

Governance of the Western Association

Most of the 11,000 members of the Order of Malta worldwide are lay people, who have not taken religious vows or made the Promise of Obedience. These lay members belong to regional associations of the order, of which there are three in the United States: American, Federal and Western. In addition, there is within the Western Association the Sub-priory of Our Lady of Philermo, to which Knights and Dames in Obedience belong. The purpose and structure of the Sub-priory will be described after a presentation of the organization of the Western Association.

The membership of the Western Association elects an eighteen member Board of Directors to direct the work of the Association, and the members of this Board choose the Executive Committee. These officers are:

President: coordinates the activities of the association

Chancellor: assists the President, and fills in for President as needed

Secretary: takes minutes and maintains records of meetings

Treasurer: oversees financial affairs of the Association

Hospitaller: coordinates charitable activities of the Association

Regional Vice-Presidents: coordinate regional meetings and investitures

There are also ex-officio members of the Board of Directors who have voice but no vote: a conventual chaplain, the immediate past president, and the chairmen of the Lourdes and Membership committees.

The entire membership of the Association meets twice annually, and for Mass on or near the feast of St. John the Baptist. Regional meetings of members also take place regularly.

2005 Officers of the Western Association

Richard B. Madden
President

William V. Regan III
Chancellor

Marybeth Barrett
Vice-President Northern California

Thomas J. Condon
Vice-President Southern California

Eugene C. Payne III
Hospitaller

J. Malcolm Visbal
Treasurer

Robert J. Stein, MD
Secretary

Rev. Msgr. Steven D. Otellini, JCD
Chief Chaplain

2005 Directors of the Western Association

Michael K. Grace

Robert H. Kilmartin

L.J. Michael Lambert

Robert W. Morey, Jr.

Francis L. Nageotte

Willa O'Day Olsen, MD

Patrick A. Ortiz

Raymond A. Rodeno

Kenneth E. Tait

George J. Tichy II

Sherry Van Meter

EX OFFICIO

Robert E. Bond
Honorary President

Rev. Msgr. Steven D. Otellini
Chief Chaplain

The Sub-Priory of Our Lady of Philermo

Since most members of the Order of Malta are lay people, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that it is a religious order. However, at the core of the Order stand the Professed Knights, who take vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. When there are at least five of these in a given country or region, it is possible to establish a Priory. Between this small group of professed members and the larger lay membership there are Knights and Dames “in Obedience.” These men and women oblige themselves by a special promise to seek a life of religious perfection in the spirit of the order. When there are at least nine members in Obedience, it is possible to establish a Sub-priory. The Sub-priory of Our Lady of Philermo was established in the Western Association in 2002, the first Sub-priory in the United States.

Members of the Sub-priory participate in the charitable and religious activities of the Association, and make their annual financial contribution to the Association. While all members of the Order of Malta are called upon to live exemplary lives, those in obedience resolve to embrace a deeper spiritual commitment to the ideals of the Order. The *Code* of the Order specifies that those in obedience do not enjoy privileges or precedence with respect to other members of the Order; rather, they should be marked out by greater zeal for the work of the Order and a hunger for holiness.

The Organization of the Sub-priory

Chapter: The Chapter is made up all those living within the jurisdiction of the Western Association who are Knights of Justice, professed Conventual Chaplains, or Knights and Dames in Obedience. The Chapter elects the Regent and members of the Council.

Regent: The Regent presides over the Sub-priory, and is elected by the members of the Chapter and confirmed by the Grand Master and Sovereign Council. The Regent convenes the Council and Chapter of the Sub-priory, and represents the Sub-priory in its relations with the Grand Master, the government of the Order and others.

Council: To assist the Regent the Chapter elects several Councilors, who are also confirmed by the Grand Master and the Sovereign Council. The first of these is the Vice-Regent, who assists the Regent and assumes his responsibilities when circumstances demand. The Chancellor serves as secretary to the Council and Chapter, and the Treasurer oversees financial matters. Two councilors at large are also elected; one councilor may be a dame. It is the responsibility of the Council to provide for spiritual exercises for members of the Sub-priory, and it may also submit proposals to the Grand Master.

The Regent and Council are elected for a six-year term, and are eligible to serve a further three years. In addition, there is a Chaplain for the Sub-priory appointed by the Prelate of the Order.

Officers of the Sub-Priory of Our Lady of Philermo

His Excellency Richard J. Dunn
Regent

Leo J. Poxon
Vice-Regent

His Excellency Richard B. Madden
Chancellor

Herman L. Carmassi
Treasurer

Robert E. Bond
John J. O'Brien
Councilors

The Right Reverend Eugene J. Hayes, O Praem, JCD
Chief Chaplain