

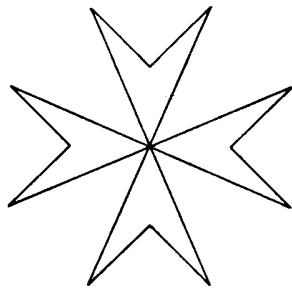
THE OSJ REDBOOK



HANDBOOK
ON THE
NATURE, STRUCTURE, AND ORGANIZATION
OF THE
SOVEREIGN ORDER OF
SAINT JOHN OF JERUSALEM
KNIGHTS OF MALTA

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Handbook
on the
Nature, Structure, and Organization
of the
SOVEREIGN ORDER of
SAINT JOHN of JERUSALEM
KNIGHTS of MALTA



SOVEREIGN ORDER OF SAINT JOHN OF JERUSALEM
Reading, Pennsylvania 19603

Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem

✱ Knights of Malta ✱
Knights of Rhodes
Hospitallers of Jerusalem

“The statutes and regulations of our Order are such decrees as are made to be observed for ever, unless repealed by a general chapter. The ordinances are only observed from one chapter to another, unless they are expressly confirmed there.”

*“Of the Meaning of Terms” by Brother Claude de la Sengle
from: The Old and New Statutes of the Order of Saint John of
Jerusalem—AD MDCLXXVI*

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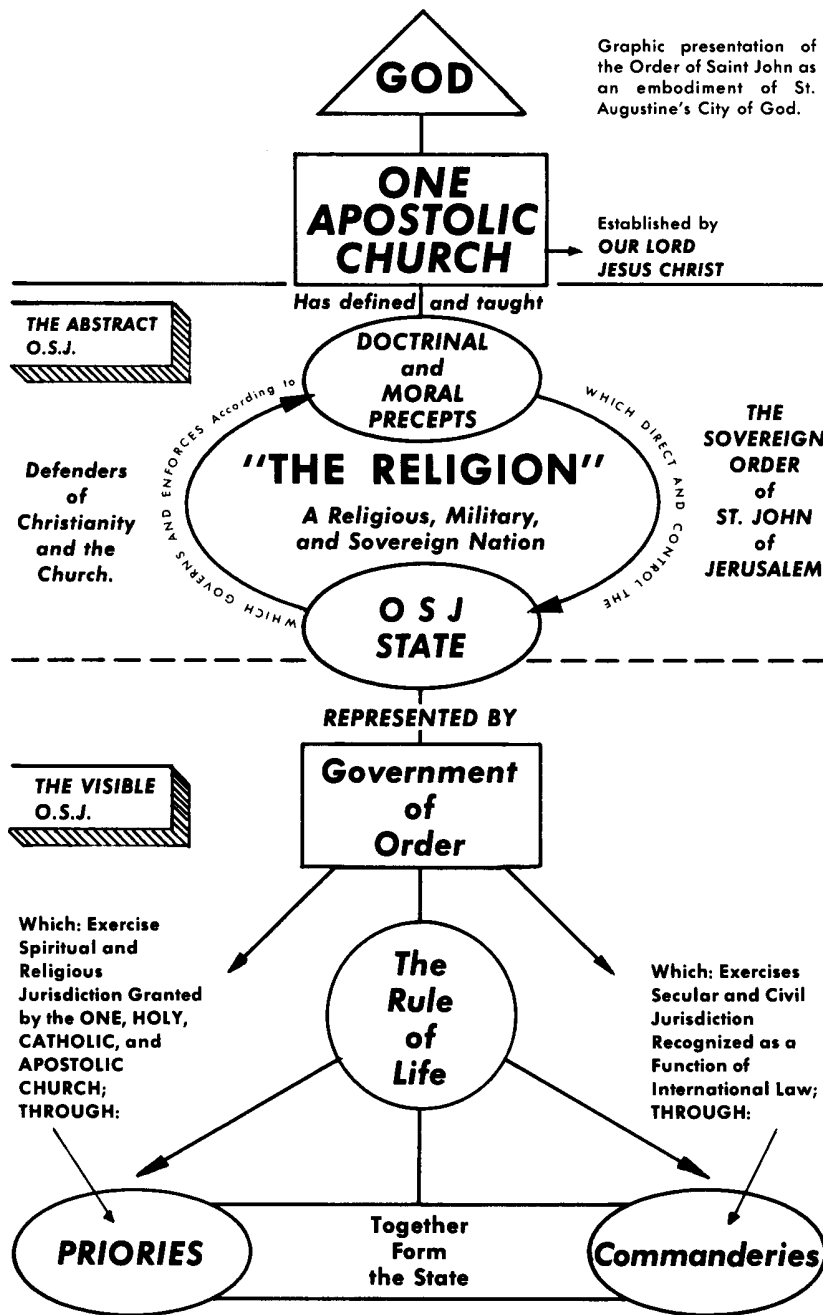
World Headquarters and Convent of the Order are located in Reading, Pennsylvania in the United States of America. Mailing Address: Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, P.O. Box 696, Reading, Pa. 19603.

MALTESE ^{T H E}  CROSS
of the
Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem
✱ Knights of Malta ✱

PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

This handbook is intended for the private use of members of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem and should serve as a quick reference guide to help explain the complex nature, structure, and organization of this 900 year old religious and military order—as it has adapted itself to the 20th Century. Information contained herein is historically accurate and verifiable based upon numerous publications and activities, both ancient and modern. For a comprehensive examination of the rule, history, customs, statutes, and regulations of the Order, the reader is referred to the following references:

- The Theater of Honour and Knighthood*. Favine. 1623.
The Old and New Statutes of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem. Borgoforte. 1676.
History of the Knights of Malta. Vertot. 1728.
Pastoralium Nobis. Pope Pius VI. 1779.
Codie del Sacro Militare Ordine Gerosolmitano (Code de Rohan). Del Sacro Generale Capitolo. 1782.
Ancient and Modern Malta, A Full and Accurate History of the Islands of Malta and Gozo, the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. Boisgelin. 1805.
Archives Nobilares Universelles, Bulletin du College Archeologique et Heraldique de France. Magny. 1843.
A History of the Knights of Malta. Porter. 1858.
Historia de La Inclita y Soberano Orden Militar de San Juan de Jerusalem de Malta. Cotonat. 1913.
History of the Ancient and Illustrious Order Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem. Welsh. 1923.
L'Empereur Paul I de Russie, Grand Maitre de L'Ordre de Malta. Taube. 1955.
Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, Knights of Malta. Pichel. 1957.
The Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Malta. Smith. 1964.
The OSJ Messenger, Volume 36—Number 1. Convent of the Order. 1981.



Graphic presentation of the Order of Saint John as an embodiment of St. Augustine's City of God.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ORDER

The Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem is at one and the same time

- a) a religious body of men and women.
- b) a theocratic state.
- c) a juridical person.
- d) an aristocratic republic.
- e) a militant army.
- f) a sovereign nation in exile.

