visitation by the Master of 1518 (whose name is unknown). Mary's visit to Elizabeth during the time Elizabeth was expecting St. John reveals much about John's call from the womb.

The second painting, by Giovanni Di Paolo, reflects John the Baptist retiring to the desert. He goes to the desert to purify himself – and he returns *on fire*. When we are faithful to our life's journey, the journey experience can give us order and a sense of what we are to do.

The third painting, by the artist Paolo Veronese, depicts John's return from the desert. In this painting, John stands in front of three male figures; one looks like he is arguing, another, pointing his finger, may be confrontational as well, and the third one, with his hand on his face, is perhaps wondering what the truth of Jesus might really be. Father Roach suggested that these three figures may represent those of us who question God in our lives. When life is very difficult, when we witness material poverty, injustice, loneliness, and the many who are unloved, we ask: where is God? St. John's mission – and our mission – is to love Christ and point to Christ as the way.

The fourth painting, by Julio Renney, represents the end time of John; the painting has Herodias looking at John's head on a platter. (Herodias divorced her first husband to marry Herod Antipas and Saint John condemned the marriage. Herod Antipas ordered John's beheading.) John's life of fortitude took him to his death, but the virtue of fortitude ensures firmness in difficulty and provides for constancy in pursuit of what is good and right. Saint John feared no one but the Lord; he was never afraid to speak truth to power because truth is more important than anyone's power. Today, might we be afraid to make a decision that is costly? What do we need to do to speak the truth of the Lord?

March, 2022 (The Beatitudes)

The Beatitudes (Matthew 5: 1-12) were the focus of our March faith discussion, led once again by **Dame Sister Diana Stano**. The 'ways of being' set out in the Beatitudes both encourage us and challenge us to stretch in our faith, and we must always keep in mind that we need God's grace to accomplish this work.

Sister Diana noted that Jesus' teaching of the Beatitudes during his Sermon on the Mount is the most complete delineation anywhere in the New Testament of the Christian counter-culture. Here is a Christian value system, ethical standard, religious devotion, attitude to money, ambition, lifestyle, and network of relationships. Here is the value system of the Kingdom of God, of the fully human person living under divine rule.

Sister Diana concentrated the day's discussion on the first beatitude about the poor in spirit, the one that is key to all others. She noted that this beatitude is not an

endorsement of poverty. Instead, it is a recognition of our need for God in all aspects of our lives. *Broken people* - those are the ones that inherit the Kingdom of God. With the Beatitudes, Jesus turned everything upside down. Our righteousness is insufficient. First and foremost, we must be poor in spirit, broken, contrite, realizing that without God, we are nothing.

Thank you, Sister Diana and Father Roach, for your thought – provoking insights to the virtues and the Beatitudes. Now the work is left to us to attempt to be better examples

of justice, better fortified in our faith to seek and speak truth, and better able to embrace the brokenness of our humanity in order to be touched more fervently by the presence of God.

THE CLEVELAND COMMANDERY MOURNS THE DEATH OF CHEVALIER RICHARD BOWEN



The Cleveland Commandery sadly mourns the death of **Chevalier Richard Bowen**. Dick's architectural and procurement skills, along with his desire to help those in need, were instrumental in furthering many of our Commandery's projects including major restoration and renovation projects and housing for the homeless. Dick's pro bono work on behalf of those in need of resources was exemplary. His designs won numerous recognitions and awards, he served on numerous boards, he was a stranger to no one, and his dedication to work, family, and community serve as an inspiration to all of us.

May we all honor his memory as we attempt to emulate his passion.

RECOGNITIONS AND AWARDS

Chevalier Bill O'Neill has been promoted to Knight Commander of Justice, and **Commander Claire Rosacco** has been promoted to Dame Commander of Justice. Congratulations to both of you!

Dame Kathy O'Neill received the Heath Oliver Distinguished Director Award from the Cuyahoga Community College Foundation in appreciation for her exemplary service to the college and its students. This is the second time that Kathy was honored by her Board peers. In 2019, she received the Foundation Board's Inaugural Chairperson's Award in recognition of her dedicated service to the organization and its mission. Congratulations, Kathy!

An interview with **Chevalier Alex Machaskee** was included in the documentary "Tesla Nation" which was broadcast through the public television network. The documentary,

created by the award-winning producer Zeljko Mirkovich, highlighted the many contributions of Serbian-American immigrants to the United States and to the world. Alex's segment of the documentary was focused on the Serbian Cultural Gardens, for which Alex led the fund-raising efforts in 2006. (The Serbian Cultural Gardens are part of the Cleveland Cultural Gardens which commemorate diverse immigrants who have contributed to the heritage of the United States.) Congratulations, Alex, for being one of the prominent Serbians to be included in this documentary.

Chevalier Alex Machaskee is also in the process of providing a series of oral histories to Cleveland's Western Reserve Historical Society regarding his life experiences. The series includes segments on Alex's early life, his career at the Cleveland Plain Dealer newspaper (he is the former CEO and Publisher), his travels around the world and the many and various people he has met along the way, his experiences as the former chairman of International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), his faith, and his music. Congratulations, Alex, for being a part of northeast Ohio's history, and for helping to preserve that history for generations to come.