



**SPEECH OF HE MR ANTHONY BAILEY, OBE, GCSS,
DELEGATE FOR GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND OF
THE SACRED MILITARY CONSTANTINIAN ORDER OF
ST GEORGE**

**ST GEORGE'S DAY DINNER
IN HONOUR OF THE GRAND PRIOR
HIS EMINENCE
CARDINAL RENATO RAFFAELE MARTINO
ARMOURERS' HALL - 26 APRIL 2013**

Your Serene Highness, Your Illustrious Highness, Your Eminences, Your Excellencies, Your Grace, My Lord Bishops, Field Marshal, My Lords, Reverend Fathers, Ladies and Gentlemen, Knights and Dames.

As Delegate it is my great pleasure to welcome you all here this evening to the magnificent settling of Armourers' Hall.

In particular, and under these precious George II candelabra I would like to begin by welcoming our Grand Prior and our Guest of Honour this evening.

The Constantinian family has several thousand knights and dames throughout the world, but all our united under our one spiritual head, His Eminence, Renato Raffaele Cardinal Martino.



I would like to extend a special word of special welcome to our Delegation Prior, Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, Archbishop emeritus of Westminster and wish to thank him for honouring us once again with your presence.

May I also welcome Their Excellencies the Ambassadors and the Charge d'affaires of Albania, Bulgaria, Iraq and Italy as well as the President of the Anglo Arab Organisation and Mrs Nadhmi Auchi.

From Ireland I would like to warmly welcome our three learned visitors from the emerald isle, the Order's Vice Delegate for Ireland, Professor Richard Conroy, the President of the Association of Papal Orders in Ireland, Professor Vincent McBrierty and Professor Sarah Rogers who was invested earlier today.

Looking north of the border, may I also welcome The Duke of Abercorn and his son the Marquess of Hamilton. Your Grace, your longstanding and lifelong commitment to the peace process in Ireland, your voice of reason in difficult times, and your support to countless charitable causes across these islands is much valued and appreciated.

And whilst our Order's gold medal cannot in anyway be compared with the Order of the Garter bestowed on you by Her Majesty, I hope you will cherish it nonetheless!

I would also like to warmly welcome our confrere Fra John Dunlap, member of the Sovereign Council of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta which on Sunday will mark here in London the 900th anniversary of the Papal Bull which founded it.



The Constantinian Order has enjoyed a very long association with the Order of Malta having among its membership rolls numerous Prince and Grand Masters. May I ask Your Excellency to extend the warmest good wishes of all here present to our confrere and your Prince and Grand Master, Fra Matthew Festing. It is very much hoped that His Most Eminent Highness will find time in his busy agenda to honour us with his presence.

May I also welcome the head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Britain, Bishop Lonchyna. My Lord you are most welcome and the Order is delighted that through you we now establish a formal relationship with your community which this year celebrated the Holy Father's decision to raise your community to a eparchial Bishopric of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Holy Family in London.

I would also like to mention our guests from overseas and especially welcome my good and dear friends Cyril and Lorna Woods from Mexico. Cyril's promotion to Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Order of Francis I is a remarkable achievement and recognition long overdue.

Finally may I welcome our new knight William Jeffcock from Monaco and Scot McMillian who has travelled from the United States to be with us.



Your Eminence,

We are delighted that a few moments ago the Chamberlain of London declared you the youngest Freeman of the City of London.

I don't know if Your Eminence is fully aware of the privileges which come with being a freemen. You can wander through this City with your sword drawn at any time you like; and you have the right, when drunk and disorderly, to be escorted back by the watches – although whether back to Vatican City I am not clear. And there used to be a right that allowed Freemen to bring sheep across London Bridge.

Tonight's dinner mixes the long traditions of our Constantinian Order, with the ancient guild and livery traditions of the City of London. Both originate in an era when solidarity went along with discipline, righteousness and faith. There is an inseparability of the religious and the mundane in our medieval city.