As the most singularly honored of the exempt religious orders, the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem possesses and continues to exercise all the ancient rights and privileges granted or recognized by more than sixty Roman Pontiffs.

The Order of Saint John—while totally exempt—is not above the Church that assisted in its creation. It must be understood clearly that the Order is not the Church of Rome. Therefore, the Order does not make liturgical rules, nor interpret Holy Scripture, nor create new categories of theology. Instead, the Order is sworn to defend the Christian Faith against all enemies no matter whether such agents be internal or external.

Guideline: All doctrines, canons, rules, and regulations of the Church of Rome NOT IN CONFLICT with the Magisterium of the One, Holy Catholic, and Apostolic Church apply to and act as an unerring guide in the conduct and government of the Order of Saint John.

At the present time (according to custom), the Order of Saint John may create either

Priories—which exercise spiritual and religious jurisdiction.

or

Commanderies—which exercise secular and civil jurisdiction.

All priories and commanderies of the Order must be licensed by the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, Inc., a Delaware corporation; and conform to the rules, regulations, and ordinances promulgated for their conduct and that of their respective institutions.

All chapels, schools, hospices, and other institutions of the Order must be conducted under validly constituted priories.

Priories and commanderies may coexist within overlapping geographical areas and share overlapping memberships. Priories must assume religious names, e.g., Priory of Saint Thomas; and commanderies must assume geographical place names, e.g., the Commandery of Atlanta.

Members of a priory or commandery must reside within a reasonable commuting distance of their local institutions (so as to guarantee regular attendance at all meetings and convocations), unless dispensed in writing by the Convent of the Order.

Ownership of institutions of the Order is decentralized, and all institutions of the Order must be controlled and directed by local knights under vows.

The day-to-day operation of the Order's institutions is left to the local superior and his supporting staff.

Only Knights of Justice under vows may vote in the affairs of the Order. Positions of trust and responsibility in the Order and the institutions of the Order are open only to Knights of Justice under vows or to Knights of Grace under vows and promises.

For good and compelling reasons, ecclesiastical protection and jurisdiction as well as faculties may be granted to individuals and to individual institutions of the Order by the competent officer in charge through the authority given and delegated to the Order by the various Roman Pontiffs of the Apostolic Church.

All priories, commanderies, and their subdivisions, as well as the institutions of the Order, are free to conduct their own affairs in all areas of endeavor, EXCEPT in

- 1) the practice of the religion of the Church of Rome.
- 2) the liturgy and the liturgical year.
- 3) the vows and promises taken by the members.
- 4) the rule of life based upon the four cardinal virtues and the eight beatitudes.
- 5) the recruitment and admission of members.
- 6) licensing and legal matters.
- 7) the issuance of diplomas, passports, identity cards, and certificates.

No deviation from established policy is allowed in the seven foregoing areas, which are reserved exclusively to the World Headquarters and Convent of the Order.

ADMISSION STANDARDS

Qualification for membership in every grade is today predicated largely upon nobility of character and deed, even though nobility by birth and “quartering” are recognized as historic fact.

While the Order of Saint John *de facto* is a Catholic religious order (in origin, by construction, historically, and at present), it has, nonetheless, acquired a true ecumenical character in the best sense. Christians who are in communion with Rome join the Order as citizens of the OSJ State and as members of “The Religion.” As such, they participate in the sacramental life of the Order—which is Catholic. Sincere Christians of other denominations who support the ideals of the Order and fulfill all requirements for membership join as citizens of the OSJ State—but not the religion.

Membership is by invitation only. In order to be considered for membership, a candidate must

- 1) be a baptized, practicing Christian, and
- 2) believe the truths contained in the Nicean Creed.

In addition, the prospective candidate must be willing to

- 1) take the requisite promises and/or vows without reservation,
- 2) live the rule of the Order according to the statutes, regulations, and ordinances,
- 3) support the Order and its institutions financially, and
- 4) undergo a comprehensive background and security check.

Candidates may *not* be

- 1) divorced and remarried, or
- 2) a member of any secret society or subversive anti-Christian movement, including any subdivision of affiliated groups. Some examples of contraindicated memberships are: Fascists, Nazis, Communists, Freemasons (all lodges), Socialists, Marxists, Moose, Elk, Lions, Odd Fellows, Muslims; or any of the occult sects, such as Druids, Rosicrucians, etc.

RECRUITMENT

General Procedures

- 1) Initial membership and all subsequent advancement in the grades is by invitation only. Therefore, a candidate must be known to the local prior or commander for a considerable time preceding any such invitation. Furthermore, it must be made clear to the candidate that the initial invitation to membership is only tentative in nature pending final approval by the Convent of the Order.
- 2) The sponsoring prior or commander in whose jurisdiction the candidate resides—not a lesser brother or sister—must submit in writing a personal, comprehensive, and confidential evaluation of the candidate's past activities together with a signed recommendation attesting to the candidate's fitness for membership.
- 3) A completed biography (four copies of the standard form) must be submitted with the recommendation of the Sponsor to the Convent of the Order.
- 4) If the initial application is approved by Headquarters, permission will be granted to prepare for an investiture and/or reception at an indicated grade level.
- 5) Designation of the time and place of the investiture and/or reception is the prerogative of and is determined by Headquarters after consultation with the host prior.
- 6) The taking of vows or promises must be done publicly and with adequate preparation. Such preparation may not be less than the published minimums without special dispensation.

Specific Procedures

To encourage uniformity throughout the Order and to avoid misunderstanding, recruitment guidelines and specific requirements for each grade are available to licensed priories and commanderies upon request from the Convent of the Order.

THE RULE OF LIFE

The cross of the Order is representative of the life every member should lead. It is comprised of four spear-points aligned with the four directions of the compass turned inward and impinging upon the center, which is understood to be Jesus Christ.

The arms are symbolic of the four Cardinal Virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. The eight points of the cross signify the eight beatitudes. Together, they represent a style of life which is more demanding to live than the simple observance of the Ten Commandments. By constantly living the beatitudes and adhering to the principles of the Cardinal Virtues, members of "The Religion" put into practice that upon which salvation depends.

Thus, this simple cross—a summation of our "rule of life"—is emblematic of our life in Christ.

Further refined, our rule finds daily application in the

Corporal Works of Mercy and *Spiritual Works of Mercy*

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. To feed the hungry | 1. To admonish the sinner |
| 2. To give drink to the
thirsty | 2. To instruct the ignorant |
| 3. To clothe the naked | 3. To counsel the doubtful |
| 4. To visit the imprisoned | 4. To comfort the sorrowful |
| 5. To shelter the homeless | 5. To bear wrongs patiently |
| 6. To visit the sick | 6. To forgive all injuries |
| 7. To bury the dead | 7. To pray for the living
and the dead |

BASIC DUTIES

Within their state in life and according to their vows and/or promises, members of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem are obliged at all times to live according to the Rule, Statutes, Regulations, and Ordinances of the Order.

