



**SPEECH OF HE MR ANTHONY BAILEY, OBE, GCSS,**

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RELIGIOUS RELATIONS  
AND DELEGATE FOR GREAT BRITAIN AND  
IRELAND OF THE SACRED MILITARY  
CONSTANTINIAN ORDER OF SAINT GEORGE**

**ARMOURERS' HALL - 25 APRIL 2014**

Distinguished Guests, Knights and Dames.

It gives me very great pleasure as Delegate of the Constantinian Order in Great Britain and Ireland to warmly welcome each of you this evening to this our annual dinner.

It is particularly pleasing to be able to do so in the week when our worldwide Order and this nation celebrate the great Feast of St George.

This is felt all the more, and I hope you will agree, being in the magnificent setting of Armourers' Hall surrounded as we are by its many treasures, its beautiful candlelit chandeliers and its countless references to chivalry, faith and St George.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have many distinguished guests here tonight and may I begin welcoming most warmly our much loved Sub Prior, Archbishop George Stack who has travelled from Cardiff to be with us today together with a good number of worthy Welshmen and women. Your Grace you are most welcome.

I would also like to bid a hearty welcome in the name of the Grand Master and the Cardinal Grand Prior, to the many distinguished national ecumenical leaders here present including Russian Archbishop Elisey of Sourozh, Greek Archbishop Gregorios of Thyateira, Egyptian Coptic Bishop Angaelos, Armenian Bishop Vahan, Canon Christopher Tuckwell from Westminster Cathedral, Monsignor Vincent Brady from the Apostolic Nunciature and the Secretary General of the Muslim Council of Wales Mr Saleem Kidwai. Your Eminences, Your Graces, My Lords, Reverend Fathers, Gentlemen, you are all most welcome.

Finally may I also note with pleasure the presence of our guest speaker newly arrive Italian Ambassador Pasquale Terracciano and Mrs Karen Lawrence Terracciano, former Chief Minister of Gibraltar the Hon Sir Peter Caruana who hosted 10 years ago the formal visit to Gibraltar of our Grand Master and past Grand Prior Cardinal Pompedda.

I see tonight former Lord Mayor of London Sir Gavyn Arthur, former Knight Principal Lord Lingfield, Catholic champion Lord Brennan together with Lady Brennan, the Acting Mayor of Richmond upon Thames, Cllr Clare Head as well as our globe trotting long distance and ever supportive Cyril and Lorna Woods who have travelled especially from Mexico, Martin

Vorderwülbecke and his family from Germany and William Jeffcock from the USA.

You are all most welcome.

May I finally welcome my mother-in-law, Princess Christine von Hohenberg from Salzburg and to welcome my wife Marie-Therese who with patience and a smile continues to allow me to disappear for days on end organising with my team event like this!

Ladies and Gentlemen

During the past year the Delegation has grown in number and today's investiture further illustrated this point. I would therefore like to ask all our new and promoted knights and dames from Britain and Ireland to stand and be recognised and for all present to congratulate them in the usual way.

Distinguished guests, allow me to mention some important and joyous events which are of interest to our Delegation.

As part of the programme of furthering the reach of our Order across these islands, I am pleased to report the appointment of Field Marshal Lord Guthrie as Vice Delegate for Scotland, The Rt Hon Paul Murphy MP as Vice Delegate for Wales, and The Lord Alton of Liverpool as Vice Delegate for England.

In February this year our longstanding chaplain for 25 years, Vincent Nichols was appointed Cardinal in addition to his duties as Archbishop of Westminster. Cardinal Nichols who together with our Prior Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor and Grand Prior Cardinal Martino are in Rome tonight ahead of Sunday's

historic canonization of Pope John XXIII and Pope John Paul II. Their Eminences have all sent warm wishes for this evening and paid tribute for the work the Order undertakes in this country for the Church and Society at large.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This delegation is proudly a two-nation organisation and we have always considered this to be one of our great strengths. Some of us here were able to participate earlier this month in the historic first ever-State Visit by Uachtarán na hÉireann President Michael D Higgins of Ireland to Windsor which followed the historic State Visit of our Queen two years ago to Dublin.

