

Dear Hospitallers

It is hard to believe that it is mid-summer again. Time like the weather is beyond our control but they are facts of life that we deal with every day. Change, which we can be part of or be beyond our control, can add to the apparent speed of time flying away. Sometimes we can become so forward thinking that we can forget about the day! Over the last year we have had many changes in our Governance Structures as we plan to ensure the continuance of the Ministries of the Order into the future.

The major changes are the new Extended Council and the appointment of John Pepper as Group Chief Executive of the ministries of the Order. The extended Council will transition to the Sponsorship Team when the PJP comes into operation at the latter part of 2013. This sponsorship Team will take the place of the Provincial and Council and the Group Chief Executive will report to it.

All these changes will put additional responsibilities on our Lay Hospitallers, responsibilities that heretofore were carried by the Brothers. The transition of major responsibilities from the Brothers to our Lay Hospitallers is very much in keeping with the teachings of the Second Vatican Council and also with our Founder St. John of God.

We welcome all our new Lay Board Members to the various Companies of the Order. They bring with them a wealth of experience and expertise and really open up the potential for the better development of our services. We are all Hospitallers and the people amongst us who are the most capable of carrying the senior governance roles must do so to ensure that the Hospitality in the manner of St. John of God lives on. The many changes that are and

will take place in the coming years are value driven and will ensure that the people we serve in Mental Health, Learning Disability and the Elderly receive the best service possible in the tradition of the Order.

We wish John Pepper in his new role as Group Chief Executive and our new Extended Council Members; Mary Collins, Anne Gunning and Bridget Butler our sincere congratulations and we are confident that the heritage, mission, vision and values of the Order are safe in their **Hospitaller Hands**.

This year we have had several invigorating meetings of the Hospitality Planning Group. These meetings are always lively. Some of the fruits of these meetings are the development of a new Institute of Hospitality Website which will be finalised and on-line in September. We also developed a Questionnaire which has gone out to everyone who has attended the Hospitality Foundation Programme since its inception in 2004 to the present. The Questionnaire asked several questions around how Hospitality has changed our attitudes, and how does Hospitality energise our lives today since attending the Programme. Also what offers hope through Hospitality today. We hope we have a good response from the Questionnaire which will be a great help to us at the Institute for planning into a future.

Once again I would like to thank all the Directors for releasing people to attend the Programmes and to all the attendees for their enthusiastic participation in all the sessions. It is evident from the Hospitallers who attend the Programme that there is a hunger for the spirituality of the Order and that Hospitality is alive and well in our Services in spite of all the difficulties and austerity in the country. John of God lives on!

Your fellow Hospitaller,

Bro. Gregory



Be Careful with Your Tongue!!

A group of frogs were travelling through the woods, and two of them fell into a deep pit. All the other frogs gathered around the pit. When they saw how deep the pit was, they told the two fallen frogs that they were as good as dead.

The two fallen frogs ignored their comments and tried to jump up out of the pit with all of their might. The other frogs kept telling them to stop, that they were as good as dead. Finally, one of the fallen frogs took heed to what they were saying and gave up.

He lay down and died.

The other fallen frog continued to jump as hard as he could. Once again, the crowd of frogs yelled at him to stop the pain and just die.

He jumped harder and harder and finally made it out. When he got out, the other frogs said, "Did you not hear us?"

The frog explained to them that he was deaf. He thought they were encouraging him the entire time.

This story teaches two lessons:

There is power of life and death in the tongue. An encouraging word to someone who is down can lift them up and help them make it through the day.

A destructive word to someone who is down can be what it takes to kill them.

Be careful of what you say.

Speak life to those who cross your path.



June Group of
Hospitallars

Deeper Meaning of Life

Examining life for deeper meanings is a twentieth century preoccupation. We assume that things are not what they seem. Words disguise Hidden Feelings. Actions symbolize Something Else. We sometimes try too hard to discover the hidden meanings when there just might not be anymore to it than what is on the surface. Tom Mullen illustrates this at the very beginning of his book: An engineer, a psychologist, and a theologian were hunting in the wilds of northern Canada. They came across an isolated cabin, far removed from any town. Because friendly hospitality is a virtue practiced by those who live in the wilderness, the hunters knocked on the door to ask permission to rest. No one answered their knocks, but, discovering the cabin was unlocked, they entered. It was a simple place--two rooms with a minimum of furniture and household equipment. Nothing was surprising about the cabin except the stove. It was large, potbellied, and made of cast iron. What was unusual was its location: it was suspended in midair by wires attached to the ceiling beams. "Fascinating," said the psychologist. "It is obvious that this lonely trapper, isolated from humanity, has elevated his stove so he can curl up under it and vicariously experience a return to the womb." "Nonsense!" replied the engineer. "The man is practicing the laws of thermodynamics. By elevating his stove, he has discovered a way to distribute heat more evenly throughout the cabin." "With all due respect," interrupted the theologian, "I'm sure that hanging his stove from the ceiling has religious meaning. Fire 'lifted up' has been a religious symbol for centuries." The three debated the point for several minutes without resolving the issue. When the trapper finally returned, they immediately asked him why he had hung his heavy potbellied stove by wires from the ceiling. His answer was succinct: "Had plenty of wire, not much stove pipe!" *Tom Mullen, "Laughing Out Loud and Other Religious Experiences"*

Making Friends Out of Strangers

You and I perhaps tend to offer hospitality to only a limited number of people, persons whom we already know, mostly relatives and a few close friends.

However, in Abraham's time, hospitality was extended to whosoever needed it strangers and acquaintances alike.

In fact, in its original form "hospitality" combines two separate words, one meaning **friend** and the other meaning **stranger**. So, from the beginning of its usage, hospitality has carried with it the idea of making friends out of strangers.

St. John of God in his apostolate in the **Venegas Porch** gives us a great example of reaching out to strangers, befriending them and making them his **brothers and sisters!**

John really lets his **Heart Command** as it says over the doorway of the Porch.



This beautiful painting of John of God at the Venegas Porch was painted by Carla Senf, who works in the Library at Saint John of God Hospital, Stillorgan. The painting was presented to the new Group Chief Executive, John Pepper by Bro. Laurence Kearns, Provincial at the Welcoming Ceremony on 9th July at Hospitaller House. The Venegas Porch has a very special significance for John.

A Person's stature is measured by their dreams

"A person's stature is measured by his/her dreams, by the love they are able to show, by the values they respect, by the happiness they are able to share, by the truths they are able to express, by the help they are able to give, by the lives they lead, and by the destiny of which they dream."