In addition, each superior—one appointed or elected to any position of trust and responsibility—is under obligation to report in detail to his immediate superior (at regular two-month intervals) concerning all matters in which he has jurisdiction. This obligatory communication must be in writing, be self-initiated, and be in addition to normal meetings and correspondence.

Similarly, each member of the Order, of whatever rank or title and whether or not a superior, is under obligation to initiate a personal report of activities (in writing) to his/her immediate superior at regular four-month intervals.

CLASSIFICATION

A member of the Order shall be classified as being *of Justice* upon taking the five vows of Poverty, Chastity, Obedience, Charity, and Defense of Christianity within his or her state in life.

A member of the Order who takes the three vows of Obedience, Charity, Defense of Christianity and the two promises of Chastity and Poverty within his or her state in life shall be classified as *of Grace*.

Historically, certain exemptions have been allowed within these classifications since the Order left Malta. It is understood that proofs of nobility, either *nobilitas major* or *nobilitas minor* and *armigerous rights* are secondary considerations and do not qualify an individual unless a member is under vows.

However . . . This in no way impairs hereditary rights within the Russian Empire, and
. . . members living incognito under totalitarian, anti-Christian regimes may use criteria appropriate for their circumstances.

GRADES

Members of the Order of Saint John are divided into six grades, as indicated in the following charts. During the last half century, common usage and adaptation to American society have varied the traditional nomenclature slightly. Entrance into and continued good standing in each grade are dependent upon the requisite promises and/or vows indicated.

AFFILIATES

Four types of affiliates are recognized:

Knight or Lady of Honor and Charity—a man or woman who supports the work of the Order on a regular and continuous basis (usually each year with a generous contribution on the Feast of Saint John the Baptist).

Knight or Lady of Honor—a man or woman who makes a substantial one-time contribution to the work of the Order.

Donat—a man or woman associated with a particular institution who supports the Order financially.

Legionnaire—a male employee or personal subordinate of an individual Knight of Grace or Justice.

Affiliates are not members of the Order and take no part in its deliberations; however, affiliates must act in the Order's best interests as far as they are able and complement the goals and ideals of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem.

**MEMBERSHIP IN THE SOVEREIGN ORDER
OF SAINT JOHN OF JERUSALEM**

<i>Classification and Grade</i>	<i>Commitment within State of Life</i>
Bailiff Grand Cross of Justice	<i>Vows of:</i> Poverty
Knight Grand Cross of Justice	Chastity
Knight Commander of Justice	Obedience
Knight of Justice	Charity
Lady of Justice	Defense of Christianity

(By Invitation Only)

Knight Commander of Grace	<i>Vows of:</i> Obedience
Knight of Grace	Charity
Lady of Grace	Defense of Christianity
	<i>Promises of:</i> Chastity
	Poverty

(By Invitation Only)

Esquire	<i>Promises of:</i> Poverty
Escort	Chastity
	Obedience
	Charity
	Defense of Christianity

(By Invitation Only)

Serving Brother	<i>Promises of:</i> Poverty
Serving Sister	Chastity
	Obedience
	Charity

(By Invitation Only)

Page	<i>Promises of:</i> Chastity
Damosel	Obedience
	Charity

(By Invitation Only)

MEMBERSHIP BY GRADE

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
I	Bailiff Grand Cross of Justice	—
	Knight Grand Cross of Justice	—
II	Knight Commander of Justice	—
	Knight of Justice	Lady of Justice
III	Knight Commander of Grace	—
	Knight of Grace	Lady of Grace
IV	Esquire of Merit	Escort of Merit
	Esquire of Devotion	Escort of Devotion
V	Serving Brother of Merit	Serving Sister of Merit
	Serving Brother of Devotion	Serving Sister of Devotion
VI	Page of Merit	Damosel of Merit
	Page of Devotion	Damosel of Devotion

AFFILIATION

Knight of Honor and Charity	Lady of Honor and Charity
Knight of Honor	Lady of Honor
Donat	Donat
Legionnaire	—

IDENTIFICATION OF OSJ MEMBERS

Licenses: Every candidate for membership must sign a licensing agreement before taking the requisite vows or promises. Members renewing their vows/promises also are required to renew their licenses—the term of which will always expire upon the anniversary date of the vows or promises taken. A license agreement is the legal documentation necessary in order to prove current membership in the Order of Saint John.

Diplomas: Upon request, members in Grades I, II, and III are eligible to receive a parchment document signed by the appropriate officers of the Order attesting to their then current classification and grade. Each diploma is coded with the code number corresponding to a necessary identification document in the form of an accompanying “passport.”

Passports: All members in good standing in grades I, II, and III hold an Order “passport.” Passports are issued upon reception into one of the three grades and bear an expiration date which coincides with the anniversary date of the expiration of a member’s vows. Passports are the property of the Order and must be surrendered upon the anniversary date or returned sooner if the member is dispensed from his or her vows. Upon the renewal of vows, a current passport is reissued for identification purposes.

Identity Cards: All members in good standing in Grades IV, V, and VI receive a laminated identification card. Such ID cards carry an expiration date which coincides with the anniversary date of the expiration of the promises taken. ID cards must be renewed periodically by renewing the requisite promises for the grade level attained.

Registry: All members of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, as well as all affiliated personnel must be listed in the Central Registry of the Order maintained at the World Headquarters. Verification of current status is only available and valid through this central listing which utilizes a randomly accessed Current Personal Verification Number which is changed at intervals. In addition, each priory and commandery must maintain a corresponding local registry for all individuals connected with any institution of the Order.

Honorary Diplomas and Certificates: For good cause and to recognize the beneficence and admirable acts of certain individuals who choose to affiliate themselves with the Order, Honorary Diplomas and Certificates of Merit may be bestowed by the Convent of the Order.

IDENTIFICATION PAPERS BY GRADE

Bailiff Grand Cross Knight Grand Cross Knight Commander Knight Lady	Countersigned and sealed LICENSE for each member required. DIPLOMA issued (only upon request) in conjunction with a . . . PASSPORT which is valid only for the time period under vows.
Esquire Escort Serving Brother Serving Sister Page Damosel	Countersigned and sealed LICENSE for each member required. IDENTITY CARDS issued which are valid only for the time period under promises.
Knight/ Lady of Honor and Charity Knight/Lady of Honor Donat Legionnaire	Except for the occasional grant of an HONORARY DIPLOMA or CERTIFICATE of MERIT, no identification papers are issued. Affiliates are listed only in the central and local registers.

A member who . . . voluntarily refuses to renew his/her vows or promises upon the anniversary date, or

. . . petitions and is released from his/her vows or promises before their expiration

is dismissed at that time from the Order and possesses no further rights or privileges. With permission, he or she may retain a position of lesser commitment depending upon the vows or promises retained.

A member who performs a treacherous act against the welfare of the Order *ipso facto* is dismissed from the Order of Saint John.

RECEPTION and INVESTITURE
of a
KNIGHT of GRACE or JUSTICE

The Reception

Entrance Procession: Standard bearer, page, sword bearer, presiding officers according to rank, chaplain, and postulants (dressed in white garment signifying the putting on of the new man). During procession, the *Veni Creator* is sung. If the reception takes place during Mass, which is customary, the procession starts before the Offertory.

