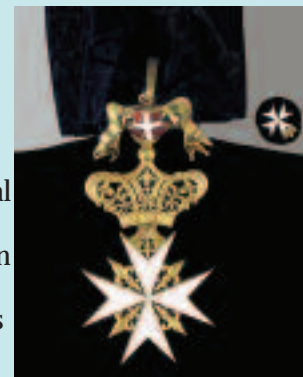


The Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Malta

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The badge of the Order is a four armed Maltese cross, in gold with white enamel and a gold fleurs de lis between each arm (except in the Austrian and Bohemian Grand Priorities, which have a gold eagle between the arms), surmounted by an enclosed royal crown. Knights wear this suspended from a neck badge, dames from a bow. The badge of knights of justice and of honour and devotion is augmented by an elaborate military trophy from which the crown and badge are suspended; knights of grace and devotion have a simplified version of the military trophy; the knights of magistral grace an ornamental gold bow ensigned with the arms of the Order. Knights in obedience wear the badge of the Order with the fleur de lis as a breast star; knights of justice wear the cross of profession, a gold and white enamel cross without the fleurs de lis as a breast star (novices the same cross placed in a gold circlet). Those decorated with the grand cross of justice and honour and devotion wear the neck ribbon with elaborate gold embroidered links imitating the crown of thorns on either edge; bailiffs wear also a plain black riband from the right shoulder to the left hip, those of justice with a plain white cross charged on a black background, those of honour and devotion with a large scale badge of the Order suspended from the crown; knights grand crosses of grace and devotion and magistral grace have a zig-zag line in gold with two narrower gold lines embroidered on each side of their black neck ribbon and, if granted specially, a black riband with a broad white centre stripe (grace and devotion) or red stripe (magistral grace). Dames

of honour and devotion wear the cross and crown suspended from a similar gold bow to that of the cross of knights of magistral grace (with dames grand cross bordering their ribbon with the same gold embroidered decorations as knights of honour and devotion); the badge and crown of dames of grace and devotion is suspended from the plain arms of the Order on the centre of the bow of their ribbon (grand crosses with the same embroidered edges as knights grand cross); dames of magistral grace wear the badge and crown suspended from the ribbon. Dames grand cross of honour and devotion are also entitled to wear the broad black riband from right shoulder to left hip. Chaplains wear the same decoration as knights of magistral grace, suspended from a similar but elongated neck ribbon; chaplains grand cross with the same embroidered edges as grand crosses of grace and devotion and magistral grace. Donats wear the cross with the top arm broken off. The rosette of honour and devotion is the badge in gold; that of grace and devotion is in silver; and that of magistral grace is without the fleurs de lis; each is surmounted by the royal crown.



Order of Malta, knight of Magistral Grace
(Courtesy Hermann Historica)

was first introduced, had to be drawn exclusively from the ranks of the knights of honour or grace and devotion and ranked ahead of all other members of the third class; they were also limited to a maximum of five hundred members of the Order. The recent reforms of the statutes changed their status, so now they rank within the grade they had been admitted before transferring to obedience. Knights in obedience, who have provided the necessary noble proofs for elevation within their class, will remain knights in obedience when being transferred to the higher grade. The members of this class are now divided into bailiffs' knights' grand cross of honour and devotion in obedience, knights or dames grand cross of honour and devotion, grace and devotion or magistral grace in obedience, and knights or dames of honour and devotion, grace and devotion or magistral grace in obedience.

The third class is divided into the categories of (1) honour and devotion (into which rank the Grand Master must have been admitted before election), whose members may be admitted or promoted to the rank of bailiff grand cross, grand cross, commander – for those

who hold a commandery *jus patronatus* (sometimes called family commanderies) – and knight; (2) conventual chaplains, conferred in the ranks of grand cross 'ad honorem', and conventual chaplain 'ad honorem'; (3) grace and devotion, conferred in the ranks of grand cross with riband, grand cross, and knight (there remains the possibility – and indeed there have been in the past – knights of grace and devotion who have received *jus patronatus* commanderies); (4) magistral chaplains; (5) magistral grace, which may be conferred in the ranks of grand cross with riband, grand cross or knight (and, as with grace and devotion, it is possible for knights in this category to found or hold a commandery; and (6) donats.

The headquarters of the order are situated at: Sovrano Militare Ordine di Malta, Via Condotti, 68 00187 Roma – Italia, Tel. +39 06 675811, Fax +39 06 6797202. info@orderofmalta.org, <http://www.orderofmalta.org/>

Guy Stair Sainty