

MEDITERRANEAN PASS AND ORDER OF MALTA

or

KNIGHT HOSPITALLER of the ORDER of SAINT JOHN of

JERUSALEM, PALESTINE, RHODES and MALTA

The Second Step in the Chivalric Orders

We congratulate you on your admission into the Order of Malta and taking the second step on your journey of becoming a member of the Order of the Templar.

Your Objectives

Upon completion of the Order of Malta material, you will be able to:

- Describe the early history of the Order of Malta, both literally and allegorically.
- Describe the purpose of the Order of Malta.
- Identify the elected and appointed officers of a Priory of Knights of Malta.
- Identify the symbols and emblems associated with the Order the Malta.
- Complete the Order of Malta examination.

Early History of the Order of Malta

The original Knights of Saint John, whose name was given by its founder Rector Gerard and whose name would later change to the Hospitallers of Saint John, and later known as Knights of Rhodes, before being given their final names as the Knights of Malta, were a military-monastic order, established in 1080 C.E. to care for sick and injured pilgrims, and was militarized nineteen years later during the First Crusade. However, according to Cardinale Hyginus Eugene author of "Orders of Knighthood, Awards and the Holy See, "The uninterrupted history of the Order goes back to the First Crusade. It began in 1070 C.E. as a hospice-infirmiry, sacra domus hospitalis, whence the word 'hospitaller' in the official title, for Amalfi pilgrims in Jerusalem" P. 82).

As early as 1018 C.E., some merchants from Amalfi, in the Duchy of Naples, being struck with the misery to which the pilgrims were exposed on their road to Terra Sancta, the "Holy Land", obtained permission of Tāriqu I-Hākim, the Fatimid Caliph of Egypt, to erect a church and build a monastery near the site of the Holy Sepulcher at Jerusalem, which they dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. They entertained all pilgrims who came for devotion, and cure, the diseased among them. They became eminent for their devotion, charity, and hospitality.

Although the order was active prior to 1113 it wasn't until that year that it was placed under the protection of the Holy See. (Eugene, 1984) In 1126 the order became a military-chivalric order with the aim of protecting pilgrims along with the Templars. In 1128 Raymond

de Puy succeeded Gerard and became the orders first to receive the title of Grand Master, being succeeded in 1169 by Auger de Balbens. (Eugene, 1984) After the crusades and the loss of the Holy Land the Order moved to Cyprus in 1291 under the protection of Lusignan Kings. In 1310 the order acquired the Island of Rhodes becoming sovereign in its territorial rule allowing them to an international naval power for the defense of Christendom. (Eugene, 1984) Following several devastating attacks by various parties, the Muslims were able to expel them in 1522, where it took up residence in Malta. Today the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order Of St. John of Jerusalem Of Rhodes and of Malta or Order of Malta, is headquartered in Rome, Italy and numbers approximately ten thousand members spread across “five Grand Priorities, three sub-Grand Priorities, and thirty-seven National Associations, in Europe and the Americas”(Eugene, p. 85). Saint John the Baptist, being their patron, they were called Brethren Hospitallers of Saint John the Baptist of Jerusalem, in order to distinguish them from the pre-existing Knights of the Holy Sepulcher. They took the black habit of the Hermits of Saint Augustine, and on the left breast wore a cross of eight points. In war, they wore crimson, with the white cross, but in their monasteries, and on the day of their profession, the black garment only.

Although the ritual had been adopted in 1883, the Grand Encampment did not establish the degree as an Order until its 1893 Triennial in Boston, Massachusetts, creating the “Masonic Order of Malta”. (Conner, 1894) This order actually consists of two: The Order of Saint Paul, or the Mediterranean Pass, which is a preparatory order, and the Order of Malta itself. The Order of Malta may be conferred in either full or short form. The full form is quite elaborate and beautiful but, alas, is not conferred by many commanderies.

The short form is but a summary of the lessons taught in the full form, and this is what is described here. The Order of Saint Paul is the first of the Christian orders contained in the chivalric system, and is based upon the story of the Apostle Paul (née Saul) who, en route to Rome for trial, was shipwrecked on the island of Melite (n/k/a Malta) in 60 C.E. The candidate represents a knight preparing to depart for the crusades in the Holy Land. He receives sustenance, both spiritual and physical, to gird him for the ardors of his journey. In the next portion of the order, the history of the Knights of Saint John (Knights of Malta) is explained and the periods of the order's history are paralleled with the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

While Freemasonry often comes under attack by fundamentalists who accuse the fraternity of being un-Christian, the candidate for admission into this Christian order can offer clear argument to the contrary. The Order of Malta is a suitable preparation for the Order of the Temple, in that it provides the candidate with additional New Testament instruction, particularly in the Eight Beatitudes. (Grand Encampment of USA)

Purpose of the Order of Malta

The main objective of the order was to serve and care for the sick and injured pilgrims visiting the Holy Land from Europe, of which there were numerous ones even before the Crusades. The leader of the order was originally called The Master of the Hospital, but from 1128 the name was changed to Grand Master, who served for life. The Order grew as many of its patients donated land, both in Europe and in the Holy Land as gratitude for their services. As a matter of fact, early documents mentioning such donations, do not mention the sick, only the poor and strangers. The Order was also only concerned with religious conducts, and at first never mentioned anything about knights. Over time however, as the number of pilgrims increased, so did the need for their protection. For this reason, knights were recruited from the Crusaders to serve as their protection. This is said to have been the beginning of the military side of the Order. The orders members were divided into three classes,