Standard bearer, page with Holy Bible, and sword bearer stand to right of the altar near the purification table.

After all have arrived at their prearranged positions within the sanctuary, the chancellor directs the postulant to the purification table for the hand-washing ceremony.

Postulant: Symbolically washes hands, saying,
“I will wash my hands in innocence and prepare myself for the work of God.”

Chaplain: Presents a burning candle to the postulant saying,
“Receive ye the Light of Jesus Christ, and let your light so shine forth before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father Who is in heaven.”

Presiding Officer: “What do you wish, my son?”

Postulant: “The mercy of God and permission to wear the mantle of obedience and the Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ as a Knight of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem.”

Presiding Officer: "Have you considered well this step you are about to take and do you make this request of your own free will?"

Postulant: "I have considered it well and I take this step of my own free will and with joy in my heart."

Presiding Officer: "Will you strive to obey your lawful superiors and be obedient to the Holy Rule of our Order?"

Postulant: "I will endeavor to obey my lawful superiors, the Holy Rule, and the statutes, regulations, and ordinances of the Order of Saint John, so help me God."

The postulant then kneels, places his right hand upon the Bible, and recites in a loud voice:

VOWS and PROMISES of a Knight of Grace

"I, _____ (name) _____, make my vow and promise to Almighty God, to the glorious Blessed Virgin Mary, and to Saint John the Baptist, our patron, that by the assistance of His grace, I vow within my state in life for a period of _____ years:

true obedience to him that shall be commended to me by God and my Religion; true charity—the mother and foundation of all virtue; and defense of Christianity;

and I promise, henceforth, to live in Christian poverty and to observe chastity as it behooves all catholic and religious persons to do."

VOWS of a Knight of Justice

"I, _____ (name) _____, make my vow to Almighty God, to the glorious Blessed Virgin Mary, and to Saint John the Baptist, our patron, that by the assistance of His grace, I vow within my state in life for a period of _____ years:

Christian poverty; chastity; obedience to him that shall be commended to me by God and my Religion; true charity—the mother and foundation of all virtue; and the defense of Christianity."

(The postulant then signs the vows which he had written out in longhand before the reception)

(If the postulant is a knight or has been invested previously, this section is omitted)

The Investiture

- Sword Bearer:* Presents sword to the chancellor.
- Chancellor:* Gives sword to postulant.
- Postulant:* Lifting sword until the hilt is at eye level, says, "In the name of the Holy Trinity, I do brandish this sword."
- Chancellor:* Receives the sword back from the postulant and hands it over his left arm—hilt first to the presiding officer.
- Presiding Officer:* Receives the sword and says, "Remember that the dignity of knighthood is an allegory of the Christian life and a discipline never relaxed throughout life, making the Knight at once complete and free in himself, and obedient to the rules of knightly conduct, obeying those placed in authority."
- "The virtues of a knight are Obedience, Courage, Liberality, Faith, Courtesy, Piety, and Respect for Woman. No details of such a life can be unimportant. It originates in natural dignity. The loftiness of demeanour is part of the true knightly character, distinguished from pride as clearly as admiration is distinguished from envy."
- Chancellor:* Directs postulant to kneel on his left knee before the presiding officer.

Presiding Officer: Performs the dubbing with the flat of the sword on the right shoulder then left shoulder saying: "In the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ and of St. Michael the Archangel and of Saint John the Baptist, arise Chevalier _____ (name) _____ and prepare yourself to join the Universal Bond and Dignity of Knightly Brotherhood."

The ceremony continues for all postulants.

Postulant: Stands at attention and remains facing the presiding officer.

Chancellor: Presents spurs to the postulant who places his hand on them.

Presiding Officer: "Seeest thou these spurs? They represent ready service and signify that as the horse fears them when he swerves from his duty, so shouldest thou fear to depart from thy post or from thy vows."

Chancellor: Assists the postulant to remove the white over-garment, then helps the presiding officer to place the Cross and mantle on the postulant.

Presiding Officer: Pointing to the Cross on the mantle says: "Wear this white Cross as a sign of purity; wear it also within thy heart as well as outwardly, and keep it without soil or stain. As you know, this Cross has four arms and eight points, not without reason. Remember that the four arms represent the four Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance; while the eight points are signs of the eight beatitudes, which you must ever preserve, that is: spiritual joy; to live without malice; to weep over thy sins; to humble thyself to those who injure thee; to love justice; to be merciful; to be sincere and pure in heart; and to suffer persecution."

“Take this Cross in the name of the Holy Trinity, the ever Virgin Mary, and Saint John the Baptist, for the improvement of the Faith, the defense of the Christian name, and the service of the poor. For this reason we put the Cross on that side of you, that you may love it with all your heart; and that your right hand may fight for its defense and preservation. For if ever it happen, that in fighting for Jesus Christ against enemies of the Faith, you should turn your back, desert the standard of the Cross, and fly away in so just a war, you will be stripped of that holy sign, agreeable to the statutes and customs of the Order, as false to the vow you have now made, and be cut off from our body as a rotten and corrupt member.”

- Presiding Officer:* Ties the strings or closes the chain on the cape, saying: “Receive the Lord’s yoke, for it is easy and light, and you shall find rest to your soul. We promise you nothing but bread and water, and a modest habit of little worth. We give you, your parents, and relatives a share in all the good works of our Order and of our Brothers that are at present, or shall be hereafter, all over the world.”
- Postulant:* “Amen, so be it.”
- Presiding Officer:* Gives the Kiss of Peace to the postulant.
- Chaplain:* Leads all in the recitation of *The Lord’s Prayer* and *Salve Regina*.
- Gives his blessing to the postulant.
- Exit Procession:* Mass continues at the Credo.

**RECEPTION of a
LADY of GRACE or JUSTICE**

Entrance Procession: Standard bearer, page, sword bearer, presiding officers according to rank, chaplain, and postulants (dressed in white garment signifying the putting on of the new person). During procession, the *Veni Creator* is sung. If the reception takes place during Mass, which is customary, the procession starts before the Offertory.

Standard bearer, page with Holy Bible, and sword bearer stand to the right of the altar near the purification table.

After all have arrived at their prearranged positions within the sanctuary, the chancellor directs the postulant to the purification table for the hand-washing ceremony.

Postulant: Symbolically washes hands, saying,

“I will wash my hands in innocence and prepare myself for the work of God.”

Chaplain: Presents a burning candle to the postulant saying:
“Receive ye the Light of Jesus Christ, and let your light so shine forth before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father Who is in heaven.”

Presiding Officer: “What do you wish, my daughter?”

Postulant: “The mercy of God and permission to wear the habit of modesty and obedience, and the Cross of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, as a Lady of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem.”

Presiding Officer: "Have you considered well this step you are about to take, and do you make this request of your own free will?"

Postulant: "I have considered it well, and I take this step of my own free will and with joy in my heart."

