

SPEECH BY
HRH PRINCE CHARLES OF BOURBON TWO SICILIES, DUKE OF CASTRO,
GRAND MASTER
SACRED MILITARY CONSTANTINIAN ORDER OF ST GEORGE

Exchange of Honours Ceremony
In the Commonwealth of Dominica
State House Conference Centre
Wednesday 5 November 2014

MR PRESIDENT,
HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER,
HONOURABLE MINISTERS,
YOUR EXCELLENCIES,
YOUR EMINENCES,
MY LORDS,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,
and let me say dear new friends from Dominica

It is a distinct pleasure for me as Grand Master, for my wife the Duchess of Castro, His Eminence Renato Raffaele Cardinal Martino and my delegation to be here in the Commonwealth of Dominica, in this paradise island on this much anticipated visit which has, at its heart religious and charitable endeavour.

I would like to thank, through Your Excellency, and in the name of the Sacred Military Constantinian Order of St George, the Government of Dominica and most especially the Prime Minister, the Honourable Roosevelt Skerrit for his invitation in this country and for your warm welcome.

Your Excellency,

Our Official Visit to Dominica is marked today by this important ceremony of institutional exchange of honours and, as Grand Master, I would like to extend my thanks on behalf of the Sacred Military Constantinian Order of St George and of the Secretary General, Sir Anthony Bailey for the honours bestowed on us in virtue of the office held within our organisation.

Today, we are honoured to receive from you, Mr President, the highest and prestigious award of your proud nation, a honour that has been previously conferred on most illustrious personalities who have made significant contributions to your country and the world, including former Presidents and the Head of the Commonwealth, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The Constantinian Order is an ancient and internationally recognised Roman Catholic Order of Knighthood, which from its earliest origins has resolved to work for the glorification of the Cross and the propagation and defence of Faith.

Today, the Order manifests these principles, through charitable and humanitarian assistance, focused on those most vulnerable in society.

Uniquely, among Catholic orders, the Constantinian Order and its sister Order, the Royal Order of Francis I, continues to play a significant role across the world in furthering inter-religious understanding between the followers of all faiths and of none. I am pleased that our Order includes among his members Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Protestants, Orthodox and Muslim believers. We remain true to our Roman Catholic heritage yet proud of our diversity.

Recently the Order marked the 1700th anniversary of Emperor Constantine's Edict of Milan which granted religious freedom to Christians and those of other faiths and is therefore considered by many to be the beginning of European civilization as we know it today.

The Order also celebrated last year the Golden Jubilee of our formal recognition by successive decrees of the President and Government of the Italian Republic.

We also celebrated the granting of Consultative Status at the United Nations in New York, Geneva and Vienna.

In July 2012 the Constantinian Order was pleased to welcome Dominica at its major Faith-in-Sport events held to celebrate the 2012 London Olympic Games and the faith inspired origins, of the Olympic movement. Over 57 Heads of State and Government

and Ministers attended these events in London including His Excellency the President of Commonwealth of Dominica Dr Nicholas Liverpool, who were invested into our Order on that occasion.

With the recent upgrading of the diplomatic relations between Dominica and the Holy See to the ambassadorial level greater focus on Dominica among international Catholic charitable institutions such as our Order has followed.

In this regard, I would like to pay tribute to those who are championing this cause such, the Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Nicola Girasoli, His Eminence Kelvin Edward Cardinal Felix with Bishop Gabriel Malzaire. We congratulate also the newly appointed Ambassador to the Holy See, Mr. Edward Lambert, who will present his credentials in December 2014, and look forward to working together to further strengthening the relations with the Commonwealth of Dominica.

Your Excellency,

In fact, our visit is part of a wider regional visit that started in Antigua & Barbuda and the next few days will also bring us to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Barbados and, in early 2015, to Saint Lucia and Grenada.

These visits would allow the Order to focus and recognise the importance of the Caribbean region to the global Christian family which the Holy Father Pope Francis has highlighted in his discussions with regional Leaders.

I would like to note the efforts of Dr Nicholas Liverpool, Sir Anthony Bailey who have championed this regional engagement together with Baroness Scotland, a proud daughter of this beautiful country, here with us today.

Your Excellency

The Order has agreed to support here in Dominica several important projects such as the restoration of Our Lady of Fair Haven Cathedral and the building of the Diocesan Youth Centre which is being renovated with support from the Order. The renovation of both the St Peter's Presbytery in Colihaut and Our Lady of Morne Carmel Retirement Home are also part of the projects that the Order has agreed to fund.

To conclude, the dedication of Dominica to promote the principals of the Christian faith and values, so clearly embedded in your national identity, and its efforts to promote the charitable endeavour in favor of the well-being of the Dominican people are the foundations for developing a long-lasting relationship of our Order with your country.

Thank you!