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The World's Oldest Order of Westsiders' Knights Joins with the Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem

An Interesting Historic Story at Christmas Time

By Dame Adrienne Papp | December 08, 2011

It seems amazing that this day and age with our high-tech wizards and 3D special effects /virtual reality there is still an enduring organization with its chivalric principles dating back to antiquity. The fact that the oldest Order in the world, established by the son of Constantine The Great of the Roman Empire, can still exist in southern California and not just historic Europe is a testimony to the strength of the values that have survived for the past 1700 years.



Constantine the Great

An ancient Order of Knighthood with true human and historic principles that I had the pleasure of experiencing during a recent Investiture ceremony held in Pasadena, Calif.

The elegant and classic black tie dinner held to honor more than twenty citizens for their exemplary career achievements and contributions to both global and local communities, people like world-renowned medical doctor, Dr. Zein Obagi and his wife Mrs. Samar Obagi, who both have contributed to the science of skin health and beauty. These inductees are now part of an honorable order that had its origins back in 330 A.D.

The Imperial & Charitable Order of Constantine the Great & of Saint Helen is an Order of Knighthood, founded in 330 A.D., whose members are dedicated to the chivalric principles of personal honor, courage, integrity, duty, and service.

To give you an idea as to its historic lineage, the order is named in honor of the victory of Constantine in 312, also known as Constantine the Great, who was a revolutionary Roman Emperor and lived from 27 February 272 – 22 May 337. Also known as Constantine I, Saint Constantine, or most frequently Constantine the Great was the Emperor of Rome from 306 to 337 and was well known for being the first Roman emperor to convert to Christianity. Constantine and co-Emperor Licinius also issued the Edict of Milan in 313 A.D., a document that proclaimed religious tolerance of all religions throughout the empire. The foremost general of his time, Constantine fought successfully against the Franks, Alamanni, Visigoths, and Sarmatians during his reign – even resettling parts of Dacia

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which had been abandoned during the previous century. Constantine built a new imperial residence in place of Byzantium, naming it Constantinople, which would later be the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire for over one thousand years. Following this, he became Western Augustus, ruler of the entire Western Roman Empire until his death in 337. Constantine's visionary leadership and religious tolerance are considered major factors in the spread of Christianity.



His Grace, The Duke of Gardham,

The Order's connection to Saint Helen also provides a direct line to one of the earliest and most devout Christians. Saint Helen was married to a Roman General, Constantius Chlorus, and became the mother of Constantine the Great. 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 fervor in the hearts of the Roman people. Forgetful of her high social standing, she offered assistance to poor among the lower social strata. When she was eighty, Saint Helen made a famous pilgrimage to Jerusalem, intent on discovering the cross on which Jesus Christ had been crucified. After a thorough investigation, three crosses were found on Mount Calvary. Saint Helen built a beautiful Basilica on Mount Calvary to receive the precious relic, sending portions of it also to Rome and Constantinople, where they were solemnly exposed to the faithful. She built two other famous churches in Palestine to honor the sacred sites of the life of Jesus, one at the site of His Ascension, and the other, known as the Basilica of the Nativity, in Bethlehem, which she and her son richly adorned. Her remains are now located at the church of the Abbey at Hautvillers in France.

The virtues of Constantine the Great and Saint Helen are celebrated by The Imperial & Charitable Order of Constantine the Great & Saint Helen, which recognizes men and women of exceptional accomplishment and service without regard to race, religion, or nationality and offers them an invitation to become part of their benevolent organization. As I watch the colorful procession of cloaks and flags and then finally the Investiture ceremony, I get a sense of being in a House of Royalty with all its dignified rituals and pageantry. I also get a distinct feeling that all of this is connected to an ancient lineage and tradition of chivalric principles expressed in the knightly orders of history. As each of the new Knights and Ladies are honored, they are celebrated for being highly successful in their life's work and now joining a tradition that will allow them to encourage and inspire young people and the less fortunate, and provide a model of leadership and strength of spirit, which are the foundation of our civilization.

The ceremonies include such dignitaries as Dr. Tae Yun Kim, Dame Commandatrice, the founder, owner and CEO of the highly successful, worldwide technology company, Lighthouse Worldwide Solutions. She started this business venture without any knowledge or experience in business, relying only on her strong faith in God, her business acumen, and the vision she had received through fasting and prayer. The leadership of the Order, however, realized that Dr. Kim was not just a successful businesswoman, but was a true warrior, and therefore accepted her fully into Knighthood/Ladyship. Also honored was Edmund Kelii Silva, Jr. who is the direct lineal descendent of King Kamehameha the Great, and heir to the throne of the kingdom of Maui before King Kamehameha the Great unified the lands. On November 22, 2002, the prime minister of the Hawaiian kingdom, along with the Council of Regency, Na Kupuna Council O' Hawai'i Nei, the Na Kupuna Council Hawai'i Moku of the legislative body of government, and the Royal Kupunas of the House of Nobles jointly proclaimed that His Highness, Silva Jr. is the lawful successor to Ali'i Nuis (High Chiefs) of ancient Hawai'i. Both Dr. Kim and His Royal Highness, Edmund Kelii Silva Jr. were honored by being made Priors of their local area of the Order.