Presiding Officer: "Will you strive to obey your lawful superiors and be obedient to the Holy Rule of our Order?"

Postulant: "I will endeavor to obey my lawful superiors, the Holy Rule, and the statutes, regulations, and ordinances of the Order of Saint John, so help me God."

The postulant then kneels, places her right hand upon the Bible, and recites in a loud voice:

VOWS and PROMISES of a LADY of GRACE

"I, _____ (name) _____, make my vow and promise to Almighty God, to the glorious Blessed Virgin Mary, and to Saint John the Baptist, our patron, that by the assistance of His grace, I vow within my state in life for a period of _____ years: true obedience to him that shall be commended to me by God and my Religion; true charity—the mother and foundation of all virtue; and defense of Christianity;

and I promise, henceforth, to live in Christian poverty and to observe chastity as it behooves all Catholic and religious persons to do."

VOWS of a LADY of JUSTICE

"I, _____ (name) _____, make my vow to Almighty God, to the glorious Blessed Virgin Mary, and to Saint John the Baptist, our patron, that by the assistance of His grace, I vow within my state in life for a period of _____ years: Christian poverty; chastity; obedience to him that shall be commended to me by God and my Religion; true charity—the mother and foundation of all virtue; and the defense of Christianity."

(The postulant then signs the vows which she had written out in longhand before the reception)

Presiding Officer: “Remember that the dignity of a Lady of the Order of Saint John is an allegory of the Christian life and a discipline never relaxed through life, making a Lady at once complete and free in herself and obedient to the rules of the Order and those in lawful authority over her.”

“The virtues of a Lady are Obedience, Courage, Faith, Courtesy, Piety, Liberality, and Modesty. No detail of such a life can be unimportant. It originates from natural dignity. The loftiness of demeanour is part of the true character of a Lady of Saint John, distinguished from pride as clearly as admiration is distinguished from envy.”

Chancellor: Pins on the Cross of the Order, saying:

“Wear this white Cross as a sign of purity; wear it also within thy heart as well as outwardly, and keep it without soil or stain. As you know, this Cross has four arms and eight points, not without reason. Remember that the four arms represent the four Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance, while the eight points are signs of the eight beatitudes, which thou must ever preserve, that is: spiritual joy; to live without malice; to weep over thy sins; to humble thyself to those who injure thee; to love justice; to be merciful; to be sincere and pure of heart; and to suffer persecution.”

Chancellor then assists the postulant to dress in the habit and places a white veil on her head.

- Presiding Officer:* “Receive the Lord’s yoke, for it is easy and light, and you shall find rest to your soul. We promise you nothing but bread and water, and a modest habit of little worth. We give you, your parents, and relatives a share in all the good works of our Order and of our Brothers and Sisters that are at present, or shall be hereafter, all over the world.”
- Postulant:* “Amen, so be it.”
- Presiding Officer:* Gives the Kiss of Peace to the Postulant.
- Chaplain:* Leads all in the recitation of *The Lord’s Prayer* and *Salve Regina*.
- Gives his blessing to the postulant.
- Exit Procession:* Mass continues at the Credo.

RECEPTION of an ESQUIRE

Entrance Procession: Standard bearer, presiding officers, chaplain, and postulant. Standard bearer stands to right of altar.

Postulant: Enters the sanctuary and kneels.

Chaplain: Leads all in the recitation of *The Lord's Prayer*, the *Hail Mary*, the *Gloria*, and the *Credo*.

Presiding Officer: "What do you wish, my son?"

Postulant: "The mercy of God and an opportunity to serve Our Lord, Jesus Christ, more perfectly as an Esquire of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem."

Presiding Officer: "Have you considered well this step you are about to take, and do you make this request of your own free will?"

Postulant: "I have considered it well, and I take this step of my own free will and with joy in my heart."

Presiding Officer: "Will you strive to obey your lawful superiors and be obedient to the Holy Rule of our Order?"

Postulant: "I will endeavor to obey my lawful superiors, the Holy Rule, and statutes, regulations, and ordinances of the Order of Saint John, so help me God."

After kneeling, places his right hand upon the Bible and recites in a loud voice:

PROMISES of an ESQUIRE

"I, _____ (name) _____, promise to Almighty God, to the glorious Blessed Virgin Mary, and to Saint John the Baptist, our patron, that by the assistance of His grace, I promise within my state in life for a period of _____ years: Christian poverty; chastity; obedience to him that shall be commended to me by God and my Religion; true charity—the mother and foundation of all virtue; and the defense of Christianity."

(The postulant then signs the promises which he had written out in longhand before the reception, after which he stands at attention)

Presiding Officer: Assists him to put on a white tunic, saying:

"Receive this habit of little worth as a symbol of your obedience and commitment to Our Lord, Jesus Christ, as an Esquire of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem."

(All return to their prearranged places and are seated)

Chaplain: Speaks of the importance of the religious promises and their meaning, as well as the trial period to follow. Ends with his blessing of the postulant.

Exit Procession: Mass continues at the Credo.

RECEPTION of an ESCORT

Entrance Procession: Standard bearer, presiding officers, chaplain, and postulant. Standard bearer stands to right of altar.

Postulant: Enters the sanctuary and kneels.

Chaplain: Leads all in the recitation of *The Lord's Prayer*, the *Hail Mary*, the *Gloria*, and the *Credo*.

Presiding Officer: "What do you wish, my daughter?"

Postulant: "The mercy of God and an opportunity to serve Our Lord, Jesus Christ, more perfectly as an Escort of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem."

Presiding Officer: "Have you considered well this step you are about to take, and do you make this request of your own free will?"

Postulant: "I have considered it well, and I take this step of my own free will and with joy in my heart."

Presiding Officer: "Will you strive to obey your lawful superiors and be obedient to the Holy Rule of our Order?"

Postulant: "I will endeavor to obey my lawful superiors, the Holy Rule, and statutes, regulations, and ordinances of the Sovereign Order of Saint John, so help me God."

After kneeling, places her right hand upon the Bible and recites in a loud voice:

PROMISES of an ESCORT

"I, _____ (name) _____, promise to Almighty God, to the glorious Blessed Virgin Mary, and to Saint John the Baptist, our patron, that by

the assistance of His grace, I promise within my state in life for a period of _____ years: Christian poverty; chastity; obedience to him that shall be commended to me by God and my Religion; true charity—the mother and foundation of all virtues; and the defense of Christianity.”

(The postulant then signs the promises which she had written out in longhand before the reception, after which she kneels)

Presiding Officer: Places a white veil on her head, saying:

“Receive this veil of little worth as a symbol of your obedience and commitment to Our Lord, Jesus Christ, as an Escort of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem.”

(All return to their prearranged places and are seated)

Chaplain: Speaks of the importance of the religious promises and their meaning, as well as the trial period to follow. Ends with his blessing of the postulant.

Exit Procession: Mass continues at the Credo.