Like our ancient Orders, Guilds were extended families, assisting people through times of crisis, gathering resources and relationships and channeling them to make the world a better place – but always imbued with religious faith, captured in the title of “worshipful company” which the Guilds still use today.

Cardinal Martino joins us at a very unique moment in the life of the worldwide Catholic Church having witnessed the historic resignation of a highly respected Pope, Benedict XVI and the



election of Francis as our new Supreme Pontiff.

After many years of service as a Vatican diplomat serving in many corners of the globe, he has been Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and President of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant Peoples.

I know we are all looking forward to hearing from you later this evening about our new Holy Father, Pope Francis and the new priorities he will set for us all.

Honoured Guests, 2013 is a very important year for our Order and for Christians across the world.

This year we mark the 1700th anniversary of Emperor Constantine's famous Edict of Milan which was decreed in February 313 and granted Christians and indeed others the freedom to practice their faith without fear of persecution.

This decree marks in many ways the beginning of the Christian foundation of European civilization.

This anniversary may also prove to be an appropriate time when those of us of faith should reflect on those centuries old foundations of our society.

This should be felt all the more at a time when for many there is a strong sense that our Christian and wider faith values are being tested and challenged by an increasingly secular society which sadly, at times, appears intolerant in its approach to matters of faith and the views of faith communities in this country.



As an Order headquartered in Rome, we also celebrate the Golden Jubilee of our formal recognition by the Italian State through successive decrees of the President and the Government of the Italian Republic. May I welcome therefore in a special way the Charge d'affaires of Italy, Mr Marco Mancini.

On Monday the Order will also play its role in marking the 150th anniversary of the Italian Catholic Church in Britain. We are delighted that the ever-cheerful Fr Carmello Di Giovanni is with us together and who was himself invested into the Order this afternoon.

2013 will also mark our Grand Master's 50th birthday a few weeks ago as well the 80th birthday of our Grand Prior Cardinal Martino and our Prior Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor.

We also celebrate the Order's granting of Consultative Status of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations in New York, Geneva and Vienna. We will also mark our Order's formal recognition by the Governments of Hungary, Albania, Montenegro and Colombia.

During the past year our Delegation hosted in the presence of our Grand Master, The Duke of Castro, the Faith In Sport Royal Gala Dinner which was held to celebrate the role of faith in the Olympic movement. Our Delegation was delighted to receive 57 delegations from across the world including several at Head of State, Head of Government, Crown Prince or Ministerial level.



We also held a reception to Cardinal Cormac's reception at the Hungarian Embassy and hosted an investiture ceremony at the Nunciature for the Apostolic Nuncio to London, Archbishop Antonio Mennini.

Looking ahead we will see the investiture of both the Chief Minister and the Bishop of Gibraltar in to the Order which will continue a 300-year association with the Rock.

I am pleased that continuing the Order's interest in prisons, that Cardinal Martino will pay a visit to HMP Pentonville on Monday and celebrate mass and meet inmates. .

I am pleased also that as part of our ecumenical projects His Eminence will visit as a guest of the Dean, St Paul's Cathedral which only days ago hosted a very moving funeral for our late delegation dame, Baroness Thatcher.

As part of my desire to broaden the national reach of the Order in Britain I have also appointed two highly distinguished Vice Delegates for Scotland and Wales in Field Marshal Lord Guthrie and the Rt Hon Paul Murphy MP. May I also at this point thank by fellow Council Members, some of whom are present this evening, and to the Chancery staff for all their efforts in making today happen.

Our commitment to our charitable causes continues a pace and for those able to I urge all our members and their friends to consider supporting further one or more of our adopted



Charities. Such support and your attendance at our events and masses are at the heart of all what we stand for.

Happy St George's Day and as Cardinal Martino declared to all our new knights and dames IN HOC SIGNO VINCES.

Thank you very much.