



NEWSLETTER OF THE ORDERS OF CONSTANTINE THE GREAT AND OF SAINT HELEN

Volume 6, Issue 1 — June 2012

Looking to the future...

As we resume the important works and business of our Order following the sad and untimely passing of His Grace Michael Schmickrath, The charitable works, which we have supported world-wide with more than \$100,000, continue to need our help. The policy of our Grand Council has been to provide smaller grants to worthy causes and needy individuals who might otherwise be overlooked by the larger national and international charities. Charity is one of the cornerstones of the "Knightly Renaissance" that each of us in the Order is an integral part of. The funding comes, in part, from our annual financial obligation to the Order – the dues. Additional funds are generated by individual donations from our members.

We have a number of exciting opportunities in the planning stages, including commemoration events for the Feast of Saint Helen, Investiture in Beverly Hills, an Investiture in Hawaii and our late October visit to Rome for the ceremonies commemorating the 1700th anniversary of Emperor Constantine's victory over the Roman pagans in the year 312 AD.

Working closely with our International Priories, we plan to offer overseas adventures for our members to two fascinating countries each year, where we will participate in Investitures, tours, major local cultural and entertainment events and more. We are also in discussions with other International Orders of Knighthood around the globe to participate with them in a variety of activities. As you will note from reading through the various articles in this edition of "The Constantinian", our Order is active and involved. Please step forward and join us.



Feast of Saint Helen



Helena was reputed to have been born in Asia Minor, however Some people believe that she came from Colchester in Essex; this being the Roman capital in Britain at the time. She was considered a Briton by the British.

It was suggested that Constantius, could have met her while stationed in Asia Minor for the campaign against Zenobia while serving under Emperor Aurelian. It is said that upon meeting they were wearing identical silver bracelets; Constantius saw her as his soul-mate sent by God. The precise legal nature of the relationship between Helena and Constantius is also unknown, sometimes calling Helena Constantius' "wife", and sometimes calling her his "concubine". Some scholars assert that Constantius and Helena were joined in a common-law marriage, a cohabitation recognized in fact but not in law. While others, assert that Constantius and Helena were joined in an official marriage. Constantius divorced Helena some time before 289, in order for him to marry a woman closer to his stature in the Royal house. Helena and her son were dispatched to the court of Diocletian at Nicomedia, where Constantine grew to be a member of the inner circle. Helena never remarried and lived for a time in obscurity, though close to her only son, who had a deep regard and affection for her.

She embraced Christianity late in life; but her incomparable faith and piety greatly influenced her son Constantine, the first Christian emperor, and served to kindle a holy zeal in the hearts of the Roman people.

She often forgot her high dignity and position. She was often found assisting at the Divine Office amid the poor, and by her deeds showed herself a mother and friend to the indigent and distressed.

At the fine age of 80, she made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. It was her heart's desire to discover the cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified. After many labors, three crosses were found on Mount Calvary along with the nails and the inscription recorded by the Evangelists. It still remained to identify the true cross of Our Lord. Taking the advice of Bishop Macarius, the three were applied successively to a woman afflicted with an incurable disease. No sooner had the third touched her than she arose, perfectly healed. Helen, filled with joy, built a glorious church on Mount Calvary to receive the precious relic. She also sent portions of it to Rome and Constantinople, where they were solemnly exposed to the adoration of the faithful.

In the year 312, Constantine found himself attacked by Maxentius with vastly superior forces, and the very existence of his empire was threatened. In this crisis he thought of the crucified Christian God whom his mother worshiped, and kneeling down, prayed for God to reveal Himself and give him the victory. The story continues that at noon of that day, a cross of fire was seen by his army in the calm and cloudless sky, and beneath it the words, *In hoc signo vinces*—"Through this sign thou shalt conquer." By divine command, Constantine made a standard like the cross he had seen, which was carried at the head of his troops; and under this Christian ensign they marched against the enemy. Constantine and his troops won the battle of the Milvian Bridge along with a complete victory. Shortly after this battle, Helena returned to Rome, where she died in 328.

In celebration of Saint Helen, her devotion to spirituality and her service to people of all statures in life, August 18th is celebrated worldwide as St Helen's Feast Day.

Annual Visit to Finland February 2012

Article submitted by Anneli Rajaniemi; Photos: Susanna Honkasalo

Each year, new eminent knights and ladies are invested into the Order and knighted in Finland. The Finnish Division has organized these events, where in recent years more than a hundred people were witness to the solemn ceremony. This year, the members enjoyed the evening's program. The last investiture took place in the beginning of February 2012.

Another highlight of the evening's celebration is to grant scholarships to students. In the past few years, young leaders, who have shown honor, established ethical morals and actively engaged in service, have been chosen. This year scholarships were granted to five exceptional young leaders.