RECEPTION of a SERVING BROTHER/SISTER

Entrance Procession: Standard bearer, presiding officers, chaplain, and postulant. Standard bearer stands to right of altar.

Postulant: Enters sanctuary and kneels.

Chaplain: Leads all in the recitation of *The Lord's Prayer*, the *Hail Mary*, the *Gloria*, and the *Credo*.

Presiding Officer: "What do you wish, my son/daughter?"

Postulant: "The mercy of God and an opportunity to serve Our Lord, Jesus Christ, through the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem."

Presiding Officer: "Have you considered well this step you are about to take, and do you make this request of your own free will?"

Postulant: "I have considered it well, and I take this step of my own free will and with joy in my heart."

Presiding Officer: "Will you strive to obey your lawful superiors, the Holy Rule, and statutes, regulations, and ordinances of our Order?"

Postulant: "I will endeavor to obey my lawful superiors, the Holy Rule, and statutes, regulations, and ordinances of the Order of Saint John, so help me God."

After kneeling, places his/her right hand on the Bible and recites in a loud voice:

PROMISES of a SERVING BROTHER/SISTER

"I, _____ (name) _____, promise for a _____ year period to Almighty God, to the glorious Blessed Virgin Mary, and to Saint John the

Baptist, our patron, that by the assistance of His grace, I promise true obedience within my state of life to him that shall be commended to me by God and my Religion; I promise within my state in life true charity—the mother and foundation of all virtue; I promise within my state in life, henceforth, to live in true Christian poverty; and to observe chastity as it behooves all Catholic and religious persons to do.”

(The postulant then signs the promises which he/she had written out in longhand before the reception)

Presiding Officer: Gives a small Cross to the postulant, saying: “Wear this white Cross as a sign of purity of intention; wear it also within your heart, as well as outwardly, and keep it without soil or stain.”

(All return to their prearranged places and are seated)

Chaplain: Speaks of the Order and its ideals, and the role of service in Christ’s name. Ends with his blessing of the postulant.

Exit Procession: Mass continues at the Credo.

RECEPTION of a PAGE/DAMOSEL

Entrance Procession: Standard bearer, presiding officers, chaplain, parents of postulant, postulant.

Postulant: Enters sanctuary with his/her parents and kneels. Parents stand on either side of postulant.

Chaplain: Leads all in the recitation of *The Lord's Prayer*, the *Hail Mary*, the *Gloria*, and the *Credo*.

Presiding Officer: "What do you wish, my son/daughter?"

Postulant: "The mercy of God and an opportunity to know better Our Lord, Jesus Christ, through the practice of the true Faith."

Presiding Officer: "Have you considered well this step you are taking, and do you make this request of your own free will?"

Postulant: "I have considered it well, and I take this step of my own free will and with joy in my heart."

Still kneeling, places his/her right hand on the Bible and recites in a loud voice:

PROMISES of a PAGE/DAMOSEL

"I, _____ (name) _____, promise for a period of _____ years to Almighty God, to the glorious Blessed Virgin Mary, and to Saint John the Baptist, our patron, that by the assistance of His grace, I promise true obedience to my parents and lawful superiors; I promise true charity—the mother and foundation of all virtue; and to observe chastity as it behooves all Catholic and religious persons to do."

Presiding Officer: Gives a badge of the Order, saying:

“Take this simple reminder of the promises you have made today, and contemplate the meaning of the Cross.”

(All return to their prearranged places and are seated)

Chaplain: Speaks to the postulant and his/her parents about the love of Jesus Christ, the need to know their Faith, and the necessity of performing good works. Ends with a blessing of the postulant.

Exit Procession: Mass continues at the Credo.

**CEREMONY for a KNIGHT/LADY
of HONOR and CHARITY
(Adjunct affiliate or ancient Bondsman)**

Entrance Procession: Standard bearer, presiding officers, candidate.

Candidate: Kneels reverently before the presiding officer, places both hands on the Missal which is held by the Brother who recommended him/her, and recites in a loud voice:

PLEDGE of LOYALTY and SUPPORT

“I, _____ (name) _____, promise to God omnipotent, to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, to Saint John the Baptist, and to the Master of the Religion of Jerusalem; that, to the best of my ability, I shall bring charity and love to the Master, to the Brothers, and to the Order; and I shall defend with all my power them and the goods of the Order, and, being unable to do this, I shall reveal and manifest to them all the things which may harm them and which shall come to my notice; and that I shall not make profession in any other religion outside that of the Order of Jerusalem, in which, if I shall not have made profession, I ask, after my death, to be buried in the cemetery of the Religion; and each year on the feast of the nativity of Saint John the Baptist, I shall donate something to the Order in recognition of the Confraternity.”

Presiding Officer: “Because you have promised the aforementioned things, we make you and your soul, and that of your descendants, partakers in all the divine offices, benefices, prayers, Masses, and pious works that, now and forever, shall be done in our Religion of which Our Lord, Jesus Christ, makes us His instruments.”

The candidate stands and receives the Kiss of Peace from the presiding officer and the other brothers present.

THE OSJ VOWS AND PROMISES

- Vow* A promise made to God, with sufficient knowledge and freedom, which binds a member strictly in conscience to do something that is possible, good, and better than its opposite within his or her state in life.
- Promise* Also a promise made to God to do or not to do a certain thing within one's state in life, but lacking in its very formulation the intention of contracting an obligation in conscience.
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- Poverty* Consists in the renunciation, in the spirit of the Gospel, of the use and fruits of all earthly goods one possesses within one's state in life, depending upon the degree of practice and perfection chosen.
- Chastity* Consists in the absolute vigilance which guards a member against all acts of impurity, both internal and external; and the vow or promise binds within one's state in life depending upon whether such chastity is conjugal, vidual, or perfect. The vow/promise may or may not imply celibacy based upon intent at the time it is taken.
- Obedience* Consists of the promise made to God to obey one's legitimate superiors within the Order in all things which directly or indirectly refer to religious observance and/or participation in the Order's plans, functions, and activities in conformity with the particular rule, statutes, regulations, ordinances, and constitutions of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem.

Charity

Consists in actively cooperating with the Will of God and encompasses a sharing of God's own life as exemplified in the practice of the Eight Beatitudes—a practice of love and service which denies mediocrity. It is a constant gift of self for the benefit of mankind in which all actions are directed towards the greater honor and glory of God.

*Defense of
Christianity*

Consists in an aggressive, positive, and continuous over-reaching to champion the cause of Jesus Christ in the world at every moment and in every conceivable just manner according to the Rule of the Order and the other vows or promises. It requires total commitment, a full realization of the effects and consequences of example, and a never-ending vigilance in support of Christianity.

THE RULE OF
OUR HOLY FATHER AUGUSTINE
(Bishop of Hippo and Illustrious Doctor of the Church)

CHAPTER I

*On the Love of God and Our Neighbor, Unity of Heart
and Common Life*

Before all else, most dearly beloved brethren, love God, then your fellowmen; for these are the chief commandments given to us. Accordingly, we order you who live in the monastery to observe the following precepts:

2. In the first place, live together in harmony and be of one mind and heart in God; for this is the purpose of your coming together.

