

**Speech by HE Mr Anthony Bailey, OBE, GCSS,
Delegate for Great Britain and Ireland of the
Sacred Military Constantinian Order of St George**

on the occasion of the investiture of

**His Excellency Archbishop Antonio Mennini,
Apostolic Nuncio the Court of St James's**

Apostolic Nunciature London SW19

21 June 2012.

Your Excellency

As the Constantinian Order's Delegate for Great Britain and Ireland it is my distinct honour to be here at the Apostolic Nunciature and to present to you on behalf of our Grand Master, The Duke of Castro, and our Grand Prior, Cardinal Martino, the singular distinction of an Ecclesiastical Knight Grand Cross of Grace of the Sacred Military Constantinian Order of St George.

Your Excellency's tireless efforts in representing the Holy Father and the Holy See abroad including postings in Sofia, Moscow and now the Court of St James's have been highly valued as has your special contribution to ecumenical relations between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox and Anglican Churches.

As Your Excellency is no doubt aware the Constantinian Order has had knights and dames in Britain for well over two hundred years and in other parts of Europe for hundreds of years before that. Our membership is a diverse one and covers all aspects of national and community life.

Today we are an Order of Knighthood recognised by decree of the President of the Italian Republic and by other governments across the world. In 2011 the Constantinian Order was also granted Consultative Status at the United Nations.

The Constantinian Order has also had a long and fruitful association with the Papal States, the Apostolic See and the global Catholic Church. We are proud of our historic roots as well as our relationship today which is best illustrated by the membership within our Order of over 100 cardinals and archbishops and who offer our worldwide membership much valued direction in their religious life.

In Britain we are equally proud to have Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor as our Prior and Archbishop Vincent Nichols of Westminster and Archbishop George Stack of Cardiff among our senior chaplains. I am delighted also that several of your predecessors as Apostolic Nuncio are members of the Order including Archbishop Luigi Barbarito.

Your Excellency

The Constantinian Order today is actively involved in the defence and promotion of the Roman Catholic faith and together with the multi-faith Royal Order of Francis I, undertakes spiritual, humanitarian, hospitaller, charitable and inter-religious initiatives across Britain and the world.

In becoming a senior member and chaplain of our Order today, I ask that Your Excellency bless our knights and dames and the work which our Delegation undertake in pursuit of these noble goals and mission.

Your Excellency

In times past some Orders of Knighthood granted special privileges to new recipients. Some were for example given the right to ride on horseback in church or be granted titles, or have their tax obligations cancelled, or who were granted special access to the throne rooms of Europe whilst wearing elaborate golden uniforms and carrying swords. Sadly Your Excellency's nomination has come a few years too late for this.

Nevertheless the Grand Master, Prince Carlo of Bourbon Two Sicilies, Duke of Castro, and the Grand Prior Renato Raffaele Cardinal Martino, wish to recognise your long service to our universal Church and society at large.

It is therefore my honour in the name of His Royal Highness and His Eminence to invite you to receive this insignia and diploma of an Ecclesiastical Knight Grand Cross of Grace of the Sacred Military Constantinian Order of St George.