

Celebration of St. John's Feast in Mandeni on 9 July 2000



Investiture of
Mrs. Clare Ann Kalkwarf
as a Dame of the Order of Malta

South Africa is honoured by the fact, that the first South African has been invested into the Order of Malta.

Mrs. Clare Ann Kalkwarf is a founder member and the Vice-President of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard, which is the South African Relief Organisation of the Sovereign Military Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta (Order of Malta).

The Order of Malta is a unique community with a triple nature

1. As a religious order of the Roman Catholic Church with professed members like the Benedictines, Franciscans or Dominicans.
2. As a Sovereign subject of International Law with its own government in an exterritorial area in Rome, diplomatic relations to most countries of the earth, a seat in the United Nations, its own stamps and coins and (diplomatic) passports.
3. As an International Relief Organisation with National Relief Organisations in many countries, e.g. the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard in South Africa.

On 9 July 2000 the Grand Hospitaller, who is responsible for the Relief Work of the Order of Malta internationally came all the way from Rome to Mandeni especially for this occasion and invested Mrs. Kalkwarf as a Donat of Devotion into the Order of Malta. As such Mrs. Kalkwarf, who is married with three children did not make a religious profession like a nun, but donates time and energy in devotion to the work of the Order.



Father Gérard T Lagleder O.S.B., Magistral Chaplain of the Order of Malta, during the sermon: “The place where heaven and earth meet is your day-by-day service to God in your family and in your work for the Sick and Needy”



Albrecht Baron Boeselager, the Grand Hospitaller of the Order of Malta (right) and Father Gérard (left)



During the Investiture Mrs. Kalkwarf promised: ***“I, Clare Kalkwarf, promise, as I call upon the name of God, to always witness the Catholic Faith, to defend the Church and to lead my life according to the teaching and commands of the Holy Mother Church in chivalrous faithfulness. I declare my readiness to look after our Lords, the Sick and the Needy to the best of my ability as a member of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, to abide by the constitution and laws of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta and to fulfil the obligations imposed on me by the rules of the Order and entrusted to me by my superiors with fidelity and diligence. For all this help me God, the Holy Mother of God from the Mount Philermos, Saint John the Baptist, our glorious patron Saint,***

and all Saints of the Order. You however, who are present, I call to be witnesses of my obligation.”



Then she received the Cape of the Dames of the Order of Malta and cross of the Order from Baron Boeselager.



The Donat of Devotion's Cross of the Order of Malta

Mrs. Kalkwarf, nee Sprake, was born in Johannesburg and went to Potchefstroom Convent High School. After being in business for many years she was one of the founder members who started the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard on 28 October 1992 and has been its Vice-President ever since. She was asked to take on the management of the organisation in July 1995 and she has been responsible for its Financial Administration and for Blessed Gérard's Community Development Centre.

Thank you from Mrs. Kalkwarf

Dear Members of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard,

In this holy year, 2000, I feel most privileged to have been invited by and accepted into Blessed Gérard's 900-year-old "everlasting brotherhood", the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. I will always remember the 9th July as the day that changed my life. I would like to thank God for counting me amongst those worthy to serve him. I will endeavour to live up to the promise, which I have made, to the best of my ability and I will wear the cross and the vestment of the Order as a sign of affirmation of my vocation and loyalty to our motto "Tuitio fidei at obsequium pauperum". I humbly accept the responsibility of being the first South African to become a member of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta and to continue to assist the President of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard, in introducing and spreading the Order of Malta and its spirituality to our community and to our country.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who helped to make the day of 9th July 2000 so very special. Many of you came forward to give your assistance in different ways. Without the assistance, which you offered, this day would not have been the success it was. I cannot mention each and every one who helped, as the list would fill the whole page, but please accept this as the sign of gratitude for your help.

To all of you, members and guests, who attended the opening of the new and upgraded wing of Blessed Gérard's Care Centre and Hospice and my investiture into the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, I would like to say that it was overwhelming to see so many people show and interest in this event – Thank you for coming, thank you for your many good wishes and thank you for the support, which you give to our relief organisation. Many of you travelled a very long way to be here (some people even came from Cape Town and Johannesburg) your efforts are greatly appreciated. So many of you sent greetings via e-mail, per post and on the telephone. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude. Thank you also to those who sent gifts; I am truly overawed by all the attention.

Lastly, thank you to those who work with me, who help me and support me. Enclosed you will find a little gift, a memento of my wonderful day.

May God bless you all.

Yours Sincerely

In the service of "Our Lords the Sick"

Clare Kalkwarf D.M.