3. Do not call anything your own, but hold all that you have in common; and let distribution of food and clothing be made by your superior, not to all alike, because all have not the same health, but to each one according to his need. For thus you read in the Acts of the Apostles; that they had all things in common and distribution was made to each, according as anyone had need. (Acts, IV, 32, 35.)

4. When they who held some wealth in the world come to the monastery, let them place it freely in common. But they who had nothing must not seek in the monastery what they could not have in the world; yet whatever their infirmity requires is to be given to them, though in the world they may have been so poor that they could not even have the necessaries of life. Let these not, however, deem themselves happy because they have found food and clothing which they could not have had elsewhere.

CHAPTER II

On Humility

Let them not become proud because they associate with those whom they would not presume to approach in the world; but let their hearts be fixed on higher things, not seeking for the empty things of earth, lest the monastery come to be of advantage to the rich and not to the poor, if the rich are humbled there and the poor become proud.

2. And the rich in turn, who held some place of honor in the world, shall not look down upon those of their brethren who have come into this holy brotherhood from humbler conditions of life. Let it be their aim to glory in the brotherhood of the poor rather than in the high standing of rich kindred. And let these not be elated because they have given something of their wealth to the common store, lest wealth thus become an occasion of pride more even in sharing it with the monastery than if it were enjoyed in the world. For every other kind of sin is concerned with the commission of evil deeds; but pride lurks even in good works, seeking to destroy them. And what advantage is there in giving to the poor, even becoming poor oneself, if the miserable soul is more given to pride in despising riches than it had been in possessing them?

3. Let all, therefore, live together in harmony; and honor God in yourselves, Whose temples you are become.

CHAPTER III

On Prayer and Divine Office

Give yourselves to prayer at the hours and times appointed. In the oratory let no one engage in work for which it was not intended, whence also the oratory has its name. So that if any one has the time and wishes to pray there even outside the hours appointed for prayer, others are not to stand in the way, thinking that they have something else to do there.

2. When you pray to God in psalms and hymns, think in your hearts what your lips are uttering. Chant only what is prescribed to be chanted; moreover, do not chant what was not written for chant.

CHAPTER IV

On Fasting and Refection for Body and Soul

Subdue the flesh, so far as your strength permits, by fasting and abstinence from meat and drink. But if some cannot keep a strict fast, let them take no food outside the hours for meals, unless they are ill.

2. From the time you come to table until you leave, hear what it is the custom to read, without noise or talking, so that while the body takes nourishment, the spirit also may relish the word of God.

CHAPTER V

On the Care of the Sick

But if those who labor under infirmity from their former life in the world are given food different from the others, this ought not to appear offensive to the others, or an injustice to those whom a different condition of life has made sounder in health. Nor should they deem the infirm happy, because they have food which the strong may not have. Let them rather be thankful for the enjoyment of good health, which the others have not.

2. And if something more is given to those who come to the monastery from a more comfortable condition of life in the way of food, clothing, or bedding, they who are stronger, and therefore happier, to whom these things are not given, ought to consider how much these others have given up of the comforts of their former life in the world, although they are as yet unable to attain the simplicity of life practiced by the stronger brethren.

3. Nor should all expect to have what they see granted to a few of the brethren, not for the sake of showing them favor, but out of patient consideration for their infirmity. This would be the source of deplorable disorder: that in the monastic life where, as far as possible, the rich are to be trained to labor, the poor be spoiled by over-indulgent ease.

4. Again, as they who are not in good health must sometimes take less food on account of their illness, so after recovering, they should receive what will quickly restore their strength, even though they have come from the poorest estate in the world. Ill health has given them the same need for special treatment which the rich have from their former habits of life. But when these have recovered their usual strength, let them return to the happier manner of life, which is more befitting the servants of God in proportion as they are bound by fewer needs. And when they have recovered, let them not be held in the bondage of desire for the same nourishment which was necessary while they were sick. They should deem those more truly rich who have been better able to sustain our frugality of life. To want a little is better for us than to have too much.

CHAPTER VI

On Dress and External Comportment

Let your dress be plain. Do not seek to please by your apparel, but by a good life.

2. When you have occasion to leave the monastery, go together; and when you have reached your destination, remain together. In your walk, deportment, dress, and all outward action of the body, let nothing appear that may give offence to others, but only what becomes your holy profession.

3. Although your eyes may perchance turn towards a woman, you may not fix your gaze. You are not forbidden, however, to see women when you are abroad; but to design to see them, or to bring yourself to their notice, is wrong; for it is not by touch or desire alone, but by one's gaze also that disordered affections mutually arise. And do not say that you have a pure mind, if your eyes are unguarded. The eye that is not modest

is a sign of an impure soul. And when unchaste souls meet knowingly in a mutual gaze, even though nothing is said, and take carnal delight in their passion for one another, then is purity of life lost, even though bodily integrity has not been impaired by unchaste actions. And let him who fixes his gaze upon a woman, and who likes to have her gaze rest upon him, not think that he is unobserved on these occasions. He is certainly seen, even by those who he fancies do not see him.

4. But even though this be unobserved by men, shall it therefore be unknown to Him Who sees from on high and from Whom nothing can be concealed? Or is it thought that He does not see, because He is looking on with a patience befitting His Wisdom? Fearing, therefore, to offend God, let the religious man not seek to make himself an occasion of sinful pleasure for those of the opposite sex. Let him not desire to gaze upon a woman lustfully, knowing that God sees all things. For it is just in this connection that fear of the Lord has been recommended to us, where it is written: "An abomination to the Lord is he that fixeth his gaze." (Prov. XXVII, 20.)

5. When, therefore, you are together in church, or wherever those of the opposite sex are present, have a care mutually to keep your hearts pure. Thus by your vigilance over one another, will God, Who dwells within you, grant you protection.

CHAPTER VII

On Fraternal Counsel and Correction

If you notice in any of the brethren this immodesty of the eye of which we are speaking, admonish him at once. Let not the beginnings of evil go unchecked, but correct them as soon as they appear. But if after this admonition, or on any subsequent day, you see him repeating the same fault, then whoever had occasion to discover this, must reveal the offender as one wounded, in need of proper treatment. But first let the offence be made known to two or three, so that the delinquent may be convicted on the testimony of these witnesses, and be punished with due severity.

2. You are not, therefore, to think you are uncharitable when you make

known these faults. Indeed, you are not without blame if, by your silence, you permit a brother to be lost, who might have been saved by a timely correction. For if your brother had a bodily wound which he wanted to conceal for fear of proper treatment, would it not be cruel to keep this secret, and a kindness to make it known? How much more, then, ought you not to tell of a spiritual wound, which may bring death to the soul?

3. But before a fault is made known to the others by whose testimony the culprit is to be convicted, in the event he denies the charge or fails to heed your warning, let the offence first be brought to the notice of the superior, that thus, corrected by private admonition, his fault may not be made known to others. But if he denies the fault, then the others are to be brought in, that in the presence of all the culprit may now be convicted, not by the accusation of one witness, but upon the testimony of two or three.