It was I believe a watershed moment and changed forever the relationship between our two great and heavily intertwined islands. The Vice Delegate Prof Richard Conroy whom I warmly welcome leads a strong Irish presence here tonight, and he has asked me to extend an invitation to you all to attend our Delegation's annual Irish mass and dinner scheduled for 3 October.

The Order recently concluded its celebrations for the 1700th of the Edict of Milan of Emperor Constantine and I was delighted together with other members here present to attend the Private Audience with Pope Francis in early December. It was a very special occasion indeed and the Holy Father expressed to our Grand Master, The Duke of Castro and our Grand Prior Cardinal Martino his appreciation for the work which we continue to do in Italy and across the world.

Our relations with our Orders continues to grow in strength and I am pleased to note the election of longstanding Constantinian knight, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien as Grand Master of the EOHS.

As some of you are aware every Prince and Grand Master of SMOM since 1878 has been a senior member of the Constantinian Order. Our confrere Prince and Grand Master Fra Matthew Festing spoke of the warm relations which exist between our two Orders at a luncheon hosted by him in honour of the Duke of Castro in early December during which a further high honour was presented to our Grand Master on the occasion of his 50th birthday.

It is very much hoped that the warm and cordial relations, which have existed between our respective Orders, continues to flourish and not least in these islands.

2014 also marked the moving Beatification of Queen Maria-Cristina of the Two Sicilies. This highlighted once again the historic and continued importance and relevance of the BTS dynasty in Italy today.

It was also the occasion when the two branches of the Two Sicilies family put aside historic differences and signed an Act of Reconciliation. This is something many of us have been working towards for a long time and in this same spirit as the Duke of Castro and the Duke of Calabria would wish, I would like to warmly welcome those members of our extended Constantinian family who join us for the first time evening. You are most welcome.

The Order has also launched high profile charitable activities in

Latin America following last year's investiture into the Constantinian Order of President Santos of Colombia at a ceremony held in London. We will also continue with our activities in Panama and Costa Rica.

In Africa we will shortly launch charitable programmes together with our new confrere and the continent's last reigning Catholic monarch King Letsie III of Lesotho. The Order's Delegation in Monaco has also recently commenced a programme of donating ambulances and buses to Senegal.

The Order has also launched several charitable programmes which the British and Irish Delegation will play its part. A list of our adopted charities was recently issued by the Chancery and internationally projects will be launched in the weeks and months ahead in Italy, Hungary, Romania, Portugal, St Lucia, Dominica, Kosovo and Albania.

2014 also marks the conclusion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary or Golden Jubilee of the Constantinian Order's formal recognition by successive decrees of the President of the Italian Republic and the Italian Government.

I am delighted therefore that as we mark this historic anniversary it has coincided with the arrival at the Court of St James's of Italy's new Ambassador Pasquale Terracciano whom we look forward to his address shortly.

The Ambassador who was born in Naples comes from a distinguished Italian family and has unusually been honoured by both the Duke of Castro and Duke of Calabria. He has served his country with distinction with postings to NATO in Brussels, and as Italian Ambassador to Spain and Andorra. Before his

appointment as Ambassador here in Britain he served as Head of Cabinet of the Italian Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and later as Diplomatic Adviser to the Italian Prime Minister.

Dear Friends, in conclusion, tonight's dinner mixes the long traditions of our Constantinian Order, with the ancient traditions of the City of London. Our centuries old and internationally recognised Orders of Knighthood have as its hallmark the feel on an extended family, the dedication to assisting people through times of crisis and need, gathering resources and building relationships and channeling them to make the world a better place and most especially keeping in mind those in need. – and always imbued with our religious faith and commitment. Long may this continue and may I conclude by wishing each of you a very *Happy St George's Day*.

*IN HOC SIGNO VINCES.*