New knights and ladies in Helsinki.

In Finland, the Imperial and Charitable Order of Constantine the Great and Saint Helen is active. During the past year, member participated in organized events which included lectures on heraldry and knighthood, and interesting topics related to international affairs. Also planned excursions to culturally and historically interesting places have kept members, their families and friends very active.



Grand Prior Pertti Jalasvirta grants a scholarship to Cadet Staff Sergeant Antti Pajuranta.

The division in Finland and the ScanBaltic area was established less than 10 years ago and has grown from a small group of twenty Knights and Ladies to many times larger. The division acts and keeps in contact with members according to its operational and informational plan. This plan was recently edited and released in brochure format. Squires and Ladies-in-Waiting are also active within the division.



Knights of the Order – Finland & ScanBaltic Division

This year, there is an excursion to Rome planned to visit the Milvian Bridge, where Constantine the Great won the forces of Maxentius 1700 years ago.

News from Around the Globe



Armenia

In the autumn of 2011, the Order of Constantine and Saint Helen was created in Armenia, Eastern Europe. The Prior is Sir Edward Cook. Members include Ray Reader, Jivon Vardanyan, Lusine Mkrtchyan and Ruzan Mkrtchyan .

Sir Ray Reeder is an American, a former Peace Corps Volunteer, who married there. Living in Armenia in the dark days of the middle 90s, Sir Ray has worked there to further education.

Sir Jivon, a chess master, teaches chess and works in the community.

Lady Lusine works for the US Embassy in Yerevan, organizes seminars in the region. She earned her MA from the American University of Armenia, and is fluent in English. Lusine Lady Ruzan is a graduate of Linguistic University of Armenia. Recently she was sent to Germany and the Russian Federation by the Council of Europe. In Nalchik, the topic was mutual understanding of the Caucasus's.



Burning Star, NGO, whose mission is community service, information, and education, is supported by the Order. They have produced films in Armenian and English. Burning Star works with the mentally challenged and presents classes in health to 20,000 community students.

Pacific Northwest

After many attempts to have a get together, only to cancel due to inclement weather, the Pacific Northwest Priory finally met in Hood River. The day was full of sun, surprises, and great fellowship.

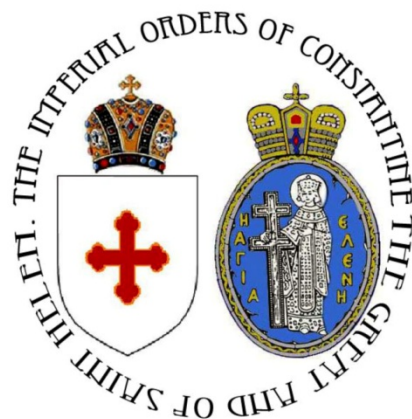


H.E. John Quiroz promoted Sir Robert Keller to Prior for the Pacific Northwest Priory, Sir Aaron Jubitz was presented with his certificate assigning him Sargent at Arms for the Order. Finally, Cameron Methvin was inducted as a Squire for the Order and assigned Sir Aaron Jubitz for training, guidance and chivalric direction.



Upcoming Events:

Meet & Greet California – June 23, 2012
Investiture Hawaii
Feast of St Helen
California Investiture
Rome Celebration – October 2012
Annual Toys for Tots – Winter 2012



Promotions:

Sir Robert Keller – Prior for the Pacific Northwest Priory
Sir Bradley Niederhauser – Prior for California
H.E. William Wenger - Commander for The Republic of Georgia
Sir Ron Dunn – Commander for Virginia
Sir Aaron Jubitz – Sergeant at Arms for the Order
Sir Shafiq Hasan - Chancellor for Administration

Celebrate the 1700th Anniversary of the Victorious Battle of Milvian Bridge in ROME

Travel with members of the Order of Constantine the Great and Saint Helen to a Grand Event in Rome 2012. Members from Belgium, Finland, United States, and other countries will be gathering for the Festival of Constantine. Set your calendars and plan to join us in Rome during the last week of October 2012.

Contact your local Prior for more information about this momentous once in a lifetime adventure.



Columbia

Our Church, in its religious significance and in its secular connotation, has faithfully preserved, not only Orthodox Catholicism and the consciousness of the original Christian faith, but also the ethos, the substance of Christ's teaching, this is: the ethics of love.



It shows that we are not alone, it is precisely with love, effort and dedication each time we begin a project.

This year we decided to benefit more children than last year (2011) with school supplies and of course, this Once a kit will cover 5,800 for each child.

Is Great and Wonderful God? IMMENSELY BIG AND WONDERFUL!

