

Admission to the Order of Malta

The Grandmaster of the Order of Malta, Frà Matthew Festing, invested six members of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard as members of the Order of Malta on 14th April 2014:
Wilfrid Cardinal Napier OFM, Bishop Xolelo Kumalo,
Dr. Paul Thabethe, Nokuthula Thabethe, Yvonne Renaud and Dr. Khaya Nzimande.

The members of the Order of Malta are called "Brothers who come to the service of the poor" and „Servants of the Poor of the Lord" in the original monastic rule. In later versions of the rule this is extended and the members are called "brothers acceding for the service to the poor and to protect the Catholic faith". It was already in the 13th century that members of the Order promised "to be servants and slaves of our Lords, the sick". The Order of Malta is not an order of merit, but a religious order, which takes its members on duty to humbly serve the needy.

The Dedicated Members of the Brotherhood devote themselves with all their heart, with all their soul and with all their strength (cf. Dtn 6.5) to Jesus Christ and his body, the church (cf. 1 Cor 12.27), by striving to be the yeast (cf. Gal 5.9) of God's love in their entire life as members of their family, community, at their work and in their leisure time. Over and above this, their special task is to initiate, facilitate, guide, support and bear responsibility for the activities of the Brotherhood. For the Dedicated Membership only baptised and confirmed members of the Roman Catholic Church qualify, who are known for their outstanding character, loyalty to the Church and good Christian life.

This attitude and practice of lived charity is also one of the requirements for admission to the Order of Malta. Therefore it was an immense joy for us that the Grand Master and the Sovereign Council (Board) of the Order of Malta accepted our request to admit our Dedicated Members to the Order.

It was on 14 April 2015 that the Grandmaster himself admitted

- Wilfrid Fox Cardinal Napier O.F.M. as Bailli of Honour and Devotion

- Bishop Xolelo Thaddeus Kumalo as Conventual Chaplain ad honorem



- Dr. Paul Thabethe, Sr. Nokuthula Thabethe and



- Dr. Khayelihle Nzimande as Donats of Devotion



to the Order of Malta. The gentlemen were invested with the cuculla of the order and the lady with the cape of the order.



The Grandmaster presented the priests, gentlemen and the ladies with the Cross of the Order. (The photo shows the Cross for the Bailli of Honour and Devotion, Cardinal Napier.



Fra ' Matthew presented the Order's Cross on the day before to Yvonne Renaud who could not participate at the investiture because she was hospitalised.

Thus South Africa now has seven members of the Order of Malta, the six newly admitted and

Father Gérard, who has been a member of the Order of Malta for over twenty years.



We remember with reverence and gratitude our late South African member of the Order of Malta, Mrs. Clare Kalkwarf, who had been a member of the Order of Malta since 2000, most recently as a Dame of Magistral Grace, until her assassination in 2006.



The members of the Order of Malta across the globe endeavor to live in the spirit of our Order's prayer:

Lord Jesus, you have counted me worthy to enlist me for your service among the Members of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem. I humbly entreat you through the intercession of the Most Holy Virgin of Philermo, of Saint John the Baptist, Blessed Gérard and all the Saints and Blessed of our Order, to keep me faithful to the traditions of our Order. Be it mine to practice and defend the Catholic, the Apostolic, the Roman faith against the enemies of religion; be it mine to practice charity towards my neighbours, 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 PRINCE AND GRAND MASTER
SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER
OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA

24 April 2014

Dear Father Gerard,

I am so sorry not to have written to you till now about my visit to Mandeni. We had rather a complicated journey home and I arrived much later than I was expecting. Please forgive me for not having written to you at Easter.

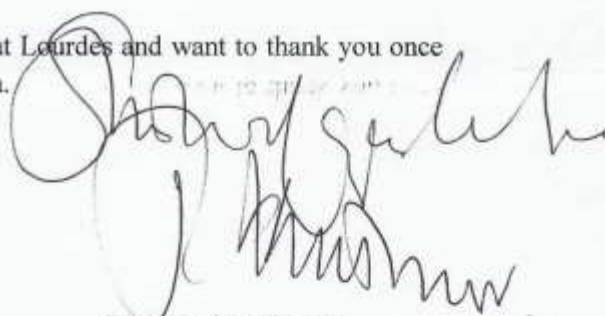
I enjoyed my visit enormously and I am absolutely full of admiration for what you are doing. You set a wonderful example which the rest of the Order should emulate. Please will you pass on my congratulations to everybody at Mandeni. They were all so incredibly kind, hospitable and welcoming.

I thought that all the various ceremonies and events were absolutely excellent and you deserve congratulations for having everything so well organised.

Thank you also for laying on the visits to the wild life park, the battle fields and the museums of Zulu history. I was absolutely fascinated by everything you showed us and the whole thing was beautifully organised.

I very much look forward to seeing you at Lourdes and want to thank you once again indeed for a wonderful visit to South Africa.

With best wishes.


Fra Matthew Festing

Reverend Father
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