4. When the charge is proven, let him be punished with a view to his amendment according to the judgment of the superior to whom it pertains. But if he refuses to submit to this punishment, yet will not leave of his own accord, let him be expelled from your brotherhood. This, again, is not done out of cruelty, but from compassion, that his sinful example may not be an occasion of ruin to many others.

5. And let what I have said about not fixing one's gaze, be observed also in regard to other disorders: to find them out, to prevent them, to make them known, to prove and to punish them carefully and in accordance with the truth, with hatred for sin and love for the brother man.

6. But if anyone should offend so seriously as to receive letters secretly from any woman, or any gifts whatever, when he reveals such a fault of his own accord, pardon him and pray for him. But if he is detected and proven guilty, let him be more severely punished with a view to his amendment, according to the judgment of the superior.

CHAPTER VIII

On the Care of Goods of the Community

Let your clothing be kept in one place under the care of one or two, or as many as may be necessary to keep them in good condition and prevent injury from moths. And as you have your food from one common store, so your clothing likewise. And let it be of no great account to you whether, at the change of seasons, each one receives back just what he had put away, or something else, as long as every one receives what he needs.

2. But if murmurings and contentions arise on this account, and someone complains that he has received worse clothing than he had before, or if he thinks that he has been slighted because another has gotten better than he, by this you may know how deficient you are in the interior adornment of the soul, while you make disturbance about the dress of the body. If, however, your infirmities require that each one receive again the same clothing which he had put off, let all still be kept in the same place under the common charge. Thus no one shall work for himself alone; but all your work shall be for the common good, done with greater care and to a better advantage than if each one worked for himself alone.

3. For charity of which it is written, that "it is not self-seeking" (1 Cor. XIII, 5), is understood thus: it prefers the common interests to the good of the individual, not the individual to the common good. In proportion, therefore, as you care for the common good before your own interests, you may know that you are advancing in charity. Thus let charity, which endures forever, rule over all things that minister to the wants of this transitory life.

4. It follows, therefore, that when gifts of clothing, or other necessities of life, are made to kindred or friends living in the monastery, these are not to be appropriated by the individual; but they are to be given over to the superior, that as part of the common store, they may be given out as they are needed.

5. But if anyone secretly keeps something that was thus given to him, he shall be judged as guilty of theft.

CHAPTER IX

On the Care of Clothing, Cleanliness, and Other Temporal Needs of the Brethren

Let your clothing be kept clean according as the superior shall provide, either by yourselves, or by persons employed for the purpose. But let not too much care about the spotlessness of what you wear be the source of interior stains on the soul.

2. Cleanliness of the body also, as the laws of health require, shall be denied to no one. Let this be, however, according to medical advice, without murmuring; so that even if a brother is unwilling, he shall do what the superior orders for the good of bodily health. But if a brother wishes to have what would be harmful, he must not therefore be humored in this; for sometimes that is positively hurtful which you may think to be beneficial, because there is a craving for it. If, finally, it is a question of some internal disorder of the body, you must readily believe what the servant of God says regarding his ailment. But if you are not sure whether what he craves would be good for him in this illness, let a physician then be called in.

3. If there is any need of going to a public bath, or any other place, let at least two or three go together; and when such occasions arise, they must go with those whom the superior shall designate.

4. The care of the sick and the convalescent and those suffering from less serious indispositions of the body shall be entrusted to one of the brethren, so that he may provide from the common store whatever he sees to be necessary for each one.

5. Let him who has charge of food, or clothing, or books, serve his brethren with cheerfulness.

6. Books are to be given out at a fixed hour each day; he that comes outside that hour shall receive nothing.

7. They who have the care of clothing and shoes shall not delay the giving of these when they are needed.

CHAPTER X

On Asking Pardon and Forgiving Offences

Do not engage in a wrangle of words; if they begin, put a stop to them at once, lest anger turn into hatred, and a mote grow into a beam, and the brother incur the guilt of murder in his heart. For thus you read: "Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer." (I John, III, 15.)

2. Let him who has injured another by word of mouth, by abusive or even incriminating language, remember that he ought to be ready to repair the wrong as soon as he can; and he that was offended ought to be ready to forgive. But if both were at fault, then both must yield and both forgive. For this is the express condition of your prayer to God, which you ought to say with greater sincerity the more frequently you repeat it.

3. But he who is easily moved to anger, yet is ready to repair a wrong, is not so much to be blamed as he who, while less easily moved, is too slow to acknowledge his fault. He who will not forgive a brother must not expect to obtain the fulfillment of his prayer. And he who will not ask pardon, or, if he does, yet means it not in his heart, is out of place in the monastery, even though he be not expelled. Be careful, therefore, about harsh or unkind words; if they have escaped your lips, let those same lips be prompt to repair the injury they have caused.

4. But when good order and discipline require you to speak with sternness to those who are under you for their correction, and you are conscious of having been too hard in your manner of correcting, you are not therefore to ask pardon of those who are subject to you; lest by excessive humility towards those who ought to be subject to you, you break down respect for authority, which is necessary for the observance of rule. But ask forgiveness from the Lord of all, Who knows your heart and love even for those whom you may happen to correct with undue severity. But let your love for one another be according to the spirit, not according to the flesh.

CHAPTER XI

On Obedience

Obey your superior as a father, but especially that one who has the first place of authority among you.

2. That these ordinances, therefore, may all be observed, that no disorder be passed over or neglected, but that correction be made for the strengthening of discipline, the immediate superior shall be held responsible. He, in turn, shall refer to the next higher in authority whatever is beyond his power or his right to determine.

3. Let the superior deem himself happy for the opportunity, not of exercising authority, but of serving you in charity.

4. Before his subjects, the superior shall hold a place of honor; but in fear before God, he shall be your humble servant. Let him be for all an example of good works. Let him correct troublemakers, strengthen those who are wavering, console the sick, with patience towards all. Let him embrace regular discipline with all his heart, while imposing it with discretion upon others. While both love and fear are necessary for good government, let him endeavor to make his rule one of love more than fear. Let him remember always that he shall give an account of you to God. Whence you also have further motives for living in due subjection, knowing that the spiritual peril of the superior is greater by reason of the heavier burden of his charge.

CHAPTER XII

On Regular Observance and the Frequent Reading of the Rule

The Lord grant that you may observe these precepts in the spirit of charity, as lovers of spiritual beauty, giving forth the good odor of Christ in the holiness of your lives; not as slaves under the yoke of the law, but as freemen living under the dominion of grace.

2. But that you may look into this Rule as a mirror, that you may neglect no point through forgetfulness, let it be read once a week. And if you find that you have observed its precepts with fidelity, give thanks to God, from Whom all good things proceed. But if a brother sees that he has failed in any point, let him be sorry for the fault, guard against it for the future, praying that he may be forgiven and may not be led into the way of temptation. Amen.