- The military brothers
- The infirmary brothers
- The Chaplain brothers (Meij, nd, p. 1)

“The Military brothers consisted of knights recruited from the Crusades, and were called Heavy Cavalry. They were commanded by a Marshal. Lower-ranking men were recruited from amongst the locals, and were called Turcoples. Those assigned to oversee the Turcoples were called Turcopiliars. This title is still used in the Scottish Rite Council of Kadosh. The first mention of the military aspects of the Order are found in documents dating from about 1200, and

identified two types of knights. The first were knights serving the order for a short period of time, and were called secular knights. The second were knights who vowed permanent allegiance to the order, and were called professed knights. As the order grew, they became rivals with the pure military order, the Knight Templars. To differentiate themselves from the Templars, the Hospitallers wore a black cape with a white cross, while the Templars wore white capes with a red cross. The order later enjoyed vast privileges like the Templars, of being independent in spiritual and temporal authority (except from Rome), the right to have their own chapels and cemeteries, and their own clergy" (Meji, p. 5-6).

Elected and appointed officers of a Priory of Knights of Malta

Conclaves are meetings held by Commanderies of Knights Templar, and are generally opened in that degree, called the Order of the Temple. The Order of Malta, however, similar to the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross, has its own officers but they typically do not open conclaves. Thus, the officers of a Priory of Knights of Malta consist of:

- Prior
- Lieutenant Commander
- Capitan General
- Chaplin
- Marshal
- Capitan of Outposts
- Guard

Symbols and emblems associated with the Order the Malta

THE BANNER OF THE ORDER: There are two banners of the Order, one called the “Banner of St. John,” the other the “Banner of Malta.”

The Banner of St John: is red, having upon it a white Greek Cross (equal limbed); on the center of this is a Paschal Lamb, and one of the following letters in each of the four quarters of the banner: F.E.R.T. These letters are the initials of the words in the following sentence “Fortitudo ejus Rhodum tenuit” (His courage preserved Rhodes.)

The Maltese Banner: is black having painted or worked upon it a silver or white Maltese Cross, with the Cross of St. John on a red shield in the center. Around the Cross, the following legend: “Rex Regum et Dominus Dominorum.”

Additionally there are five banners placed in the East, on the right and left of the prior. In addition to these five banners used in the ceremonial:

1. White, having upon it “Palestine, 1099,” and the letter B.
2. Red, having upon it “Cyrpus, 1287,” and the letter L.
3. Black, having upon it “Rhodes, 1310, and the letter D.
4. Purple, having upon it “Candia, 1523, “and the letter R.
5. Yellow, having upon it “Malta, 1530,” and the letter A.

These banners are placed as follows: Beginning in the West with No. 1, they extend in numerical order towards the East, leaving as much space between each as space permits.

During the ceremony each banner has a guard.

Jewel of Cross: The Cross is a white enameled Maltese Cross, set in gold or gilt metal, and bearing upon its center the arms of the language or particular country of the Priory; with us, the Coat-of-Arms of the United States of America. The Jewel is attached to a black ribbon.

Quiz 3

KNIGHT HOSPITALER of the ORDER of SAINT JOHN of JERUSALEM, PALESTINE, RHODES and MALTA

1. What was the year of inception of the Knights of Malta?
 - A) 1018
 - B) 1070
 - C) 1080
 - D) 1113

2. Who was the first Grand Master of the Order?
 - A) Rector Gerard
 - B) Raymond de Puy
 - C) Auger de Balbens

3. Who did the Order seek permission from to erect a hospital in Jerusalem?
 - A) The Pope of Rome
 - B) The Fatimid Caliph of Egypt
 - C) The King of Naples
 - D) The King of Jerusalem

4. Name the five locations in which the Order has taken up residence.

Palestine, Cyprus, Rhodes, Malta, Rome

5. What year was the Ritual for the Order of Malta adopted by the Grand Encampment?

A) 1883

B) 1893

C) 1894

6. The Order of Saint Paul also known as the Mediterranean Pass is said to be a preparatory order for the Order of Malta, what other order is said to be a preparatory Order? The Illustrious Order of the Red Cross

7. Why is the Order of Malta Considered the suitable preparation for the Order of the Temple? It provides the candidate with additional New Testament instruction, particularly in the Eight Beatitudes.

8. Why was the Order of Malta established? The Order of Malta was established to serve and care for the sick and injured pilgrims visiting the Holy Land from Europe.

9. What was the source of the Orders major growth?

- A) Wealth
- B) War
- C) Donations
- D) Absorptions

10. What resulted after the Order of Malta became a Military Order?

- A) The became the rivals of the Knights Templar
- B) The members were divided into three classes
- C) They recruited knights from the crusades
- D) All of the above

11. Following the establishment of its military side of the order there were two types of

knights who were they?

- A) Turcopesles Knights and Turcopiliars Knights
- B) Teutonic Knights and Knights Kadosh
- C) Secular Knights and Professed Knights
- D) Knights Hospitallers and Knights Malta

12. List the meanings of the words found on the banners of the Order?

Banner of St. John	Fortitudo ejus Rhodum tenuit – His courage preserved Rhodes
Maltese Banner	Rex Regum et Dominus Dominorum – King of Kings, Lord of Lords
White Banner	Palestine 1099 – Birth
Red Banner	Cyprus 1287 – Life
Black Banner	Rhodes 1310 – Death
Purple Banner	Candia 1523 – Resurrection
Yellow Banner	Malta 1530 – Ascension

Quiz 3

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