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As each of the honorees are sworn into this noble Order, they are also made aware that charity, though it often begins at home, continues on into other parts of the world. The Order, as constituted by its modern Knights and Dames, selects candidates from all professions and inspires them to return to the chivalric values of mankind. The Order also has affiliations with similar Orders in many parts of the world who also remain actively committed to making the world a better place to live. The Imperial & Charitable Order of Constantine the Great & of Saint Helen now has a growing presence in 23 countries and still growing. To make sure that their efforts don't go unnoticed, the Order appointed Dame Adrienne Papp in January of 2011 to be the public officer, or in our modern language publicist, for the organization. Thus, like tradition allows through Dame Adrienne a new person can be invested into the Order as a Knight or a Dame upon acceptance.

Next year the Order will visit the Vatican, and various battle fields in Rome, to celebrate the seventeenth-hundred anniversary of the victory of Constantine the Great in 312 A.D. While no longer required to maintain a "battle-trained horse, three lances and armor in good repair," the Dames and Knights of the Imperial and Charitable Order of Constantine the Great and of Saint Helen continue to grow and prosper, expanding their influence and chivalric values everywhere. Since 2005, this Order of Knighthood has raised and donated many hundreds of thousands of dollars for the less fortunate and will continue to do so with the help of its growing membership. It's all part of the organization's sworn pledge to uphold the traditional and historic values of personal honor, courage and service to others.

One the Order's newest affiliation is with The Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem. The Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem is an international organization primarily established to aid and assist in Hospitaller and philanthropic work in the various continents in which it operates. Its Grand Pories and Commanderies are very active throughout the world. Originally a medieval military, religious it played a military role from 1120 to about the beginning of the 16th century, with military activities centered in the Holy Land helping to hold it for Christianity. In its religious aspect, the Order was originally comprised of monks taking the triple vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. After the Crusades, the Order's religious character was maintained by means of its chaplains, its Religious Protector, its Spiritual Grand Prior, its rules, services and traditions. Members were expected to live their lives in the spirit of ecumenical Christian charity.

American officers were elected, providing the necessary protocol to consecrate the Grand Priory of the United States, on July 23, 2011 in the Chapel of St. Francis of Assisi in Riverside, California, USA.

Led by the Very Reverend Thomas Mount as Grand Prior, Lazerites have already shown a strong dedication to Hospitaller work, raising funds to for instance purchase a specialized Moto-Med machine, which was provided to assist a 22-year old woman who was permanently paralyzed in an accident. "We believe that the U.S. Grand Priory will indeed be one of the leading Grand Pories within the order in the coming years," commented Dr. Max J. Ellul. "We have seen a gigantic effort within the U.S. team of officers, led by Dame Karen Cantrell CLJ, have exercised in order to create a foundation for such a Grand Priory and are positively assured that their Hospitaller work in the U.S. will be an example to all."

"The Order is for individuals with a strong will and a desire to become a better person and volunteer for humanity to help preserve honorable traditions and help make a better world," says Dame Cantrell. "If you need to give up something luxurious in your life in order to help, please do so" she adds with sincere tears in her eyes. She is genuine, dedicated and a not only a beautiful woman, but a beautiful spirit.

If anyone believes that the principles of knighthood and chivalry are dead, then



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they haven't been exposed to the phenomenal work that some of our modern Knights and Dames (or as commonly referred to in Europe, Ladies) are doing. To see the work done by The Imperial & Charitable Order of Constantine the Great & Saint Helen and The Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem is to experience a shining light that was lit back in the year 312 and continues to be a beacon of benevolence and charity for all to this day through its dedicated leaders and members.

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Comments to date: 2. Page 1 of 1. Average Rating: ★★★★★

Rev. Sherra C. Stephens-Jarrells, L.H.D.
Mooreville, NC

10:23am on Tuesday, December 13th, 2011

★★★★★

I am very happy about the 2 orders working together...Matthew 18:20, "For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst."...Blessings are assured. Rev. Sherra C. Stephens-Jarrells, L.H.D., Commander of the Commandery of North Carolina, Hospitaller Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem

Dr Edmond Wallace
California

12:21pm on Friday, December 9th, 2011

★★★★★

BRAVO! It is fantastic to see 2 Orders working together for the good of those in need!

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